



VINITALY
INTERNATIONAL
Academy

ITALIAN WINE MAESTRO CERTIFICATION COURSE
STUDY GUIDE AND SYLLABUS
2021/22

COURSE DESCRIPTION & INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Italian Wine Maestro program of the Vinitaly International Academy (VIA) certification study program. This course introduces students to the wealth of Italian native grape varieties that are fundamental to understanding Italy's complex and fascinating wines.

The focus on native grapes as well as regional appellations sets this course apart from many others and provides a unique depth of knowledge and understanding. As the complementary base course to VIA's education system, Italian Wine Mastro is not only the preparatory course for the higher level Italian Wine Ambassador qualification but also resonates with the continuous contribution from the evolving VIA world community. Ultimately, the VIA qualifications aim to be the gold standard of Italian Wine Education, under the guidance of its founder Stevie Kim, VIA Chief scientist Prof. Attilio Scienza and supported by the Institutional Advisory board members.

There are currently three levels of certification available through the VIA program: **Italian Wine Maestro, Italian Wine Ambassador and Italian Wine Expert**, the latter being VIA's highest qualification level. The goal of the VIA certifications is to develop a cadre of enthusiasts who are highly knowledgeable about Italian wine, can speak and write about Italian wine with authority, and will be credible representatives of the Vinitaly International Academy. Students who successfully pass this course and wish to further their study may apply to enroll in the rigorous VIA study program held annually in Verona and abroad, wherein students pursue either the Ambassador or Expert credentials.

SCOPE OF THE VIA MAESTRO COURSE

This study guide and syllabus contains a description of the body of knowledge needed to achieve the VIA Italian Wine Maestro certification. It was designed specifically to organize the body of knowledge into a manageable format and set expectations for study and course work. The required text for the course is Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape.

The study topics represent key areas that will be covered in classes or that the student should concentrate on while preparing. Though VIA focuses and believes in a grape variety study approach, ideally, students should come to the Maestro program with a basic understanding of viticulture and wine making techniques, as this will not be covered in the scope of this course. That knowledge, however, is required in order to fully grasp the concepts covered in the VIA course. Prior wine education such as WSET level 2/ CSW/ ISG level 1/ or the Court of Master Sommeliers Introductory Level may be helpful but are not considered as prerequisites.

COURSE STUDY MATERIALS

Required Texts

Stevie Kim, GERALYN Brostrom, Lingzi He, Michele Longo, Michaela Morris, and JC Viens. *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*. Positive Press, 2017.

Additional Useful Resources

www.federdoc.com—additional information from the Federation of DOCs
www.italianwinecentral.com—online resource for details on wine production rules of each denomination, as well as statistics, pronunciation aids, glossaries, etc.

TEST METHODOLOGY AND GRADING CRITERIA

At the end of the Italian Wine Maestro, students will take a written exam consisting of 50 questions in one hour. There will also be a 20 minute tasting component consisting of one white and one red each marked out of 20.

Students who achieve a combined score of 65% or higher will be designated **Italian Wine Maestro**.

Learning Outcomes

Outcome One: The theory of Italian wine and native wine grapes

- 1) Understand and explain the history, geography, wine laws and labelling of Italian wines and styles.
- 2) Describe and understand the key factors that influence the characteristics and differences between Italian native grape varieties.
- 3) Describe and understand the key production factors that influence the characteristics and differences between Regional Italian wine styles including sparkling, dry, fortified & sweet wines.
- 4) Be able to provide accurate, authentic and credible information and advice on Italian wines.

Outcome Two: The analytical tasting of Italian wine

- 1) Identify and assess the characteristics & quality of Italian wines and styles correctly.

