

Decanter, Giugno 1998, “Franciacorta. Patricia Guy introduces the pretender to Italy’s sparkling wine throne and an alternative solution to the Millennium celebration drink question”

“What will you be uncorking on December 31st 1999? I bet most of you have said Champagne, but perhaps one or two well-advised Italophiles thought of Franciacorta. Its resemblance to that other famous sparkler has led some to believe that the very name of the zone is an homage to France. Not so! It is medieval in origin, derived from *franchae curtes*, meaning tax-exempt courts.

It was so called because its many abbeys and monasteries did not have to pay tithes to the ruling lords. In 1429, when the Franciacorta was controlled by the Most Serene Republic of Venice, it was the doge himself who set its official boundaries...Franciacorta is starting to take on the role of other sparkling wines, with longer traditions, as the wine for celebrations...to make a comparison between Franciacorta and Champagne is perhaps unfair, because, although they are using the same grape varieties and the same bottle-fermentation method the producers are trying to achieve quite different things... Both enthusiasm and an awareness of the technology that is available is shaping this wines. The innate characters of this wines differ, due to climatic diversity...Franciacorta has a more southerly latitude than Champagne, and the grapes have a much lower level of acidity. I think that the most successful style of Franciacorta brings out a softness and a positive fruit character this creates...and the Pinot Bianco grape, which gives it a slightly spicy character...

** Ricci Curbastro Franciacorta Extra Brut 1993

** Ricci Curbastro Franciacorta Satèn Brut