



The "Italian champagne" is at home in Franciacorta in Lombardy, but it is in the Oltrepò of Pavia that, with the exception of France, we find the largest area of vineyards cultivated for Pinot Noir in the world: whether white or rosé, here are the top 5 Oltrepò Pavese Metodo Classico wines.

#WINE AND COCKTAIL

In the context of **Italian champagnes**, the "**Metodo Classico**" is to the south of Lombardy, and numerically speaking the second most important place for the Italian *Metodo Classico* after **Franciacorta**. But while this is almost exclusively cultivated with Chardonnay grapes, **Oltrepò of Pavia** is the second European "home" of Pinot Noir in terms of hectares of cultivated vineyards, second only to France. This grape, with a red berry, is vinified both "**in white**" and **in rosé** to produce sparkling wine, with a very soft pressing of the bunch to obtain the juice. The sparkling wine of the Oltrepò of Pavia was officially born in 1930, although a few pioneers had attempted some rudimentary experiments before this, such as **Count Carlo Giorgi Vistarino** in 1865 – who alongside **Carlo Gancia** started to market the "Italian Champagne" – and then emulated in 1870 by the engineer **Domenico Mazza Codevilla**. In 1907, **Pietro Riccadonna and Angelo Ballabio** started on production of "Grand Spumante SIC", which was exported as far as New York. But it was **Cesare Gustavo Faravelli**, at the wine cellar of La Versa (of which he was the first president), to give life to a real and proper production of sparkling wines, consequently driving sparkling wine production in the area. And yet the Oltrepò Pavese, as a high-quality wine region, is only a recent story in the last few years, as in the past it was little more than a wine basin with proximity to Milan, featuring rather modest wines, so much so that considering that the Controlled Designation of Origin (DOC) was created in 1970, it was only in 2007 that the **DOCG Oltrepò Pavese Metodo Classico** received acclaim for this area. There have been a few companies of excellence, including the top 5 that we have chosen for you, which have really distinguished themselves and brought about a real production revolution for the enhancement of the Pinot Noir grape variety, becoming a virtuous example of how the quest for quality can really make the difference.



Conte Vistarino – Oltrepò Pavese *Metodo Classico* Pinot Noir Brut 1865



Having imported the first cuttings of Pinot Noir to Italy, Count Carlo Vistarino started to produce the first *Metodo Classico* in 1865, and in celebrating these first attempts a special date was chosen by the company to place its most iconic sparkling wine on the label. The vineyard is still prominent today around the splendid nineteenth-century residence of the Rocca de' Giorgi estate, which bears witness to the origins of the Giorgi di Vistarino family. Among these high hills of the Oltrepò, the pioneering spirit of the founder is still a wellspring of inspiration for the most recent female member of the generation, Ottavia Giorgi di Vistarino. Special attention to the land and to its values, with a special devotion to Pinot Noir, is the basis for high-quality productions, which point to the harmony and complexity of the wines. The fragrant and fresh aromas of the Pinot Noir are reminiscent of citrus fruits and broom, with the acidity of apple peel and the delicacy of dried fruit, they hasten a rich and vibrant taste, with a high mineral content. (€18)