

The rediscovery of taste

The winegrowers and wine cellars of the Terradeiforti

TERRA DEI FORTI

Consorzio Tutela Vini

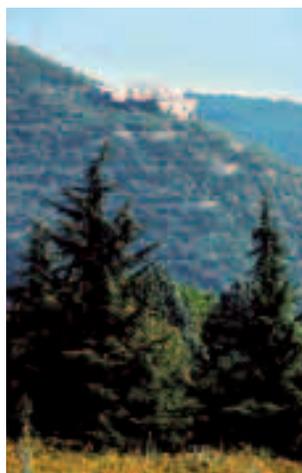


The Terradeiforti

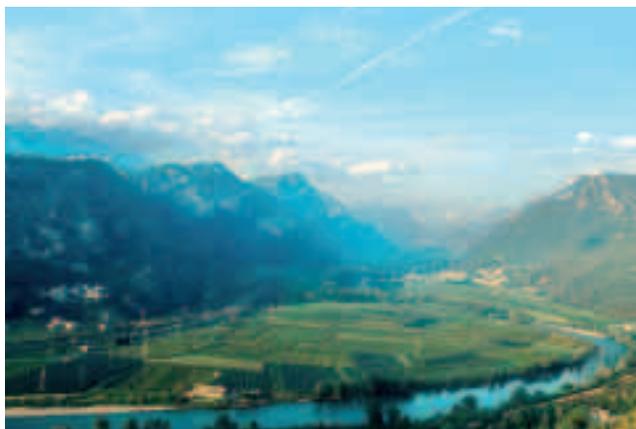
This valley was modelled by the glaciers in the Quaternary Age and hollowed out by the Adige River. It stretches southwards from Chiusa di Ceraino and opens up northwards between the Monte Baldo and the Lessinia to reach the Trentino region.

It comprises the municipalities of Rivoli Veronese, Brentino Belluno, Dolcè and Avio that are all linked by the Adige River and the rows of vines.

Welcome to the Terradeiforti!



Monte Fort



The vineyards of the Terra dei Forti between the Monte Baldo and the Adige River

Why Terradeiforti?

Right from the Roman period, the Adige Valley has always been a crucial communication line between the Mediterranean and the alpine areas. The many castles and forts dotted along the Adige River are reminders of the area's historical events throughout the centuries. Although the area can be considered as a link between the Veronese and Trentino cultures, the denomination of "Terra dei Forti" results from the determination of the Protection Consortium to provide the local wines and territory with a clear identity.

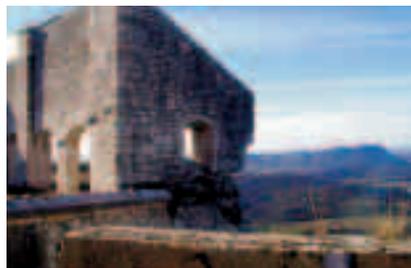
Forts as a tradition



Wohlgemuth Fort in Rivoli



San Marco Fort



Monte Fort



Tagliata Incanal



Ceraino Fort





A land full of emotions



*The Adige River near
Chiusa di Ceraino*

If globalization scares you to death and you hate the standardization of tastes, you must come to the Terra dei Forti and discover its wines. Some unique wines are produced in this area rich in nature, history and tradition. They are precious wines that will never become part of the mass market: this is widely renowned among the viticulturists of the Terra dei Forti and they have thus always paid particular attention to quality, still using and improving traditional methods. The Terra dei Forti is a land full of emotions: come and visit its castles, forts and ancient villas. Let yourself become enchanted by the landscape, the unique views and by the history of the small villages.

Come and rediscover the taste



The old dishes: stewed venison with polenta



Turrets and bell towers

The forts, the Sabbionara castle, the villas and noble residence, the parish churches, the Lessinia Park - that preserves the natural beauties and traditions of the Cimbrian people, the Madonna della Corona sanctuary: these are signs of the past and present of the Terra dei Forti. The slopes overlooking the valley are dotted with citadels, castles and forts following a path where the sacred and profane are mixed together. The Adige Valley was crossed by armies, pilgrims going to Rome, invaders, princes and bishops, artists, smugglers, travellers and wanderers of all ages. Frederick Barbarossa (Redbeard), King Autari and Teodolinda, Dante, Napoleon and Mozart passed through here.



