



VERDUNO DOC

In-depth briefing

Masterclass "Verduno Pelaverga DOC and the 2025 vintage" — Verduno, 10 September 2026 · Associazione Verduno è Uno. Distributed to participants in the digital press kit, as a complement to what was presented in the room. All scientific, institutional and press sources are listed at the end.

Verduno DOC in brief

Uniqueness, from every point of view. Three pillars tell the story of this wine:

- **the geographic paradox** — a DOC found only in Barolo country: a choice of conviction, not of the market, where Pelaverga Piccolo thrives in the west-side soils that Nebbiolo does not use to best effect;
- **the aromatic paradox** — the intensity of pepper without the weight of a great red;
- **the role** — the counterpoint to Nebbiolo: the same hill, two opposite grammars.

The four points that follow are variations on this single thesis.

- **Science has given the pepper a name:** rotundone, first identified in Verduno DOC in 2021 by CREA-VE in Asti (Petrozziello et al.), is present in Verduno DOC typically at 40–70 ng/l, up to 4 times above the perception threshold (16 ng/l in red wine) — but with real variability between samples (from below threshold up to ~117 ng/l in the literature): the appellation's chemical signature, which is nonetheless grown and defended.
- **DNA confirms the uniqueness:** Pelaverga Piccolo is related neither to Pelaverga Grosso (Mannini et al. 1991) nor — according to the 2020 DNA genealogy analysis (Raimondi, Schneider et al., Scientific Reports) — to any other historic variety of north-west Piedmont: a "genetic orphan", truly a child of Verduno alone.
- **Three clones, a single harvest date:** I-CVT C1, I-CVT 212 and I-CVT 223 (certified in 2016, comparison plot at Fratelli Alessandria in Verduno) bud and ripen together — though véraison falls in different ten-day periods — and differ in vigour, structure and profile; in the vineyard producers combine them with one another and with massal selections from the old vines.
- **Pepper is grown (and vinified):** bunch shading, vigour, water availability, temperatures below 25 °C and the harvest window (45–55 days after véraison) maximise rotundone; in the cellar, extraction in the first days of maceration and moderate oxygenation matter. In Verduno these conditions converge by nature — deep soils, cool exposures, nights ventilated by the Tanaro: the same grape, grown elsewhere, would not give the same pepper.

1. The most recent scientific research on Pelaverga Piccolo and Verduno DOC

1.1 The aroma research line of CREA-VE in Asti (2021 → 2025)

This is today the most important line of research. *Petrozziello M., Espada-Rodríguez L., Bonello F., Aspraudi A., Cravero M.C., Motta S., Panero L., López R. (2021), "Effect of some winemaking factors on rotundone levels of Pelaverga di Verduno wines", European Food Research and Technology 247: 1645–1653* is the study that first identified rotundone in Verduno DOC and quantified its concentration (~40 ng/l, well above the olfactory threshold of 16 ng/l in red wine), directly linking the molecule to the spicy notes found in sensory analysis. The experimental design (2×2×2 factorial: oxygen +4 mg/l vs 0; SO₂ +90 mg/l vs 0; storage 20 °C vs 4 °C) yields an important detail: oxygen produces a statistically significant but small increase in rotundone (means ~47 vs ~44 ng/l; p = 0.011), while SO₂ (p = 0.795) and temperature (p = 0.513) have no effect on the molecule. Note, however, the overall sensory picture: after 3 months in bottle, warm storage and high SO₂ doses significantly penalise some floral and fruity descriptors (violet, clove, raspberry, blackberry, cherry) — a further argument for cool storage, even though the pepper itself holds up.

The AROSE project (CREA-VE Asti) (funded under the Piedmont Rural Development programme 2023–2027, intervention SRG10), whose results were presented by Maurizio Petrozziello in Verduno on 9 September 2025 for the DOC's thirtieth anniversary, characterised Verduno DOC with a multi-instrument approach: a trained sensory panel of 12 experts (ISO 8589 laboratory), gas chromatography-olfactometry and GC-MS (SPME) on wines from several vintages (2015–2017), plus a dedicated method to measure rotundone. In olfactometry, rotundone emerges among the highest-impact compounds (mean intensity 72.3%), alongside β-damascenone (rose), 2-phenylethanol, fruity esters and sotolon; the established sensory profile turns on pepper, violet, rose, raspberry, blackberry, cherry and fresh acidity. The appellation's concentration is given as 40 to 70 ng/l, with a precious nuance: the CREA interpretive scale places 16–20 ng/l as "detectable-moderate", 20–75 as "moderate-high" and above 75 as "high intensity", and the AROSE samples range from a below-threshold wine (~5 ng/l) up to ~70 ng/l, with a literature value for Verduno DOC of around 117 ng/l.

