Do other types of Prosecco really exist in Italy?

scritto da Fabio Piccoli | 20 Febbraio 2024

With an almost monthly frequency in our Country, it reopens the matter of other existing types of sparkling wines that might follow the Prosecco wave of success around the world.

A recent example in this direction is an article published by the authoritative “The Drink Business” with the title “Could Prosecco have competition from Calabrian Frizz?”

I have talked about this topic many times here in Wine Meridian because of two questions that I think it is important to ask ourselves:

Might the Prosecco success opens the

doors to other Italian sparkling wines, in particular Charmat?

Given the Prosecco success's perseverance in the world, could there be in the markets the desire for a sparkling of different "flavor"?

These are two questions tied to one another but not necessarily because while the first implies the perseverance of the Prosecco's success, regardless of any other possible type of Italian Charmat sparkling, in the second case I am referring to markets quotas losses for Prosecco to the advantage of **other sparkling Made in Italy**.

It is clear that, as an Italian, the wish is for a **cohabitation between increasing growth of Prosecco and a rise of other Italian sparkling in the market**.

But, given that this topic has been discussed for many years, perhaps it is time to seriously ask ourselves why Prosecco has actually left little space for **other Italian Charmat wines**.

Certainly, it can be affirmed that Prosecco has educated and is still educating the world to appreciate sparkling wines in various consumption contexts, **not only on celebratory occasions**. And it is doing so at prices that are certainly more affordable than the **noble Champagne** (although I believe this comparison is always a stretch), to the extent that even French consumers have noticed.

However, if this pulling effect of Prosecco has not actually occurred, it is interesting to ask why. In order to understand concretely whether this has not happened due to the **characteristics and strength** of Prosecco and its supply chain or due to the **weaknesses** of the "others".

It is quite obvious that the “strength” of Prosecco, in all its different peculiarities (both in terms of product, brand, and supply chain organization), is undoubtedly the **main and fundamental driver** of its success.

However, the issue of possible “alternatives” to Prosecco may have come back into fashion today in light of apparent initial signs of disenchantment in some markets towards Prosecco.

The Markets:

Despite the fact that Prosecco is still the best-selling Italian PDO abroad, in the period from January to September 2023, the volume decreased by **3.8%** (according to Istat data), but values □□increased by 3.6%, thanks to an average price that rose to **4.56 euros per liter** (+7.7% compared to 2022).

In fact, however, it would seem that “only” North America is the area where Prosecco has lost some of its appeal, given the decline of **16.4%** in volume and **9.1%** in value in the USA and **11.4%** in volume and **15.3%** in value in Canada.

Losses in volume are also seen in other markets such as the **United Kingdom (-6%)**, **Belgium (-10.4%)**, and **Switzerland (-1.4%)**, but they still registered increases in value, further demonstrating that the average positioning of Prosecco in the world grew in 2023, which is good news.

For this reason, I find it difficult to speak of a *real disenchantment with Prosecco*, which I believe will still represent a winning type of sparkling wine in the world for a long time. But it is undeniable that having other types that can enrich our list of successful sparkling wines internationally would be an advantage for our entire wine system.

How is it possible?

It would be easy to respond: “**Avoid doing what we have done up to now**“.

And that is to announce that there would be product x, from territory x, which would be perfect as an “**alternative to Prosecco**“.

Most of these announcements, but we could also say all, have announced “oenological theories” and not products already really ready on the market, with as many marketing and commercial strategies.