

## Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi: The Soul of Le Marche

Verdicchio is an historic wine that has been made since the 1400's. There is an ancient bond between the Verdicchio vine and the region of Le Marche, a seaside province on the Adriatic sea, which stems from a cherished relationship with the Benedictine, and later the Camaldolese, Monks. The monks helped spread Verdicchio vines – which had been present for centuries – as well as viticultural-oenological techniques throughout the Marche region. The efforts of the monks, along with improvements in the quality of the vines & vinification methods, have allowed Verdicchio to thrive for centuries. At one time, Verdicchio measured 65,000 hectares (158,080 acres) of grapes throughout Italy.



*Shoreline of the Adriatic Sea*



*Province of Marche*

Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi comes from the central and eastern part of the Province of Marche, one of the twenty regions of Italy. Marche takes its name from the "Marca" of Ancona (Ancona is Marche's largest & capital city), referring to the border land between two political areas. The grapes are grown in 23 communes, slightly west of Ancona, and measure 7,410 acres or 3,000 hectares in size. Jesi is the focus commune, and Castelli refers to the towns where people retreated during times of war (castle-like towns).

Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi was established as a DOC in 1968, and its DOCG was founded in 2010 (the DOCG area measures only 145 hectares). The law requires the wine to be 85% Verdicchio grapes, with 15% allowed from other white grapes cultivated in Marche (such as Trebbiano and Malvasia).



*Vineyards of Cantina Zaccagnini*



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Verdicchio means “little green one”, in reference to the grape and the color of the resulting wine. The Verdicchio grape – which also goes by Giallo and Turbiana (Lake Garda) – is grown across Italy, and it is closely related to Trebbiano and Greco. The grape is subject to mutations. The most famous producer is Fazi Battaglia in an Amphora bottle, though over the years many local producers have bottled this wine in a fish bottle (all the rage in the 1960’s).

The wines are light and refreshing. Verdicchio exhibits lemon citrus flavors, aromas of flowers and apples, with herbaceous qualities. The wines usually age well for 2-3 years, picking up an amber color and almond flavors. 525 producers make 1.4 million cases (9 liter) per year for domestic consumption and export. Sparkling and straw wine versions (*Passito* style) are produced in much smaller quantities.

Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi DOC pairs well with most seafood recipes: fish appetizers, raw fish, pasta, risotto and fish soups. Its softness and good persistence also make it a nice complement to sea bass, turbot or crustaceans, especially if prepared on the grill. It also pairs well with white meats and sharp, aged cheeses.

Local food pairings include the following:

1. Fish Stew (Brodetto)
2. Stuffed Olives – olives stuffed with meat and bread and then fried.
3. Moscioli - seaside Mussels
4. Vincisgrassi – Lassagne-like pasta
5. Ciauscolo (spreadable salame)
6. Tagliatelle with Acqualagnas - egg pasta with local shaved white truffle
7. Ancona Fish Stock- fish and vegetables
8. Rabbit in porchetta- boneless rabbit rolled up and stewed. Looks like a ballotine.



*Moscioli*