In short: **spice is not an automatic feature of the grape but a variable — of vintage, vineyard and production choices — that producers can govern. It is the decisive point for reading Verduno DOC: the same variety, without the conditions of this territory, does not give these aromas.**

1.2 Other recent studies on the volatile profile

Bonometti et al. (2023), "Volatile components of Pelaverga red wines from Piedmont (Italy)", JSFA Reports (Wiley): an independent study (University of Turin area) on the volatile components of Piedmont's Pelaverga Piccolo wines; a third-party confirmation of the aromatic picture.

1.3 Genetics and ampelography

Raimondi S., Ruffa P., Torello Marinoni D., Schneider A. et al. (2020), "DNA-based genealogy reconstruction of Nebbiolo, Barbera and other ancient grapevine cultivars from northwestern Italy", Scientific Reports 10: in the broadest genealogical reconstruction of north-west Piedmont's varieties, Pelaverga Piccolo turns out to be genetically unrelated to the set of historic varieties analysed: no parent-offspring relationship identified. This finding updates (and effectively downsizes) the old hypothesis of a derivation from "Pignolo albese" that circulated in the 1980s–'90s, and confirms on a molecular basis the independence already shown by Mannini et al. (1991) from Pelaverga Grosso/di Saluzzo ("Cari" in the Turin area). **The grape has no known father or mother.**

On the institutional front: entry in the National Register of Grape Varieties on 24/11/1994 (Official Gazette 295 of 19/12/1994, code 330), DOC status from the Decree of 20/10/1995, certification of the three clones

in 2016 (Official Gazette 155 of 5/7/2016). The Register's nursery data tell the story of the revival: from 3,285 grafted vines in 2014 to almost 14,000 in 2022 (5,250 standard + 7,864 certified + 858 base).

1.4 The international context on rotundone

- *Wood C. et al. (2008), J. Agric. Food Chem.*: the discovery of rotundone as responsible for the pepper note in grapes and wine ("From Wine to Pepper"). Thresholds: 8 ng/l in water, 16 ng/l in red wine; 20–30% of tasters cannot perceive it even at 4,000 ng/l.
- *Caputi et al. 2011, Geffroy et al. 2014–2017, Herderich et al. 2012*: rotundone is documented in Syrah, Duras, Gamay, Malbec, Vespolina, Schioppettino, Grüner Veltliner...; Pelaverga Piccolo (Petrozziello et al. 2021) is the most recent Italian-Piedmontese entry into this family.
- **Recent reviews and applied research** (OENO One "May peppery wines be the spice of life?", IVES Technical Reviews; 2024 studies on the cv. Tardif in hot, dry vintages; AWRI programmes on "peppery Shiraz"): confirm rotundone as a marker of cool climate and its sensitivity to global warming — a direct link to the 2025 vintage theme.

2. The clones of Pelaverga Piccolo: growing and oenological features

There are three certified clones: I-CVT C1, I-CVT 212 and I-CVT 223 (codes 330-001/002/003), all selected by the CNR of Grugliasco (then the Institute of Plant Virology, now the Institute for Sustainable Plant Protection) with the Regional Experimental Wine Centre Tenuta Cannona, and entered in the Register on 8/6/2016 (Official Gazette 155 of 5/7/2016). The certification and comparison plot is in Verduno, at the Fratelli Alessandria estate: Guyot vertical trellis on SO4, 4,000 vines/ha (0.9 × 2.8 m), planted 2009, observed 2011–2013. The material's historic area of origin lies between Verduno, Roddi and La Morra.

Phenology: budbreak (late April — late: a natural guard against spring frosts), flowering (mid-June) and ripening (late September) coincide across the three clones, which are therefore harvested together. *Véraison*, on the other hand, is staggered: early August for C1, mid-August for 223, late August for 212 — three different starts converging on the same harvest date. Susceptibility to botrytis and powdery mildew is "optimal" (low) for all three.