Sabbionara Castle Castellum Ava

A history that leaves its mark...



The small church of Sant'Andrea in Ossenigo surrounded by vineyards.



The fort of Rivoli

The fort was built between 1849 and 1852 and was a menacing guardian of the crucial communication route between Italy and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. At present, it hosts a museum of the Great War and is a symbol of the area below: the Terra dei Forti.

Castellum Ava

This striking castle that overlooks the Adige Valley is enclosed in an irregular quadrilateral that was wisely fortified during the centuries. It consists of various buildings built throughout the centuries starting from 1053: the keep, the Torre Picadora and the guardhouse with the wonderful profane frescoes.

(photo courtesy of the writer Luisa Pachera born in Avio - www.luisapachera.it)



Villa Del Bene

This Renaissance villa stands along the ancient Tridentine road a few metres from the Adige River. The stairs, loggia and the rooms on the noble floor are all decorated with a vast series of frescoes. Here the atmosphere is truly fascinating.

Madonna della Corona

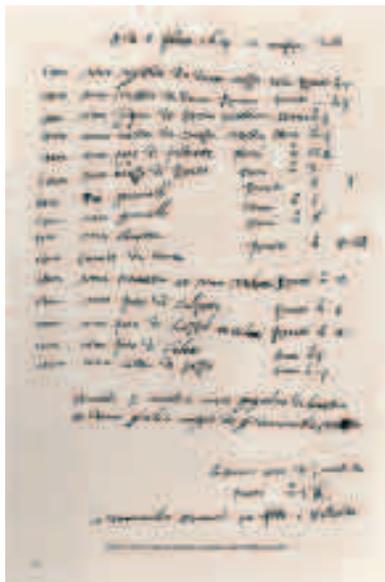
This is the most courageous sanctuary ever built in Italy: it is excavated in a rocky wall at 774 m a.s.l. and boasts a natural terrace that looks over the Adige Valley. This place of worship is visited by both Italian and foreign faithfuls and can be reached from Brentino Belluno or Spiazzi following a panoramic path.



A heritage to safeguard

The Terra dei Forti is a microarea that belongs to the “Valdadige” DOC mark. It comprises the territory belonging to the municipalities of Rivoli Veronese, Brentino Belluno, Dolcè and Avio with a total vine area of 1,300 hectares. 16 wine cellars and eight hundred wine-makers work to safeguard the “Valdadige Terra dei Forti” DOC mark: this is to guarantee that these high-quality wines are produced exclusively with grapes coming from this region with its unique pedo-climatic and environmental characteristics.

Unforgettable wines



Legacy from 1600



The DOC mark comprises the wines: Enantio, Rosso Superiore, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon (also the “reserve” version); Pinot Bianco, Pinot Grigio, Chardonnay and Sauvignon

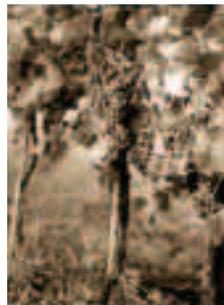


The vineyard gardeners

In this area the vines are surrounded by thick woods. Each plot looks like a garden. Each vineyard is carefully cared for in full respect of the surrounding environment. This is to safeguard the production of wines with unique characteristics and to preserve their peculiarities. Each procedure is carried out with great care, professionalism and passion.

The harvesting is completely manual: in this way the ripe bunches carried to the cellar remain intact so as to collect the best of its juice.

The picking starts once the grapes are fully ripe: at the beginning of September for the Pinot Grigio, while the Enantio can take advantage of the rays of sunshine up to October.



Ripe grapes



The harvest

The Ganzega

On the last day of the harvest, the winegrowers and pickers join together to celebrate the end of their work with a party with traditional dishes, such as salt cod with polenta or some salami.



"Stroppe" used to bind the vines: they are young and flexible branches of willow.