REQUIRED STUDY TOPICS

Part One: Introduction and Background Information

A. History, Geography, Wine Laws and Labeling

For the following topics, students:

- are expected to know the name, location in Italy, relative proximity to other regions and correct spelling of all 20 political regions in Italy
- should be able to demonstrate an understanding of Italian wine label terms (riserva, superiore, etc.) and geographic classification terms (crus, subzones & MeGA's)
- should be able to demonstrate an understanding of Italian Wine laws, including EU & Italian nomenclature, quality level requirements and relationships between quality levels (DOCG, DOC, IGP etc.)

B. Ampelology & other grape variety background info

For the following topics, students should be able to:

- define the specific meanings of native, traditional and international grape varieties and what distinguishes one from the other.
- describe and give examples of the ways in which grapes are named in Italy
- describe the concept of anthocyanin profiles

Part Two: Italy's Native Grape Varieties and Wines

A. Grape Groups and Families

General: students are expected to know the difference between a group and a family.

For grape groups and families listed below, students are expected to know the following:

- whether the collection of cultivars is considered a group or a family
- characteristics such as anthocyanin profile, tannin and acidity levels, etc. where listed as noteworthy in Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape
- associated regions & DOPs
- the variety's primary blending partner(s) if used in a blended wine, and the resulting style(s) of wine produced (i.e., dry, sweet, sparkling, etc.)

*(Note: In the list below, the most important groups/families are bolded. The most important members of each group or family are marked with an *asterisk.)*

1. **Greco** (White: *Greco, Greco Bianco)
2. **Lambrusco** (Red: *Lambrusco di Sorbara, *Lambrusco Grasparossa, Lambrusco Maestri, Lambrusco Marani, *Lambrusco Salamino)
3. **Malvasia** (White: *Malvasia Bianca di Candia, *Malvasia Bianca Lunga, *Malvasia del Lazio, Malvasia di Candia Aromatica, Malvasia di Lipari, *Malvasia Istriana; Red: Malvasia di Casorzo, Malvasia di Schierano,

- *Malvasia Nera di Brindisi, *Malvasia Nera di Lecce)
4. **Moscato** (White: *Moscato Bianco, Moscato Giallo, *Moscato di Alessandria/ Zibibbo; Red: Moscato di Scanzo, Moscato Rosa)
 5. **Refosco** (Red: *Refosco dal Peduncolo Rosso)
 6. **Trebbiano** (White: *Trebbiano Abruzzese, Trebbiano Romagnolo, Trebbiano Spoletino, *Trebbiano Toscano)
 7. **Vernaccia** (White: Vernaccia di Oristano, *Vernaccia di San Gimignano; Red: Vernaccia Nera)

B. Major Native Varieties

This section breaks down the Must-know Native and Traditional Varieties section of Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape into two further categories to help the student prioritize his/her study: **most important** grapes and **other important** grapes. **Most important** grapes are those that are significant in both an Italian and global wine context. **Other important** grapes are those with recognized quality potential but with a reputation limited primarily to Italy as of this time.

For every variety, the student is expected to know:

- correct name, spelling and notable synonyms
- color
- associated regions & DOPs

For the most important varieties, the student is also expected to know:

- the variety's primary blending partner(s) if used in a blended wine, and the resulting style(s) of wine produced (i.e., dry, sweet, sparkling, etc.)
- closely related varieties
- characteristics such as anthocyanin profile, tannin and acidity levels, etc. where listed as noteworthy in the Handbook of Native Grapes of Italy

MOST IMPORTANT RED-BERRIED GRAPES:

1. Aglianico
2. Barbera
3. Calabrese/Nero d'Avola
4. Cannonau
5. Corvina
6. Dolcetto
7. Gaglioppo
8. Montepulciano
9. Nebbiolo
10. Negro Amaro
11. Nerello Mascalese
12. Primitivo
13. Sagrantino
14. Sangiovese

Other important native red-berried grapes:

1. Aleatico
2. Brachetto
3. Canaiolo Nero
4. Carignano
5. Cesanese Comune
6. Cesanese d'Affile
7. Ciliegiolo
8. Corvinone
9. Croatina
10. Frappato
11. Freisa
12. Fumin
13. Grignolino
14. Lacrima
15. Lagrein
16. Mammolo
17. Marzemino
18. Molinara
19. Nerello Cappuccio
20. Oseleta
21. Petit Rouge
22. Piediroso
23. Pignolo
24. Rondinella
25. Rossese
26. Ruchè
27. Schioppettino
28. Teroldego
29. Uva di Troia
30. Vespolina

MOST IMPORTANT WHITE-BERRIED GRAPES:

1. Arneis
2. Carricante
3. Catarratto Comune
4. Cortese
5. Fiano
6. Garganega
7. Glera
8. Grillo
9. Pecorino
10. Ribolla Gialla
11. Tocai Friulano
12. Verdicchio
13. Vermentino/Favorita/Pigato

Other important Italian native white grapes:

1. Albana
2. Ansonica/Inzolia
3. Bosco
4. Coda di Volpe Bianca
5. Erbaluce
6. Falanghina
7. Grechetto
8. Nascetta
9. Nuragus
10. Picolit
11. Prié
12. Timorasso

C. Crossings

General: students are expected to know the definition of a crossing.

For each crossing listed here, the student is expected to know:

- alternative names, if any
- color
- regions where found
- crossing of which varieties

1. Albarossa

3. Manzoni Bianco (Incrocio Manzoni 6.0.13)

D. International and Traditional Varieties

General: students are expected to define the differences between international and traditional varieties.

Part Three: Important Denominations in Italy, Organized by Region

While the study of Italy's denominations is not the focus of the VIA course, in order to become an Italian Wine Maestro, Ambassador or Expert on Italian wines, students should know these very well too. Those listed below in bold are the most important.

For every denomination listed here, the student is expected to know:

- correct spelling
- region(s) where the denomination is located
- most important grape variety or varieties associated with the denomination
- what type(s) of wines they make (red, white, sparkling, dessert)

For the most important (those bolded):

- whether their wines are blends, varietals (min. 85%), or 100%

Although background information on denominations is available from a variety of sources, beware of outdated books and websites. Reliable sources include the websites www.federdoc.com and www.italianwinecentral.com.

VALLE D'AOSTA

1. **Valle d'Aosta DOCG**

PIEMONTE

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|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Alta Langa DOCG | 12. Gattinara DOCG |
| 2. Asti DOCG | 13. Gavi DOCG |
| 3. Barbaresco DOCG | 14. Ghemme DOCG |
| 4. Barbera d'Alba DOC | 15. Grignolino d'Asti DOC |
| 5. Barbera d'Asti DOCG | 16. Grignolino del Monferrato |
| 6. Barolo DOCG | Casalese DOC |
| 7. Carema DOC | 17. Langhe DOC |
| 8. Colli Tortonesi DOC | 18. Nizza DOCG |
| 9. Dogliani DOCG | 19. Roero DOCG |
| 10. Erbaluce di Caluso DOCG | 20. Ruché di Castagnole |
| 11. Freisa d'Asti DOC | Monferrato DOCG |

LIGURIA

21. Ormeasco di Pornassio DOC

LOMBARDIA

- 22. **Franciacorta DOCG**
- 23. Lugana DOC (also in Veneto)
- 24. Oltrepò Pavese DOC

- 25. **Sforzato di Valtellina DOCG**
 - 26. Valtellina Rosso DOC
 - 27. **Valtellina Superiore DOCG**
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TRENTINO-ALTO ADIGE

- 28. **Alto Adige/Südtirol DOC**
- 29. Delle Venezie DOC (also in Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia)

- 30. Teroldego Rotaliano DOC
 - 31. **Trento DOC**
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VENETO

- 32. **Amarone della Valpolicella DOCG**
- 33. Bardolino DOC
- 34. Bardolino Superiore DOCG
- 35. **Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco DOCG**
- 36. Lugana DOC (also in Lombardia)
- 37. **Prosecco DOC (also in Friuli-Venezia Giulia)**