2.1 The three clones compared — official Register data (2011–2013)

Parameter	I-CVT C1	I-CVT 212	I-CVT 223
Vigour	Medium	Moderate	Medium to high
Fertility	Medium	Medium-high	Medium-high
Productivity	Medium, prone to alternate bearing	Medium, not always constant	Medium, not always constant
Véraison	early August	late August	mid-August
Actual fertility (infl./shoot)	1.8	1.9	1.9
Yield per vine (kg)	3.2	3.2	3.1
Bunches per vine	10	13	12
Average bunch weight (g)	306 (medium-large)	256 (small-medium)	256 (small-medium)
Pruning wood (g/vine)	835	705	928
Ravaz index	3.83	4.54	3.34
Must sugars (g/l)	212	218	212

Parameter	I-CVT C1	I-CVT 212	I-CVT 223
pH must	2.98	3.01	3.0
Total acidity (g/l)	8.5	8.8	8.6
Tartaric / malic acid (g/l)	6.6 / 2.86	6.78 / 2.96	6.58 / 2.64
Total wine anthocyanins (mg/l)	44–63	47–67	44–71

Source: official "PELAVERGA PICCOLO N." datasheets for clones I-CVT C1, I-CVT 212, I-CVT 223 (CREA/SNCV, catalogoviti.politicheagricole.it). Shared certification plot: Fratelli Alessandria estate, Verduno.

2.2 The official oenological profiles (from the datasheets' sensory descriptions)

- **I-CVT C1 — the clone of typicity and drinkability:** good alcohol and dry extract, adequate polyphenol content; slightly less intense colour and a less structured wine than 212 and 223, but with a positive panel verdict for the typicity of its spicy aromas (pepper in particular), fresh acidity and balance on the palate. "Typically suited to early drinking".
- **I-CVT 212 — the clone of structure:** excellent oenological aptitude for its high alcohol, good extract and adequate polyphenol composition; statistically significant panel preferences for colour (brilliance), taste and overall judgement; the fruity notes of strawberry and small red fruits are joined by the characteristic pepper. Short ageing is conceivable, given its greater structure and complexity.
- **I-CVT 223 — the complete clone:** excellent chemical composition in both micro-vinifications (2012 and 2013): alcohol, extract, acidity, anthocyanins and flavonoids; the 2012 wine was statistically preferred on every parameter, with a deeper, brilliant ruby than the other clones, pepper, strawberry and small red fruits, balance and complexity with fresh acidity. Here too short ageing is conceivable.

Two little-known details: in the ranking tests (Kramer method) eight candidates were compared (C1, C2, C3, C6, I11, 211, 212, 223) — only three reached certification: in 2012 the panel most appreciated 212 and 223, in 2013 clone 212. And a clarification on the current descriptions of the three clones: the medium-large bunch (306 g) belongs to C1, while 212 and 223 have small-medium bunches (256 g).

2.3 The pre-history of the clones: the 1985–1995 chronology

- **1985:** the Association of Pelaverga Producers of Verduno is founded; correspondence begins with the Veronelli Seminary for the "Pelaverga Project" (presented in 1987, already envisaging the "development of Pelaverga clones").
- **1990:** the Municipality of Verduno authorises the conversion of a plot into an experimental vineyard, entrusted to the agriculture faculties of Turin and Milan: thirty clones/biotypes are planted there to obtain selected material for future vineyards.
- **1992:** Franco Mannini (CNR, Centre for the genetic improvement of the vine) and Turin's agriculture faculty work on the experimental vineyard, comparing the biotypes of Pelaverga di Saluzzo, of Cari di Chieri and of the Pelaverga grown in Verduno and Canavese. Paola Oberto's thesis sums up the outcome: Saluzzo and Cari coincide in ampelographic traits, while the Pelaverga of Verduno and of Canavese are clearly distinct both from each other and from the first two.
- **1994–1995:** entry of the variety in the Register (24/11/1994) and DOC status (Decree of 20/10/1995, Official Gazette 270 of 18/11/1995). The three clones certified in 2016 are the ripe fruit of these thirty years of selection.

