



**Project for the establishment of
A EUROPEAN NETWORK OF AREAS
PRODUCING
GREEN WINES**

FINAL REPORT

WHY VERDICCHIO

The project for the creation of a **European Network of areas producing green wines** started from the recognition that the *Verdicchio of the Castelli di Jesi* is an important calling card, as well as a key to accessing areas suitable for acting as a pull for all the other tourist food and wine, rural and environmental resources present in the province of Ancona.

The Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi is without a doubt the most well-known wine of our region, representing the largest number of DOC wine, i.e. wine with controlled designation of origin, with 1200 companies operating in the area of the Province of Ancona, and is waiting to obtain the prestigious DOCG quality certification, with DOCT standing for controlled and warranted designation of origin.

Starting from these assumptions, an agreement has been made to develop a far-reaching marketing strategy, based on the collaboration of other European wine-producing areas.

In particular, the southern area of Europe is crossed by a vast strip, which starts on the extreme Western limit of the continent and pushes on to the heart of Mid-Europe, characterised by the presence of wines that offer various traits, but that share in common a particular green hue.

Along this wide strip of land various "green wines" can be found: the Portuguese *Vinho verde*, the Spanish *Verdejo*, the Slovenian *Zélen* and the Marches' *Verdicchio*, a product that plays the role of one among the most important and efficient representatives of our region.



If it is true that different microclimates produce different results, also of the same type of vine, affirming that the *Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi* is the best among the green wines means implicitly recognizing the value of a land that, through the numerous promotional activities proposed, can undoubtedly see improvements in terms of tourism too.

Without fear of being proven wrong, the *Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi* today attracts the attention of professionals and enthusiasts, as the undisputed "king" of the mass of "green wines"! This holds for various reasons: its notable structural characteristics, the indisputable prestige it enjoys among professionals, the important image that it has earned internationally, also in virtue of the numerous awards received over the last few years within the framework of the authoritative International Wine Challenge of London, which considered as a real "World Championship" in the wine field.

Thanks to its privileged position, which is right at the core of the great wines of the "old continent", the Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi has taken on the role of promoter and representative of all the other resources of the territory.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the project is the promotion of the *Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi* as the driving engine of an overall proposal, aimed at promoting tourism in the territory and developed in collaboration with other important European wine-producing areas.

A series of specific aims can be derived from this general objective:

- synergy with European rural and wine-producing areas for developing initiatives linked to the wine-producing, food and wine, tourism and cultural sectors;
- promotion of actions aimed at increasing the value of the territory and the development of tourism linked to local productions;
- promotion of "green wines" as a characteristic element of the areas that are part in the network;
- promotion of exchanges of experience in the production and promotion of wine;
- collaboration in the diffusion of wine culture;
- organization of promotional events with the participation of wine producers;
- support in the realisation of projects linked to the area's development and improvement, in line with European Union indications;
- preparation of projects destined to activate the financial resources provided for international cooperation activities on a European level;
- joint participation in trade fairs concerning wines and food and wine tourism.

ORIGIN OF THE PROJECT

The first phase of the project was based on the establishment of the *European Network of areas producing green wines*, which took place on 13th April 2007 at the *Palazzo del Governo*, i.e. the seat of Ancona's municipal council.

To fully understand the value and the origin of such a result it is necessary to refer to the work that has made it possible to reach this important aim.

In 2004, in Fermo, as part of the programme of the *TIPICITÀ* show, i.e. *the Festival of typical Marches products*, the initiative *Signori in verde* was set up, aimed at celebrating the most famous wine of the region: the *Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi*.

Three years ago, during *Tipicità*, this prestigious "ambassador" of our land met its Spanish equivalent: the *Verdejo*, coming from the vines cultivated on the sunny lands of the high plains of the Meseta. In 2005 the Slovenian *Zélen* was added and, in the 2006 edition, the Portuguese *Vinho Verde* arrived. What three years ago seemed little more than a small oddity has now become established as an out and out event, capable of attracting the interest of gourmets, wine professionals and the specialised trade press. A successful event that, precisely for this reason had to take place where the Verdicchio is produced!

