

# The Prosecco-Making Process Explained

Prosecco is a popular Italian sparkling wine that has captured the hearts of wine enthusiasts worldwide. Originating from the Veneto region in Italy, Prosecco is made primarily from the Glera grape variety.

Unlike Champagne, Prosecco is produced using a different, more straightforward method known as the Charmat-Martinotti method or tank method. In this article, we'll explain the process of making Prosecco in simple terms, focusing on the key steps that contribute to its unique, refreshing character.

**Base Wine Production:** The first step in making Prosecco is to create a base wine. Winemakers harvest Glera grapes, and sometimes other permitted grape varieties, and then press them to extract the juice. The juice is fermented in stainless steel tanks to preserve its fresh, fruity characteristics.

**Blending:** After fermentation, the winemaker blends the base wines, focusing on achieving a balanced and harmonious flavor profile. This stage is crucial in establishing the final taste and quality of the Prosecco.

**Secondary Fermentation:** The Charmat-Martinotti method involves a second fermentation in large, pressurized stainless steel tanks, also known as autoclaves. The winemaker adds sugar and yeast to the blended base wine, triggering a secondary fermentation. As the yeast consumes the sugar, it produces alcohol and carbon dioxide. The carbon dioxide is trapped in the tank, giving the wine its signature bubbles.

**Filtration and Bottling:** After the secondary fermentation is complete, the winemaker filters the wine to remove the yeast and any remaining sediment. The wine is then bottled under pressure to preserve its carbonation.

**Aging:** Unlike Champagne, Prosecco is not typically aged for long periods. It is meant to be enjoyed young and fresh, usually within a few years of production. However, some premium Proseccos, like Prosecco Superiore DOCG, may benefit from a brief period of aging to develop more complex flavors.

The Charmat-Martinotti method used to make Prosecco is a more streamlined and efficient process compared to the traditional method used for Champagne. This approach results in a lighter, fruitier, and more accessible sparkling wine that has become a favorite among wine lovers.