

The World's Most Expensive Wine



The Romanée Conti is a legend. It is said that even the French government would be willing to give anything to preserve this heritage brand to Gaul.

Domaine de la Romanée-Conti is located in the Burgundy region and takes its name from one of their own vineyards. For centuries the property was transferred from hand to hand, and only since the mid-nineteenth century is run by the today's company, although it is known that their vineyards already produced wine in the twelfth century.

The name of Romanée comes precisely from the incursion of the Romans in the old Europe. Do not forget that the Italian Julius Caesar showered the French countryside with vineyards, ordering his soldiers to carry vine shoots in their backpacks, to plant during their military campaigns.



The truth is that Romanée Conti is part of the history of France. Conti's name was added to the comune when the prince of the family acquired the property in 1760, deciding that his wines would be exclusively for their own consumption and for friends and family. Then, during the French Revolution, the property was confiscated and later on given back to their owners.

In 1855, when Dr. Jules Lavalie published his classification of the Burgundy vineyards, Romanée-Conti was one of those placed in the highest of five categories, tête de cuvée.

Romanée-Conti was one of the last Burgundy vineyards to be replanted with grafted vines after the phylloxera epidemic struck, despite declining harvests due to declining vigour of the vines. The last vintage of pre-phylloxeric wines was 1945, when the harvest was down to only one-tenth of today's output, or around 2.5 hl/ha, which meant that only 600 bottles were produced in this vintage.

Despite this very small production and continuous consumption of the wine, thousands of bottles of Romanée-Conti 1945 have been traded over the decades, including large-format bottles that were never filled by the domaine in this vintage. It has therefore been concluded that Romanée-Conti 1945 is forged to an unusually high extent.



After the 1945 harvest, the old vines were uprooted, the vineyard left fallow, and replanted in 1947. The first Romanée-Conti vintage produced after the replantation was 1952. Since 1985, Domaine de la Romanée-Conti has practiced organic farming in the vineyard and today the price set for the Romanée-Conti is around 2-3000 euros a bottle. However, in 1996 a set of eight bottles of Romanée-Conti, DRC 1990 was sold for €160,000 (or €20,000 per bottle) at Sotheby's London.

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