With these premises, in 2006, the Provincial Authority of Ancona and the Chamber of Commerce of Ancona decided to set up a marketing project of the area that, focusing on the Verdicchio, could improve all the food and wine and tourism resources of the area.



The first step of the project became concrete in Valladolid (Spain) at the *INTUR-Xª FERIA INTERNACIONAL DEL TURISMO DE INTERIOR*, where a "declaration of intentions" was signed between the Italian and Spanish institutions, with the aim of creating a European "Network" between the regions producing green wines.

The initiative received considerable attention from the Italian and foreign press. Furthermore, on that occasion, the food and wine of the Province of Ancona were exclusive protagonists, for the entire month of December 2006, of the prestigious provincial Museum of Wine of Peñafiel, representing Italy in the sector of *VINUS MUNDI*, an initiative reserved to the comparison of some important wine-producing areas of the world.

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

These premises have led to the programme of initiatives developed over the course of 2007 and 2008 in the province of Ancona. The structure of each of these activities can be looked at in greater detail:

- **Press conference:** The project was presented to mass media on 12th April in Ancona, at the *Parlamentino* Meeting Room of the Chamber of Commerce. The press conference was organised in collaboration with the press office of the Chamber of Commerce of Ancona. The representatives of the Provincial Authority of Ancona and the Chamber of Commerce of Ancona, together with the sponsor Banca Popolare di Ancona and the project developer, illustrated the press the path that had led to the establishment of the *Network* and presented the initiatives programmed for the following week-end. Beforehand a press file containing all the documentation relating to the project had been prepared. Representatives of local newspapers and regional television networks were present; a collaboration agreement had been defined beforehand with them.
- **Ceremony for the establishment of the Network:** On 13th April 2007, at *Palazzo del Governo* in Ancona, the official ceremony for the establishment of the ***European Network of areas producing green wine*** took place. On this occasion the representatives of the Provincial Authority and the Chamber of Commerce of Ancona signed, with their analogues in Valladolid, the document that confirms the 'birth' of the Network. The ceremony was divided into two moments: the presentation of the project and its signing. The meeting was coordinated by the Coordinator of the project, Mr. Angelo Serri, who illustrated the motivations and presented the signees, who confirmed

that the primary objective of the network was to “..promote and support initiatives linked to the carrying out of promotional programmes in the wine-production, food and wine, tourism and cultural sectors of these territories..”, word for word reported in a fundamental passage of the deed of partnership. Following the presentation of the project was the ceremony of the signing of the Network’s constitutional act. The event was followed by a numerous and qualified public consisting of national and local press journalists, public administrators, workers and technicians in the wine-producing sector and opinion leaders.

- **Tasting of the Verdicchio and Verdejo wines, paired with typical dishes and products of the province of Ancona:** at the establishment ceremony of the Network the Verdicchio and Verdejo wines were tasted and offered alongside some typical dishes of the area. The tasting was arranged by the Hotel School “A. Panzini” of Senigallia, which offered a series of creations, of the sea and land, of regional gastronomic traditions, presented under the form of *finger food*. The wines were suggested by professional sommeliers of A.I.S.- the Italian Association of Sommeliers.
- **Press tour:** From 13th to 15th April a selected group of journalists of the national press, of the tourism and food sectors, participated in an educational tour organised on the occasion of the establishment of the Network. In addition to witnessing the signing ceremony, the group visited some of the important attractions of the province of Ancona, through a route that, other than the regional capital of the Marche, touched the Riviera of the Conero, the Frasassi Caves, the Paper Museum in Fabriano and the Accordion Museum in Castelfidardo. The tour also included a full immersion into the Castelli di Jesi area, where the most exquisite technical part of the programme was carried out, including a visit to a winery, as well as