- 38. Recioto della Valpolicella DOCG
 - 39. Recioto di Soave DOCG
 - 40. **Soave DOC**
 - 41. **Soave Superiore DOCG**
 - 42. **Valpolicella DOC**
 - 43. **Valpolicella Ripasso DOC**
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FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA

- 44. **Collio Goriziano DOC**
- 45. **Friuli Colli Orientali DOC**
- 46. Friuli Grave DOC
- 47. Friuli Isonzo DOC

- 48. Colli Orientali del Friuli Picolit DOCG
 - 49. **Prosecco DOC** (also in Veneto)
 - 50. Ramandolo DOCG
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EMILIA ROMAGNA

- 51. **Lambrusco di Sorbara DOC**
- 52. **Lambrusco Grasparossa di Castelvetro DOC**

- 53. **Lambrusco Salamino di Santa Croce DOC**
- 54. Romagna Albana DOCG

TOSCANA

- 55. **Bolgheri DOC**
- 56. **Brunello di Montalcino DOCG**
- 57. **Carmignano DOCG**
- 58. **Chianti DOCG (and its sub-zones)**
- 59. **Chianti Classico DOCG**
- 60. Morellino di Scansano DOCG
- 61. **Rosso di Montalcino DOC**

- 62. **Rosso di Montepulciano DOC**
 - 63. Vernaccia di San Gimignano DOCG
 - 64. **Vino Nobile di Montepulciano DOCG**
 - 65. **Vin Santo del Chianti Classico DOC**
 - 66. **Vin Santo del Chianti DOC**
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MARCHE

- 67. **Castelli di Jesi Verdicchio Riserva DOCG**
- 68. Lacrima di Morro d'Alba DOC

- 69. **Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi DOC**
 - 70. **Verdicchio di Matelica DOC**
 - 71. **Verdicchio di Matelica Riserva DOCG**
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ABRUZZO

- 72. **Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo DOC**
- 73. **Montepulciano d'Abruzzo Colline Teramane DOCG**

- 74. **Montepulciano d'Abruzzo DOC**
 - 75. **Trebbiano d'Abruzzo DOC**
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UMBRIA

- 76. **Montefalco Sagrantino DOCG**
 - 77. **Orvieto DOC** (also in Lazio)
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LAZIO

- 78. Cesanese del Piglio DOCG
- 79. Frascati DOC

- 80. Frascati Superiore DOCG
 - 81. **Orvieto DOC** (also in Umbria)
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CAMPANIA

- 82. **Aglianico del Taburno DOCG**
- 83. Falanghina del Sannio DOC
- 84. **Fiano di Avellino DOCG**

- 85. **Greco di Tufo DOCG**
- 86. **Taurasi DOCG**

BASILICATA

- 87. **Aglianico del Vulture DOC**
 - 88. **Aglianico del Vulture Superiore DOCG**
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PUGLIA

- 89. Castel del Monte DOC
 - 90. Gioia del Colle DOC
 - 91. **Primitivo di Manduria DOC**
 - 92. **Salice Salentino DOC**
 - 93. IGP Puglia
 - 94. IGP Salento
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CALABRIA

- 95. **Cirò DOC**
 - 96. Greco di Bianco DOC
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SICILIA

- 97. **Cerasuolo di Vittoria DOCG**
 - 98. **Etna DOC** (Rosso and Bianco)
 - 99. Malvasia delle Lipari DOC
 - 100. **Pantelleria DOC**
 - 101. **Sicilia DOC**
 - 102. IGP Terre Siciliane
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SARDEGNA

- 103. **Cannonau di Sardegna DOC**
- 104. Carignano del Sulcis DOC
- 105. **Vermentino di Gallura DOCG**
- 106. **Vermentino di Sardegna DOC**
- 107. **Vernaccia di Oristano DOC**