Enantio: the ambassador of the Terradeiforti

The Enantio is the major black-grape vine of the Terra dei Forti. It is essentially an autochthonous vine that was born right in this area. Some recent studies by the Università Cattolica of Milan show that there are some strong phylo-genetic bonds between this wine and wild vines found in the local woods. This proves that this vine originates directly from this progenitor and thus that it was born here some millenniums ago.

The Enantio is well appreciated by the viticulturists for its rustic characteristics and because it can well adapt to different grounds, as long as mainly calcareous. Besides, it is highly resistant to parasites and winter frost: it is truly an organic vine!

The pride of winegrowers



A bunch of Enantio grapes



The typical jagged edge leaf of the Enantio vine

All local viticulturists know the history of their most precious vine. The Enantio was already quoted in the first century a.D. by the Roman writer Pliny as: "La brusca: hoc est vitis silvestris, quod vocatur oenanthium", a wild vine called Enantio. In 1596, in his book "Storia naturale dei vini" (natural history of wines) Bacci writes about the "labrusca" grape that was produced in the



Enantio vineyards in autumn

Tridentine area from where the wines of Enantio came. It is still possible to find some vines that are more than 100 years old: they survived the vine phylloxera pest at the turn of the twentieth century and are preserved to study their peculiarities.



Combinations: traditionally it can accompany game-based dishes, grilled meat, stewed meat, the "patisada de caval" and mature cheeses, such as the Monte Veronese DOP

The Enantio is a unique wine. It has a very intense ruby-red colour and a powerful scent of ripe fruit. It is a bodied wine with strong and dominant tannins that are softened after maturing in wooden barrels.



The old dishes: polenta with Monte Veronese DOP cheese and mushrooms; salted beef and beans

Pinot Grigio: the story of success

The local winegrowers have cultivated this aristocratic vine for more than 40 years. In the Terra dei Forti, the Pinot Grigio can express all its potentiality mainly thanks to the vocational characteristics of the territory. But not only: this wine also needs special agronomic cares such as thinning the buds, stripping, topping and thinning the grapes. All procedures that have been

improved over the years by our growers with great passion. Moreover, the local microclimate ensures the perfect ripening of these very delicate grapes: the constant aeration allows harvesting perfectly sane grapes so as to guarantee the production of high-quality wines.



Bunches of Pinot Grigio

Unmistakable



Some vineyards enclosed between the Monte Baldo and the Lessinia

Pinot Grigio

At first glance, the straw-yellow colour gives the impression of a particularly refined and elegant wine, while a golden shade suggests a full-bodied Pinot Grigio that was matured in small oak barrels and then refined in bottles. This wine is fruity while still young (pear and hazelnut notes) and then acquires a more complex bouquet that reminds us of dry hay and toasted almonds. Our palate fully enjoys the intensity, persistency and elegance of the taste and olfactory sensations it provokes.



The old dishes: trout from the Adige River with polenta

Combinations: it perfectly accompanies the white asparagus of Rivoli with vinaigrette and boiled eggs or cooked in risotto. It perfectly complements raw ham, the fettuccine with duck or rabbit ragout, as well as white meat and dishes made with fish and shellfish



The old dishes: fettuccine with rabbit ragout

“Casetta” or “Foja Tonda”, the traditional vine

From the ampelographic standpoint this wine is classified with the name “Casetta”, but the growers call it “Foja Tonda” (round leaf). This is to distinguish it from the Enantio with jagged-edge leaf. This ancient vine also derives from the Terra dei Forti and was first recuperated by Albino Armani who provided it with its undoubted quality. At present, it is cultivated only in 12 hectares. These are mainly old vines but have remained “franche di piede”, that is they managed to survive without being grafted onto American roots to survive the vine phylloxera that destroys the European roots. It has been grown for centuries in this area along the Adige River and halfway up the hills where it yields small and very sweet bunches.



Bunches of Casetta

It is classified as a variety in danger of extinction: for this reason in 2002 it was added to the varieties that can be cultivated, as formerly, paradoxically, it was not authorized.

The Wine Protection Consortium intends to comprise the Casetta in the Terra dei Forti DOC mark so as to safeguard its production and to increase its popularity among the consumers.