the professional tasting of 'green hue' wines at the Marche Region's Collection of Wines in Jesi. Of notable interest were the convivial thematic meetings foreseen by the programme, through which it was possible to offer participants an overview of the varied food offered by the area and its interesting culinary matching to Verdicchio. In particular the programme included a gala dinner at the *Fortino Napoleonico* in Portonovo, a "folkloristic" lunch in the centre of Poggio San Marcello, a dinner dedicated to gastronomy in the hinterland of the Province of Ancona, at the country guesthouse "Il Gelso" in Fabriano and the leave-taking lunch, dedicated to the gastronomy of the sea at the "Da Sara" *trattoria* in Sirolo. 12 journalists took part in the tour in total, thereby representing prestigious publications within the tourism and food sectors. The Spanish delegation, consisting of six people among administrators and technicians, also participated in some of the stages. The praise of the guests was unanimous.

- **Gala dinner:** The gala dinner, organised at the restaurant *Fortino Napoleonico* in Portonovo, Ancona, on the theme of "In the sign of green", deserves its own description. It involved tasting of high level wines offered by the Chef Mr. Paolo Antinori, relating to the possible pairing of these wines with, also unusual, seafood, thereby representing an authentic summary of some of the possibilities that can be expressed on the table by the *Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi*. Guests were offered the possibility of tasting the dishes also matched with the Spanish *Verdejo*. The event saw the participation of the journalists present on the tour, the Spanish guests, the representatives of the Provincial Authority of Ancona, the Chamber of Commerce of Ancona and the sponsor the Banca Popolare di Ancona, as well as some Verdicchio producers.
- **Display-Show of Verdicchio:** The Provincial Authority of Ancona and the Chamber of Commerce of Ancona, on hearing the opinion of

the director of *I.M.T. Istituto Marchigiano di Tutela*, i.e. the Marches Institute for the protection of local products, deemed it appropriate to have the best production of the territory represented by wines that have obtained prestigious recognitions and, in particular, those wines that were awarded prizes in 2007 by GamberoRosso-Slowfood (“Tre Bicchieri”, *Three Glasses*) and AIS (“Cinque Grappoli”, *Five clusters*). This was a clear sign for producers, so that they can be stimulated to increase the quality of their products. Following these criteria, the collaboration of the “award-winning” companies was required, six of which sent samples of products used in the tasting activities foreseen in the programme, but also for arranging a show-display that accompanied some moments of the programme, among which the tasting in the Prefecture, the gala dinner at the *Fortino Napoleonico* restaurant and the comparative tasting at the Marche Region’s Wine Collection in Jesi. The Show was completed by the selected Spanish wines of the Valladolid partners.

- **Comparative Professional Tasting:** The tasting activity was organised at the Marche Region’s Wine Collection in Jesi in collaboration with ASSIVIP. Guided by the president of the A.I.S. Marche Otello Renzi and by one of his Spanish colleagues, it was carried out on a selection of the Verdicchio and Verdejo wines of the types: base, reserve and superior. The tasting activity was also extended to a selection of two types of *Zélen* wine, sent by potential Slovenian partners who, although not able to participate in person in the important meeting, considered it appropriate to be present through their products. Journalists of the national press participating in the tour, some journalists from local television, the director of I.M.T. as well as representatives of the Italian and Spanish bodies and organizations involved in the project took part in the tasting.

- **Work meeting:** On the occasion of the event organized at the Regional Wine Collection, the representatives of the Italian and Spanish Institutions held a preparatory work meeting for the elaboration of a series of functional proposals for the development of the Network.

