- History of the regions
- Geology, climate, terroir
- Appellations, classifications and aging requirements
- Tasting!
- Vintages

Italian Quality System:

- Denominazione di Origine Controllata → Denominazione di Origine Protetta
  - Modeled after French AOC system
- DOCG: "guaranteed"
- Indicazione Geografica Tipica → Indicazione Geografica Protetta
- Vino da Tavola
- Expansion, credibility and the current perspective on the system

History

PIEDMONT

- 1700s-1800s: Piedmont part of House of Savoy (French); wine culture thrives
- Early 1800s: Giulietta Falletti and French enologist make first dry, Bordeaux-style wine from Nebbiolo
- 1861: Italy "unified"

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- 1934: Official zone of Barolo defined
- 1960s: Move toward estate-bottling and delineation of *crus* in Barolo; Barbaresco builds acclaim
- 1963: DOC system introduced
- 1980: Barolo gains DOCG status
- 1980s: Modern techniques evolve style of Piemontese reds
- 1992: Goria's Law and new IGTs throughout Italy

TUSCANY

- Middle Ages: Viticulture flourishes in Tuscany as Florence builds power
- Late 1300s: First mentions of Brunello di Montalcino and Chianti (as a white!)
- 1716: 1st wine legislation identifying Chianti production zone
- 1840s: Brunello clone isolated by Clemente Santi
- 1950s: Demise of nobility-owned vineyard system; investments and quality plummet throughout region
- 1960s: Chianti zone is expanded; first "Super Tuscans" appear
- 1966: Vernaccia di San Gimignano DOC
- 1978: Banfi established in Montalcino; new investments throughout Tuscany
- 1989: Chianti Classico 2000 project

Soil, Climate, Exposure: the notion of *Terroir*

PIEDMONT

- Northwestern Italy, bordering Switzerland and France
- Literally "foot of the mountain"
- Continental climate; Alps create a rain shadow
- Calcareous marl, sandstone
- *Sorí* and *la nebbia*
- At current count: 40 DOCs and 16 DOCGs

TUSCANY

- Western central Italy
- Bordering Mediterranean
- Wide variations of soil
    - Galestro and alberese in Chianti Classico
    - Clay and galestro in Montalcino
    - Volcanic and sandstone in Montepulciano
- Overall dry climate, inland is more seasonal; near sea receives maritime influence
- Hills and exposure affect ripening

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The (Main) Grapes

PIEDMONT

- Nebbiolo
- Barbera
- Dolcetto
- Cortese
- Moscato
- Arneis

TUSCANY

- Sangiovese
- Cabernet
- Syrah
- Merlot
- Canaiolo
- Vernaccia
- Trebbiano
- Malvasia

Big "B"… Barolo v. Barbaresco v. Brunello

Barolo and Barbaresco: both 100% Nebbiolo from hills around Alba, Piedmont

Barolo:

- Five main communes south and west of Alba broken into many individual crus
- Slightly warmer climate, more masculine versions
- 38 months minimum aging (18 in barrel)
-

Barbaresco:

- Four communes north and east of Alba
- Slightly cooler climate, slightly finer versions
- 26 months minimum aging (9 in barrel)

Other Piemontese Nebbiolo: Langhe, Roero, Carema, Gattinara, Ghemme, Bramaterra

Brunello: 100% Brunello strain of Sangiovese from hills of Montalcino, Tuscany

- South of Chianti, south of Siena
- Hotter climate, more limestone soil, more powerful Sangiovese
- Two years minimum aging in barrel (plus 4 months in bottle)

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Other Tuscan Sangiovese: Chianti, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, Morellino di Scansano

Super Tuscans:

- Unofficial category of Tuscan wine that doesn't follow DOC(G) requirements
- IGT / Vino da Tavola / new DOCs
- Usually involves a blend of international varietals

Crivelli Barbera Collina La Mora '11 – Asti, Piedmont

- Barbera is for "everyday" drinking in Piedmont
- Asti located in Monferrato hills northeast of Langhe, Barolo and Barbaresco
- Soils are clay, sand and limestone
- 85% Barbera required for Barbera d'Asti DOCG; this is 100%
- Crivelli family's vines are over 80 years old

Reversanti Barbaresco '05 - Barbaresco, Piedmont

- Barbaresco DOCG is within Langhe DOC; requires 100% Nebbiolo
- Four Barbaresco communes (Barbaresco, Neive, Treiso, San Rocco Senodelvio) and many crus
- Minimum aging: 26 months (nine must be in barrel)
- Tortonian soil (calareous marl)

Seghesio Barolo '95 - Barolo, Piedmont

- Barolo DOCG is within Langhe DOC; requires 100% Nebbiolo
- Five main Barolo communes (La Morra, Barolo, Serralunga d'Alba, Monforte d'Alba, Castiglione Falleto) and many crus
- Minimum aging 36 months (18 in barrel)
- Tortonian and Helvetian soils
- Modern vs. traditional winemaking styles
- Seghesio founded by brothers Aldo and Riccardo in 1988; focus on sustainable vineyard practices

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Monteraponi Chianti Classico '11 - Chianti Classico, Tuscany

- Chianti DOCG contains 7 subzones, one of which is the “core” Chianti Classico DOCG
- Galestro and alberese soils
- Chianti Classico requires 80-100% Sangiovese; this is 95% with 5% Canaiolo
- Monteraponi is a small medieval village that dates back to the 10th century; sits at 470 meters altitude
- Focus on traditional production: organic, indigenous yeasts, cement tanks or large casks, no fining/filtering

Il Colle Brunello di Montalcino '06 - Montalcino, Tuscany

- Brunello clone isolated by Clemente Santi in 1865; the Biondi-Santi estate became one of the most famous for its Brunello Riservas
- 100% Sangiovese Grosso required for DOCG (and infamous history of producers skirting this rule); minimum two years in wood
- Rosso di Montalcino DOC: less aging
- Galestro, clay, marine sediment
- Traditional vs. modern styles and producers (Il Colle is very traditional)

Tenuta di Trinoro Le Cupole '09 - Tuscany, Italy

- “Super Tuscans” made outside of DOC(G) requirements… or as a protest to them
- Bordeaux varietals, Syrah, Sangiovese
- Emerged most prominently in 1980s
- Spurred IGT category and Bolgheri DOC
- Tenuta di Trinoro makes Bordeaux blends with a particular emphasis on Cabernet Franc

Top Recent Vintages

PIEDMONT

- Good: 2009, 2008, 2007, 2003, 2000, 1999, 1998,1997
- Great: 2006, 2004, 2001, 1996, 1990, 1989

TUSCANY

- Good: 2010, 2009, 2008, 2005, 2001, 1997, 1995
- Great: 2007, 2006, 2004, 1999

To find value:

- In “lesser” vintages look for reliable producers
- In great vintages look for up-and-coming or under-the-radar producers

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