Foja Tonda

This wine boasts a strong personality. It can be easily recognized for its flavour of prunes and maraschino cherries, cinnamon and tobacco that together with moss enhance its wild character. The taste in the mouth is smooth and creamy despite its noteworthy bitterness: this is a notable feature in combination with the various dishes. In fact, if drunk while still young, it perfectly complements very rich fresh pasta, braised or stewed meat. After maturing for a few years, it perfectly accompanies large game and roasted meat, as well as a mixed cheese board

The old dishes: bigoli with duck sauce

The seduction of the senses

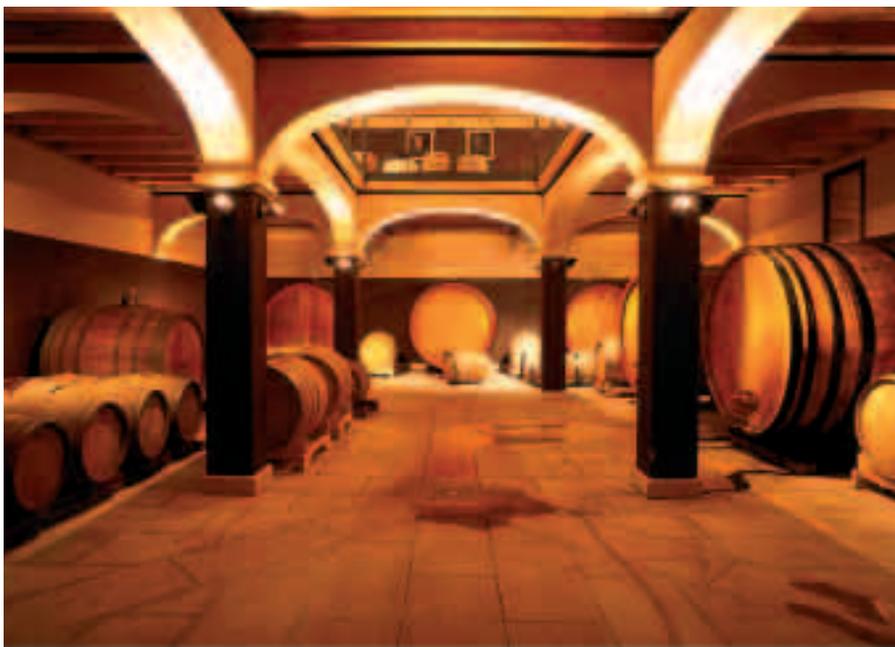
Tasting a glass of wine is a ritual, a subtle seduction of the senses. The eyes are fixed on the bottle trying to figure out the colour of the nectar through the coloured glass. Then it is the turn of the ears as the bottle is uncorked. Then the cork exudes the first scents that arouse the nose. Finally the wine comes out of the bottle and dives into the glass.

The ears are captivated by the small waterfall and the eyes instantly examine the reflections and colour of the wine. The nose hesitates as if enchanted by the aromas that rise inviting. After decanting, leave these sensations settle for a while, try to capture their essence... and finally bring the glass to your lips.



The intense red colour of Enantio

Decanting the sensations



A refining wine cellar

The wine cellars

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The rediscovery of taste

The consumers are rediscovering the values of traditional food following a period of indifference.

Thanks to this rediscovery, some genuine specialities that result from ancient traditions are gaining more and more popularity.

The guardians of taste

The Monte Veronese DOP



The Terra dei Forti belongs to the production area of the Monte Veronese cheese that gained the DOP mark in 1993.

Originally, this cheese was produced by the Cimbrian people

who had Bavarian-Tyrolean origins and began settling in this territory in the 13th century. The "Monte Veronese DOP" is a cheese exclusively made with cow milk coming from the rich pastures of the Lessinia that still preserve their natural features. There are two varieties: whole milk and "d'allevo" (from farm bred animals). The



"Monte Veronese DOP" with whole milk: a cheese with half-cooked paste made with the milk resulting from one or two successive milkings. The maturing process lasts for about thirty days. It has a delicate and pleasant taste. It is a table cheese that can be eaten as a single dish or accompanied with walnuts, pears and grapes, or that can be used to cook polenta and country-style cakes.