3. How producers combine the clones in Verduno's vineyards

What is documented with certainty:

- Fratelli Alessandria (which hosts the certification plot) plants the three clones CVT C1, CVT 212 and CVT 223 together (source: Ian D'Agata, TerroirSense).
- The shared phenology (same budbreak and ripening timing) makes co-planting manageable with a single harvest — the very logic by which the three clones were selected and offered to the territory.
- Alongside the certified clones, massal selection survives: the local tradition of Pelaverga Piccolo "interplanted" among Nebbiolo, Barbera and Dolcetto vines (this is how G.B. Burlotto made his ~1,000 bottles a year after the war), and the replantings begun in 1972 by Castello di Verduno, form a heritage of historic cuttings that many estates still draw on for new plantings.
- Almost all producers vinify it as a single varietal (the production code would allow up to 15% of other non-aromatic Piedmontese black grapes): complexity is therefore built inside the variety — by blending biotypes in the vineyard or lots in the cellar — not outside it.

The memory of names: the DOC was born from the commitment of six producers — Gabriella, Marina and GianCarlo Burlotto, Antonio Brero, Gian Battista Alessandria, Giuseppe Priola — with mayor Renata Salvano and the technical support of Paola Oberto, Luigi Veronelli, Franco Mannini, Francesco Arrigoni, Leonardo Valenti, Andrea Schubert and Lorenzo Corino.

4. Soil, climate and winemaking techniques that enhance the aromas

4.1 The soil picture

- **Laminated Sant'Agata Fossil Marls** (Tortonian, ~8 million years, marine origin): a fine, deep soil (vine-bearing depth ~1.2 m: Bonelli). Texture: 30% clay, 60% silt, 10% sand, with ~25% limestone from marine precipitation and fossil micro-shells; it concentrates the noble substances in the musts while keeping a balance tilted towards elegance, with finesse, freshness and floral notes of violet and rose. Vigour stays high: it is the microclimate, not the soil, that signs the finesse.
- **The Gypsum Vein** (Messinian): from the village ridge down towards the Tanaro, the marls alternate with banks of gypsum crystals, which act as a «natural fertiliser» (Bonelli): greater richness, more water reserve and a vigour that lasts into dry spells; in the glass, clear-cut aromatic herbs and savouriness.
- **Two «worlds»:** the territory of Verduno lives «in an interplay between spice and elegance» between two worlds — detailed in the paragraph below.

Two sides, separated by the ridge where the village sits: two geological worlds, two landscapes, two geographies, two climates. **South-east side (towards the Barolo Langa):** laminated Sant'Agata Marls on a scarp slope — steep gradients, pale soils («white lands»), little altered, lean and drier; a microclimate sheltered by the hill, with westerly winds that dry and warm as they descend, yet with air humidity always higher than the rest of the area thanks to the nearby Tanaro. **West side (towards the Tanaro):** the gypsum zone — Gypsum Vein and Cassano Spinola Conglomerates, with gypsum also beneath the village and at Rocche dell'Olmo — on a dip slope: gentle gradients, soils up to several metres deep, evolved, enriched in clay, more fertile and able to hold water; exposed to the cool, humid winds of the Cuneo plain.

Monvigliero, the textbook case: though on scarp-slope strata and dry white lands, it enjoys a constant air humidity that the vines perceive, altering the berry's contents: hence spice and elegance — Nebbiolo and Pelaverga Piccolo are the varieties most sensitive to this signal.

The grape of two worlds: Pelaverga Piccolo turned even the most fertile plots into vineyard, where Nebbiolo grew too vigorous and struggled to ripen (especially in the historically colder, wetter climates); in the rich, cool soils of the west side it finds spice, freshness and clarity — the grape optimally placed in its environment.

4.2 The climate picture

- **The Tanaro as a thermal regulator:** the Verduno hill (village at 381 m asl) juts out like a peninsula over the valley; the cool night currents generate strong pre-harvest temperature swings that halt aroma degradation and favour the synthesis of rotundone and anthocyanins.
- **"Non-Nebbiolo" exposures:** Pelaverga Piccolo also gives its best facing east and north-west: less scorching sun in the middle of the day, slower ripening, preserved acidity. It is the perfect complement to the geographic paradox (Pelaverga Piccolo in Barolo country takes the slopes Nebbiolo does not love).
- **Föhn episodes** (65 in Piedmont in 2025, Arpa data) and good ventilation contribute to grape health, crucial for a variety harvested in late September.