- **Participation in *Tipicità* (8th-10th March 2008, Fermo):**
 1. **Technical work meeting** with the Spanish, Portuguese and Slovenian delegations for the extension of the network;
 2. **Kick off meeting** of the AGRI.LA project (see table) with the delegation of the *Diputacion de Valladolid* with TV and specific interviews concerning the project work management activities on local networks;
 3. **Press conference** on the 2008 project activities and on the possibility for Portugal and Slovenia to join the Network;
 4. **Happy hour Verdicchio:** an aperitif of wines combined with typical products and interviews with local television networks
 5. Crossed professional tasting: A comparison of Verdicchio wines with professional sommeliers and the press;

Within the initiatives described above, the company in charge of the job has worked in a close and constant relation with the offices of the Provincial authorities of Ancona and of the Chamber of Commerce of Ancona and has carried out the following actions:

- Organisation and management of all the preparatory activities for the realization of the event, with particular reference to all the contacts

and connections to the Spanish partners, the organization of the mission to Valladolid and to the preparation of the Protocol of Intention;

- technical and logistical organisation of the event for the establishment of the European Network of the territories producing green wines;
- drawing up and putting into place the constitution act of the network;
- technical and logistical organisation of the tasting of Verdicchio and Verdejo wines matched with typical Marches dishes, that took place at the Prefecture of Ancona;
- organisation of the gala dinner carried out at the *Fortino Napoleonico* restaurant;
- hospitality arranged for the partners of the project and the journalists present on the tour;
- management of contacts with suppliers and local businesses involved in the project in various ways (associations, local authorities, producers, technicians of the sectors, experts,...);
- organisation of the professional tasting of Verdicchio, Verdejo and Zélen wines;
- constant management of contacts with the *Diputacion de Valladolid* and with the other foreign businesses involved in the project;
- coordination of the Press and Public Relations Office, with particular reference to contacts with local, national and sector media, the drawing up of press releases, the collaboration in the organisation of the presentation press conference;
- technical and logistical organisation of the educational tour for representatives of the national press;

- technical and logistical organisation of the visit by the Spanish partners;
- organisation of the Display-Show;
- logistical organisation of the participation in *Tipicità 2008*.

ANALYSIS

The various phases of the project, starting from 2006 to the full development of the Network in 2007-2008, fully reached the objectives set and therefore the success of the initiative from several points of view:

- **Ability to act as a single system:** confirmed by the president of the Chamber of Commerce of Ancona, on the occasion of the presentation of the Network, the first important objective reached thanks to the project lies in the recognition of the practical contribution to the success of the operation made by all those subjects who, with different competences and in various ways, have worked towards the promotion of the territory and its resources. The Chamber of Commerce of Ancona and the Province of Ancona have had the capacity to develop a far-reaching joint strategy that has involved all the players of the supply chain. It is not by chance that a credit institute such as the Banca Popolare di Ancona, that has always paid attention to supporting initiatives for the improvement of the territory, decided to collaborate on the realisation of the project, not just as a simple sponsor, but in the role of *project partner*. Also worth highlighting is the fact that the productive world has actively taken part in the initiatives proposed, through the adherence of the most qualified wine-producing companies of the land, which have

made their products available for carrying out the programme activities of exhibiting and tasting, as well as providing freebies for the guests present. Furthermore, also the most qualified experts of the sector have supplied their contribution from a technical point of view: the director of the I.M.T., the regional delegate of the A.I.S. and the director of ASSIVIP, each for its own competence, have assisted the entrusted company for the planning and realisation of the more exquisitely technical-professional activities included in the programme. Finally, municipal administrations and the people responsible for the attractions of the tour programme (Frasassi caves, the Paper Museum in Fabriano, the International Accordion Museum of Castelfidardo) have contributed actively in achieving the best for the itinerary, offering a welcome of the highest level.

- **Marketing and promotion of the territory:** without a doubt the initiative carried out has represented a moment of notable visibility for the qualified resources of this area, that have had the possibility of enjoying a privileged limelight at a national and international level. The journalists and the guests present visited some of the more interesting locations of the provincial territory with particular emphasis on the vine-growing sector. A significant indicator of the visibility that the territory has received through mass media, at a regional and national level, is represented by the press report, whose extent is difficult to gain in other contexts, if not for national shows with much higher budgets. Regional television and radio networks have also dedicated space and given notable visibility to the event. In particular RAI dedicated wide importance to the show on regional television and the initiative was even mentioned during **Eat parade**, the food programme of TG2 presented by the well-known Italian journalist Bruno Gambacorta. Finally, it should be point out in this respect that one of the journalists present on the tour, as well as the

president of the food club *Baccheide* of Milan, has already proposed its own wealthy associates a wine and food weekend in the Province of Ancona!