The "Monte Veronese DOP" d'allevo is made with semi-skimmed milk and is left to rest for at least 90 days if for eating at the table or up to two years if used for grating. It is delicious accompanied by the Lessinia honey and the Enantio from the Terra dei Forti.

Extra virgin olive oil DOP of the Eastern Shore of Lake Garda



Thanks to the mild microclimate of Lake Garda that affects the DOP areas of Rivoli and Brentino Belluno, this is the oil that is produced at the most northern latitude in the world.

It boasts a particularly refined quality as the olives are still hand picked directly from the plant and are then cold-pressed and crushed in the grinders.

The “Garda Orientale DOP” oil has a golden-green colour. It has a delicate fruity aroma which is reflected in the taste along with a slight hint of sweet almonds. It is one of the best extra virgin olive oils thanks to its low acidity level and to the long-lasting freshness deriving from the high chlorophyll content. It is ideal for

dressing any dish and is also used to prepare the traditional “fogasin su la gradèla”.

The “Marrone di San Zeno DOP”



Some century-old chestnut trees still yield their tasty fruit on the slopes of Monte Baldo up to an altitude of 800 m a.s.l., mainly on the side giving to Lake Garda: the marroni (large chestnuts). It is the “noble” variety of the chestnut. Usually it is

bigger, long and oval, lighter in colour with well-marked dark streaks, a thin skin and sweet and tasty flesh.

Since the Middle Ages, this fruit has always been a valuable vitamin and protein source for our alpine populations, especially when there was a lack of food. To this day they are still picked



with the traditional

methods. It can be boiled in water with salt and sage or roasted in the oven, and is eaten with a glass of nouvelle wine in the autumn evenings.

It is a basic ingredient for jams, sweets and marron glacè, and its taste is even greater enhanced in the soup that represents the alpine version of the typical bean soup of Veneto.



The truffles of the “Monte Baldo Veronese IGP”



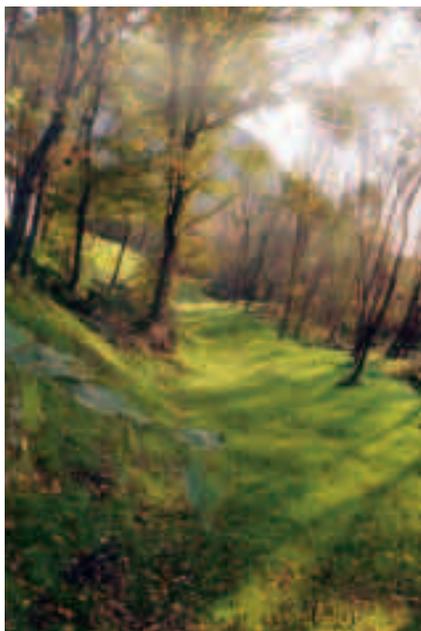
The Monte Baldo Veronese truffle is also an important part of the local gastronomy and the Truffle-growers Association soon hopes to gain the IGP mark for this product.

The Baldo truffles were already well-known and appreciated in the 16th century by the Gonzaga Court in Mantua.

In the woods of Monte Baldo, the expert hunters find mainly the black truffle (*tuber aestivum*) the so-called “scorzone”.

But there are also other varieties, such as the precious *melanosporum*, perfect for risottos and tagliatelle.

The typical local dish is the “torta baldense” made with Monte Baldo mature cheese that is melted together with the black truffle. In autumn, the truffle and the marrone of San Zeno are celebrated at the “Buongusto d’Autunno” fair that is organized by the Consortium and by the “Strada del Vino e dei Prodotti Tipici della Terra dei Forti”.



