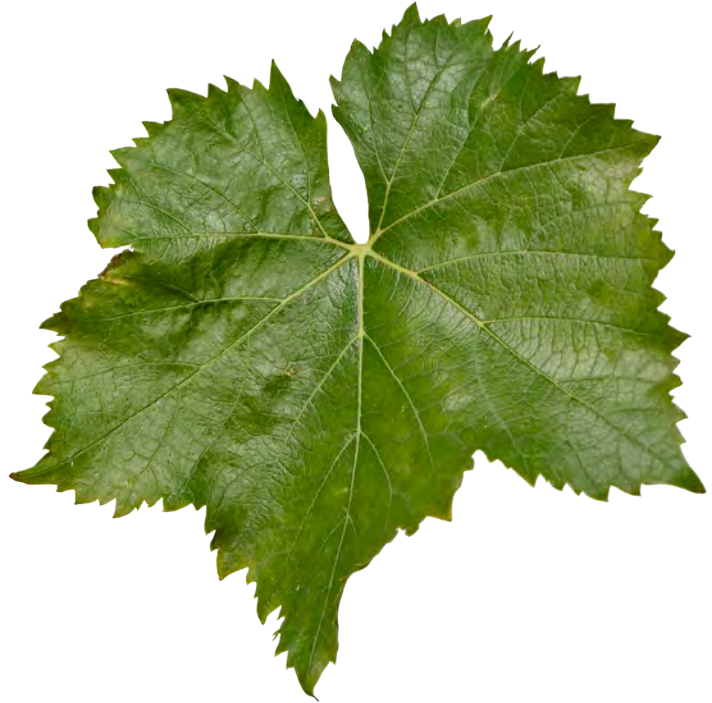


Yellow Muscat



Origin

Muscat originates from an old family of varieties and was already known early on in the Mediterranean area by the Greeks, Phoenicians, and Romans (who called it *Vitis apiana*). This type of grape has a great variety of forms (around two hundred subvarieties). Experts in Italy ascribe the numerous Muscats with white grapes into three large groups: the Muscat of Alexandria (used in many cases for table grapes, raisins, and dessert wines such as Zibibbo in Sicily), White Muscat (with twenty-six types), and Yellow Muscat (with six types). The cultivation of Muscat has been described in Tyrol starting from 1492. Yellow Muscat was mentioned in the nineteenth century, as was “Pfefferer” for the area of Bolzano and Merano, a grape that was also called White-Yellow Muscat. From what point forward it was that the name Yellow Muscat asserted itself cannot be precisely dated. In Italy, Yellow Muscat carries the name Moscato Giallo and is found in that form only in Alto Adige, Trentino, Padua, and the region of Friuli. The variety does not appear to be identical to the Yellow Muscat in Germany and Austria.

Distribution

It is estimated that Muscat is cultivated worldwide on an area of around 100,000 hectares (247,000 acres). How much of this area is used for wine production, though, is not known. White Muscat is represented in Italy with 11,700 hectares (28,900 acres). Thus Italy may well have the largest cultivation area for wine production (added to which are another 1,800 hectares (4,400 acres) for the production of Zibibbo). The variety is planted as Moscato Giallo

in Trentino on 145 hectares (358 acres). Yellow Muscat grows in Alto Adige on 96 hectares (237 acres), the most part of it at Caldaro, in Appiano, and in Cortaccia. The variety has shown an increase, since in 1990 an area of cultivation of only 12 hectares (30 acres) was documented.

Vines

The large, loose, pyramid-shaped bunches often have berries of different sizes. The berries have a plain wax layer and are of a yellowish-green color. Yellow Muscat is distinguished by resistance to rot (no bursting of the berries), a relatively high yield potential, and a fine intensity of aroma. The variety can be planted in warm locations up to an average elevation of 500 meters (1,600 feet) above sea level. It is not suitable for the valley floor. Direct sunshine on the berries fosters the aromatic quality. The maturity is in the late range.

Wine

The wines from Muscat are sensorily defined by tones of nutmeg, sometimes accompanied by citrus aromas and the scent of orange blossoms. The wines have relatively high acidity levels but only a moderate structure. Yellow Muscat is frequently used for the production of dessert wines from dried grapes (straw wine or passito), either as a single varietal or as a component of cuvées. Otherwise, the wine type is dry. The advantageous characteristics of Yellow Muscat as an independent variety earn great esteem.