

VERDUZZO FRIULANO

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BACKGROUND

In Australia, this variety is known simply as Verduzzo (pronounced ver-DOOTZ-oh) but it is more correctly known as Verduzzo Friulano because there is more than one Verduzzo in Italy. For example, Verduzzo Trevigiano is a distinctly different variety. Synonyms of Verduzzo Friulano include Ramandolo, Ramandolo Dorato, Verdüz and Verdùc (Slovenia). It is an old variety, mainly grown in Friuli in north-east Italy, particularly in the eastern province of Udine. It is also found in the Veneto. Verduzzo Friulano has been in decline in recent decades, down from 2400ha in 1980 to 946ha in 2010. There are at least eight producers of 'Verduzzo' wine in Australia—in the King Valley, Mornington Peninsula, Yarra Valley, Orange and Hunter Valley.

VITICULTURE

Budburst is mid-season, and maturity is mid-season to late. Growth habit is semi-erect and vigour is moderate. Bunches are small to medium, winged, well-filled with tough-skinned medium berries that are green-yellow or gold depending on exposure. Flesh is juicy and slightly aromatic. Yield is regular and moderate. In Italy it is said to require cane pruning, to be tolerant of cold and well adapted to different environments, so long as the soil is neither too fertile nor moist. In high potential sites, good canopy control and bunch thinning may be required to achieve adequate ripening. Verduzzo Friulano has low to moderate susceptibility to powdery and downy mildews and is tolerant of botrytis bunch rot due to its thick, tough skin. Seven clones are available in Italy with variation in intensity of honey and floral characters in wine.

WINE

In Friuli, Verduzzo Friulano is used for varietal wines, both dry and sweet and occasionally sparkling, in at least eight DOCs including Lison-Pramaggiore and Colli Orientali di Friuli. In DOCG Ramandola the wines are mainly sweet, from vineyards in the hills above Nimis at 380m elevation. The lesser-quality Verduzzo Trevigiano ripens later and may be blended with Verduzzo Friulano in some DOCs. Dry wines range from fresh and fruity with citrus characters to full bodied, fruity and honey-like. Sweet wines from late harvested or semi-dried fruit may be the best wines: they have slightly astringent tannins and are lightly herbal with more honey character with age. In dry wines this astringency may be too pronounced. In Australia, dry wines have been described as light, refreshing, textural, fruity and floral.

For further information on this and other emerging varieties, contact Marcel Essling (marcel.essling@awri.com.au; tel. 08 8313 6600) at The Australian Wine Research Institute to arrange the presentation of the Research to Practice program on Alternative Varieties in your region.