The white asparagus of Rivoli

The white asparagus, another quality product of the Terra dei Forti, is grown exclusively on the morainic hills around Rivoli Veronese that were left by the Quaternary Age glaciers and then modelled by the floods of the Adige River. Its characteristic colour derives from the fact that it grows underground in the absence of light. This vegetable, though low in calories and carbohydrates, is very rich in proteins, vitamins and minerals. It can be eaten boiled, with a vinaigrette dressing and accompanied by boiled eggs and the Terra dei Forti Pinot Grigio wine. It is the spring vegetable par excellence and is also delicious in first course sauces and risottos. In spite of its limited production, the asparagus of Rivoli is the protagonist of a popular festival held during the first week of May and of the “Cantico di Primavera”, an initiative organized by the Consortium and by the “Strada del Vino e dei Prodotti Tipici della Terra dei Forti”.



The kiwi of the Terra dei Forti



In the early 60s, the vineyards of the Terra dei Forti were flanked by a similar number of rows of kiwis, which at the time were only known in Asia and New Zealand. This fruit easily adapted to the mild climate of the valley and along with the growers' experience, its ripening close to the grape harvest and the consumers' approval it became very popular. In fact, it is very rich in vitamin C and ideal for fresh juices.

The trouts of the Terra dei Forti

The gastronomy of the Terra dei Forti is even more enriched by the trouts that swim in the Adige River. They can be savoured in the recipes of our skilled chefs and accompanied by the best white wines of the Terra dei Forti.



Valdadige Terra dei Forti home-made breadsticks



In the heart of the Terra dei Forti, in Belluno Veronese, you can find the Bakery of the Zorzi brothers. Their main product is the Valdadige breadstick, a true delicacy resulting from a secret and matchless recipe. These breadsticks are light and crumbly. They are hand-made and keep their unmistakable and genuine taste.

A mixture of cultures at the table

Be seduced by our varied gastronomy. This is an area of passage where the traditions of Veneto and Trentino mix together. Here the mountain tastes and flavours join with those of the valley floor. And this creates a cuisine that never fails to surprise, that can offer mountain dishes, such as the Monte Baldo cheese with chanterelles and polenta, alongside river dishes, such as soused trout. In the same way the typical dishes of Veneto, such as potato gnocchi or tagliatelle with duck sauce, are flanked by the most traditional recipes of Trentino, such as the canederli (dumplings) or the salted beef. And all these flavours can be even more enhanced by the varied and excellent wines of the Terra dei Forti.



The old dishes: gnocchi with tomato sauce

Rediscovered flavours



The old dishes: canederli (dumplings) in broth

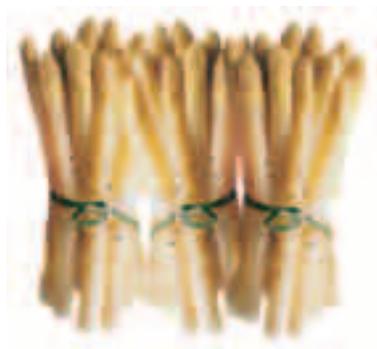


Enjoying the Terra dei Forti

To fully enjoy the Terra dei Forti you must soak up all its traditions with the help of the local people. The occasions to do so are many: in every season visitors and gourmets can enjoy the wine cellars, restaurants, castles, forts and historical villas that are open to the public.

The “Cantico di Primavera”

A wine and food tasting event held in spring whose main protagonist is the white asparagus of Rivoli that is prepared by the best chefs and accompanied by the Pinot Grigio of the Terra dei Forti.



“Storia e sapori tra borghi e castelli”

Wine, history and typical products: these are the leading characters of this event that is held on the third Sunday of May at the Fort of Rivoli, a symbolic location of the Terra dei Forti.





“Uva e dintorni”

During the first week of September, the historical centres of Avio and Sabbionara host the Harvest Festival: this is to celebrate the harvest ritual and the wines of the Terra dei Forti and boasts a wine and food tasting route accompanied by music, games in medieval costumes and other entertaining shows.



The “Buongusto d’Autunno”

This is the autumn appointment with the flavours and beauties of the Terra dei Forti. From mid November to mid December, our chefs conjure up delicious menus based on the Baldo Veronese truffle and the marrone of San Zeno DOP, whilst the valley’s treasure chest is opened so you can enjoy guided tours, recollections of the past and conferences.



See the updated calendar at
www.terradeiforti.it



TERRADEFORTI

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