ITALIAN WINE MAESTRO CERTIFICATION COURSE
**SESSION MEETING SCHEDULE AND
READING ASSIGNMENTS**

SESSION 1:

INTRODUCTION, FAMILIES AND GROUPS & FOCUS ON ITALIAN SPARKLING WINE

Readings: *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- Grappling with Italian Grapes, pages 36-44.
- Must-know Native and Traditional Varieties from Grape Groups and Families: entries on Vernaccia, Moscato, Lambrusco.
- From Major Individual Grapes: entry on Glera.
- History, pages 12-18.
- Geology, pages 20-21.
- Climate, pages 21-22.
- Italian Wine Classifications, pages 23-33.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Lombardia, pages 515-517.

SESSION 2:

PIEDMONT'S NATIVE GRAPES

Readings: *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Nebbiolo, Nebbiolo Rosé, Croatina, Vespolina, Barbera, Dolcetto, Grignolino, Freisa, Ruchè, Brachetto, Cortese, Arneis, Nascetta, Timorasso, Erbaluce.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Piemonte, pages 508-512.

SESSION 3:

NATIVE GRAPES OF VENETO & VALLE D'AOSTA

Readings: *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Garganega, Corvina, Corvinone, Molinara, Oseleta, Rondinella, Prié, Fumin, Petit Rouge.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Veneto, pages 518-520.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Valle d'Aosta, pages 506-507.

SESSION 4:

NATIVE GRAPES OF FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA & TRENTO-ALTO ADIGE

Readings: *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Grape Groups and Families: entries on Refosco.
- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Tocai Friulano, Ribolla Gialla, Picolit, Schioppettino, Pignolo, Teroldego, Lagrein, Marzemino, Nosiola.
- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Albarossa, Incrocio Bruni 54, Manzoni Bianco.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Friuli-Venezia Giulia, pages 523-525.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Trentino-Alto Adige, pages 521-522.

SESSION 5:

NATIVE GRAPES OF LIGURIA, EMILIA-ROMAGNA, TUSCANY & UMBRIA

Readings: *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Albana, Sangiovese, Canaiolo Nero, Ciliegiolo, Mammolo, Aleatico, Sagrantino, Grechetto.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Liguria, pages 513-514.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Emilia-Romagna, pages 526-527.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Toscana, pages 528-531.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Umbria, pages 532-533.

SESSION 6:

NATIVE GRAPES OF LE MARCHE, MOLISE, ABRUZZO & PUGLIA

Readings: *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Grape Groups and Families: entry on Trebbiano.
- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Verdicchio, Pecorino, Montepulciano, Lacrima, Negro Amaro, Primitivo, Uva di Troia.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Le Marche, pages 534-535.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Abruzzo, pages 540-541.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Molise, pages 542-543.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Puglia, pages 546-547.

SESSION 7:

NATIVE GRAPES OF LAZIO, CAMPANIA, BASILICATA & CALABRIA

Readings: *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Grape Groups and Families: entries on Malvasia, Greco.
- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Cesanese Comune, Cesanese d’Affile, Fiano, Falanghina, Coda di Volpe Bianca, Aglianico, Piediroso, Gaglioppo.
- From A Vinous Giro d’Italia: Lazio, pages 536-539.
- From A Vinous Giro d’Italia: Campania, pages 544-545.
- From A Vinous Giro d’Italia: Basilicata, page 549.
- From A Vinous Giro d’Italia: Calabria, pages 550 - 551.

SESSION 8:

NATIVE GRAPES OF SICILY & SARDEGNA

Readings: *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Catarratto Comune, Grillo, Ansonica/Inzolia, Carricante, Nerello Mascalese, Nerello Cappuccio, Calabrese/Nero d’Avola, Frappato, Vermentino/Favorita/Pigato, Nuragus, Cannonau, Carignano.
- From A Vinous Giro d’Italia: Sicily, pages 552-555.
- From A Vinous Giro d’Italia: Sardegna, pages 556-557.

SESSION 9: EXAM