- **Economy of costs:** Thanks to the contacts established and consolidated by the company and the cooperation and awareness-raising work started in 2006 on the territory concerned, it has been possible to achieve a co-interest of the same suppliers, who have made their services available, in many cases, at notably reduced costs compared to those usually expected for those services and in some cases even for free! This has allowed the event to be carried out at a very high level considering the budget available for expenses.

- **European Scenario:** The initiative has allowed the territory of the province of Ancona to project itself in wine-growing Europe! What has already been renamed as the "treaty of Ancona", in fact opens its doors to important trans-national cooperation. Not by chance, an important collaboration activity has already been set up with the Spanish partners within the field of a community initiative for rural development. The project, however, is in perfect synergy with the guidelines provided by the European Union on the Adriatic and Mediterranean Euroregion, in that it is based on cooperation and on the exchange of experience between the promoting countries of the Network with the aim of achieving common growth. A project that, however, foresees further gradual expansion through the collaboration with other European Countries that produce green wines, such as, for example, Portugal and Slovenia.

PROSPECTS

In consideration of the results described in the previous point, it is hoped that this project, which has definitively turned out to be an important TERRITORIAL MARKETING PROJECT of European worth, can further be developed and transfer its positive effects on the territory and on its more qualified resources.

With this project the province of Ancona, and in particular the district of the *Castelli di Jesi*, can enjoy the privileged limelight on a national and international level. Through the collaboration and exchange with other European regions, the coordination set up in Ancona represents an unmissable opportunity for improving, alongside the highest quality productions of Verdicchio, all the food and tourism resources of the territory.

In reality, with the signing of the constitution document of the **European Network of green wines**, the Chamber of Commerce and the Provincial Authority of Ancona have found themselves united in a project capable of projecting the whole provincial area in a continental context through a journey that sees the two authorities in the role of protagonists of an internationally relevant coordination activity.

The interest shown by Slovenia and Portugal for the project represents a further stimulus for the promoting organizations in the development of their role as lead partners. The project includes, in fact, a progressive expansion of the network to other European countries that produce green wines with which it will be possible to establish exchanges of knowledge, common promotional programmes and co-marketing actions. Hence this initiative is not merely a declaration of good intentions but, as highlighted by the President of

the Province of Ancona at the moment of signing the treaty, the start of this collaboration “takes on a particular significance, as it happens in concomitance with the 50th anniversary of the signing of the *Treaty of Rome* that represents a fundamental moment on the road to European integration!”.

Collaboration with the Valladolid, regional capital city of Castilla y León, i.e. the largest region in Europe (almost ten times bigger than the Marches), confirms the worth of the project set up and supplies a guarantee for the continuation of the activity hypothesized. Not by chance, during the Ancona initiative, a series of activities with the Spanish partners were hypothesized with the aim of developing the collaboration, such as: the organisation of a Castillian food week and the *Vinus Mundi* show in the territory of the Province of Ancona, the start of a collaboration between the Paper Museum of Fabriano and the Book Museum set up in the province of Valladolid, the exchange of experience between the Museum of Spanish bread and the show *Pane Nostrum* of Senigallia, the collaboration between the activities of the Santiago de Compostela Walking Path and Loreto, for developing synergy in the segment of religious tourism.

The project may thus be able to find new openings and interesting horizons, to trigger the starting up of collaborations also in other sectors. The *format* of the show organized within the territory of the Province of Ancona, is furthermore capable of transforming itself, with opportune adjustments, in a repeated appointment, to be organized on an annual basis, aimed at promoting the typical gastronomy and food tourism, through the efficient vehicle of the *Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi*.

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