



Ribolla Gialla

Synonym: Rabola, Rabilla, Rebolla, Rebula, Ribolla di Rosazzo, Ribuele

Commonly mistaken for: Garganega, Jarbola Bijela, Pignoletto, Prosecco Lungo, Ribolla Verde, Robola

Origin: It was claimed that Pliny the Elder was referring to Ribolla Gialla when he wrote about the variety Pucinum but most commentators are unconvinced. Its current home – Friuli-Venezia-Giulia in north-east Italy is likely to be its birthplace. There is evidence referring to Rabola in Venezia as early as the 1296 and it continues to be referenced in subsequent centuries.

Agronomic and environmental aspects: Best grown on well-drained sites, typically hillsides, to reduce its vigour. Prefers cold climates, well ventilated sites, hilly terrain and good exposure. Less fertile soils are better. Adapts well to most training systems but prefers long cane pruning. Late budburst helps avoid late

spring frosts, medium ripening. Ripens at low baume (9-11.5) so good for lower alcohol wines. Has good natural acidity. Yields are lowish but consistent.

Diseases, pests and disorders: Susceptible to millerandage and botrytis. Sensitive to bunch shatter and sour rot in particularly humid and rainy years. This data is from Italy so it is worth bearing in mind a normal year in Friuli can be around 1500mm annual rainfall, so when Italian data says particularly rainy years they mean extreme wet years.

Description

Growing Tip:

expanded, spidery with a greeny-gold colour

Leaf:

medium-large, almost round or with three slightly roundish lobes. Petiolar sinus generally open. Flat or slightly cupped and hairless on the upper and lower sides of the leaf.

Bunch:

Somewhat small, cylindrical-pyramidal, semi-loose.

Berry:

Medium sized and discoid. Skin bloomy and slightly thick, neutral flavoured pulp.

Vegetation Growth Habit:

semi-erect

Vigour:

medium-high

Average bunch weight:

80-150g (Italy) 200g (Merbein 2017/2018)

Average Bunches per shoot:

1-2 (Italy), 3 (Merbein 2017/2018)

Growth stages:

Time of budburst:

late

Time of flowering:

medium

Time of veraison:

medium

Time of harvest: mid

early-medium

Wine characteristics: Ribolla Giaccla comes in a wide range of styles, which include sparkling, sweet, orange, oaked, aged in clay amphorae. However, the best – most terroir-driven – examples are light bodied, dry, unoaked white wines with crisp acidity. They show bright lemon and orange fruit with a distinct peppery note.

Australian Experience:

Ribolla Gialla is a completely new variety to Australia so this is the first data recorded on the grape and wine. Ribolla Gialla VCR 72 was selected in 2011 and released from quarantine in 2015, the mother rows were planted in 2015 and 2016 on single bi-lateral cordon VSP with 4 foliage wires at the Chalmers Merbein Vineyard in the Murray Darling region.

In the vineyard the Ribolla Gialla VCR 72 clone is low vigour (least vigorous of all the new 10 varieties recently imported by Chalmers) and tends to magnesium deficiency easily. The canes are short but the fruit zone is well shaded. It has high productivity with an average of 3 bunches per shoot. Being an early ripener it attracted the birds and foxes which caused damage to the berries and botrytis very quickly took hold in those areas, even in the dry Murray Darling conditions. Bees were also very attracted to the Ribolla Gialla.

The fruit achieved flavour ripeness at low sugar levels, around 10-11 baume. When flavour tasting for harvest the grapes tasted neutral up to a point then it was obvious when they were ready as the flavour intensified and changed distinctively. The grapes are juicy and pressed easily in the winery with good extraction (75%) from hand-picked grapes in a pneumatic press. The juice did not oxidise readily and stayed fresh and crisp. When juice was chilled pre ferment much of the natural acid dropped out and the must needed to be acidified. Ferment was well behaved. Wine was quite neutral but fresh and benefited from resting on fine lees in stainless steel for about 4 months before bottling.

The finished wine was light bodied, racy and with a lime/lemon nose, also a faint hazelnut or biscuit note on the nose. Perhaps lemon barley cordial aromas. The palate is lean and fresh with a slight hint of subtle tropical fruit like star fruit. The wine was well received by wine trade and consumers. Overall an interesting variety for crisp dry styles. Probably better suited to dry and cool conditions.

Available Clone:



Ribolla Gialla VCR 72

- medium size bunch
- cylindrical, elongated bunch
- semi-loose clusters
- constant and good productivity

Maturity Data: Chalmers Merbein Vineyard

	27/2/17	2/3/17	6/3/17	9/3/17	13/3/17	16/3/17
Ribolla Gialla VCR 72						
Baume	10.0	10.2	11.0	11.0	11.2	10.6
pH	3.47	3.44	3.54	3.552	3.6	3.57
TA	7.7	7.1	7.1	6.5	5.8	6.0

	15/1/18	22/1/18	25/1/18	31/1/18	6/2/18	9/2/18
Ribolla Gialla VCR 72						
Baume	8.2	10.1	10.5	11.1	11.0	11.6
pH	3.21	3.43	3.55	3.53	3.59	3.64
TA			8.2	5.8	6.1	6.5