

Understanding Aglianico del Vulture

Charles Scicolone (November 23, 2016)



Aglianico is a black grape grown in Southern Italy, mainly in Campania and Basilicata. In Basilicata it is made into a wine called Aglianico del Vulture, because the best vineyards are located in and around Mount Vulture, the extinct volcano in the northern area of the province of Potenza. The wine was awarded Denominazione di Origine Controllata (DOC) status in 1971 and the Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita (DOCG) status in 2011. It is the region's only DOCG wine.

[Aglianico](#) [2] is an ancient grape variety. It was first cultivated by the Phoenicians and later brought to Southern Italy by the Greeks 3,000 years ago when they colonized the area. In Italy, Aglianico was first planted near modern day [Pozzuoli](#) [3] and from there it spread to other parts of Campania and then Basilicata. [Pliny the Elder](#) [4] (d. 79 AD) wrote about it in his [Natural History](#) [5].

Wine made from Aglianico was called Falernian and was highly regarded by the Romans. The Aglianico grape was known as Elenico (Italian for Greek) until the 15th Century when it began to be called Aglianico. The name might also come from *vita hellenica*, Latin for Greek wine. The debate goes on. The Aglianico grape prefers volcanic soil and grows at altitudes of 300 to 500 meters. It ripens late and is often one of the last non-dessert grapes to be harvested in Italy being picked from late October to early November. When yields are kept low, the grape will produce intensely flavored wines.



Aglianico del Vulture must be made from 100% Aglianico grapes and must be aged for at least one year. If it is labeled riserva it must be aged for at least two years.

This is a full-bodied wine, tannic, with good acidity and good aging potential. The wine has aromas and flavors of dark fruit with hints of blackberries, plums, and a hint of leather and smoke. My favorite pasta is all' [Amatriciana](#) [6] and I eat it whenever I can, especially when I am in Rome or when Michele makes it at home. It is a perfect combination with Aglianico del Vulture because the robust wine can stand up to the rich flavors of the pork, tomatoes, and cheese. Aglianico del Vulture also goes with lamb and beef stews or on the grill, sharp cheeses and meat [ragu](#) [7].

● FIND IT IN NYC

[ENOTECA DI PAOLO](#) [8]: 200 Grand St. NY, NY, 212 680- 0545

IN VINO VERITAS: 1375 First Ave NY, NY 212 288- 0100

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[2] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aglianico_del_Vulture

[3] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pozzuoli>

[4] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pliny_the_Elder

[5] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_History_\(Pliny\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_History_(Pliny))

[6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amatriciana_sauce

[7] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ragù>

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