4.3 The viticulture of rotundone

Factor	Effect on rotundone (sources: CREA-VE/AROSE; international literature)
Ripening timing	It accumulates late; concentration stable 45–55 days after véraison; with overripeness it stays constant or falls → the harvest date must be chosen "on the pepper" too
Bunch exposure	Highest in the shaded sectors and the upper part of the bunch; leaf removal at véraison slashes it → prudent canopy management
Temperature	Berry temperatures above 25 °C penalise it; a sunlit berry is on average ~13 °C warmer than a shaded one
Vigour	Positively correlated with rotundone content (Pelaverga Piccolo's "medium-to-high" vigour works in its favour)
Water availability	Water availability boosts its biosynthesis; severe water stress = less rotundone (Verduno's deep marls buffer drought)
Location in the berry	Almost all in the exocarp (skin)

Every factor in this table finds its ideal condition in Verduno: the deep marls for water availability, the grape's natural vigour, the cool exposures, the Tanaro-ventilated nights. Pepper is grown — and it is grown here.

4.4 Cellar techniques

- **Extraction:** rotundone passes into the wine mainly between day 2 and day 5 of fermentation; by the end, the extracted share is only 5–6% of what is present in the skin. Rosé winemaking (early skin removal) destroys it; maceration enzymes, higher temperatures or longer macerations do NOT increase it.
- **Oxygen:** CREA research (Petrozziello et al. 2021) associated moderate oxygen use with a small but statistically significant rise in rotundone in the finished wines (~47 vs ~44 ng/l; $p = 0.011$, with +4 mg/l of O₂); the hypothesised pathway is the radical oxidation of the precursor α -guaiene.

SO₂ and storage temperature have no effect on rotundone, but warm storage and high SO₂ significantly depress violet, raspberry, blackberry and cherry: the pepper survives, the rest of the bouquet does not.

- **The appellation's prevailing style:** fermentation and ageing in steel (sometimes concrete) to preserve fruit and spice; exceptions: Burlotto (~30% in large used casks of 10+ years), Gian Luca Colombo

(amphora). The production code imposes no minimum ageing or vessel: a freedom producers use with restraint.

In short, the three key factors for rotundone:

canopy management

choice of **harvest timing**

oxygen management during vinification

(Petrozziello, conference of 9/9/2025 – Verduno).

4.5 The boundaries of the production code (the essential numbers)

Item	Production code "Verduno Pelaverga" or "Verduno" (Decree of 20/10/1995, latest am. 2014–2015)
Grape composition	Pelaverga Piccolo min. 85%; up to 15% other non-aromatic black grapes suitable in Piedmont
Zone	The whole commune of Verduno + defined portions of Roddi d'Alba and La Morra; hillside only, up to 500 m asl; valley floors and damp soils prohibited
Viticulture	Vertical trellis with traditional Guyot; new plantings min. 3,300 vines/ha; all forcing prohibited
Yields	9 t/ha (63 hl/ha, grape-to-wine yield max 70%); "vigna" designation: 8.1 t/ha, vineyard at least 7 years old, min. alcohol 11% vol
Wine	Total alcohol min. 11% vol; total acidity min. 4.5 g/l; non-reducing extract min. 18 g/l
Official descriptors	More or less deep ruby with cherry-red or violet reflections; intense, fragrant, fruity nose with a spicy character; dry, fresh, velvety and harmonious palate
Timing and places	Release from 1 March of the following year; vinification within the communes of the broader Barolo zone (Verduno, La Morra, Roddi, Barolo, Castiglione Falletto, Serralunga, Monforte, Novello, Grinzane, Diano, Cherasco); bottling only within the province of Cuneo
Ageing	No minimum time or prescribed vessel: stylistic freedom is written into the production code

Control of the appellation is entrusted to Valoritalia (operational office in Alba).

5. The 2025 vintage: weather data and impact on Pelaverga Piccolo and Verduno DOC

5.1 The numbers of the vintage (Arpa Piemonte)

Period	2025 pattern in Piedmont
Full year	Mean temp. 10.8 °C: ~+1 °C above the 1991–2020 norm; 5th-warmest year since 1958 (after 2022, 2023, 2015, 2024). Rainfall 1,113.8 mm: slight surplus (+8%); 71 rainy days (+31% above average)
Winter–early spring	Mild; for the 3rd consecutive year no significant lowland snow
April	The wettest month of the year: 227 mm regional average (+110% above norm); 73.1 mm average in a single day on 16 April — deep water recharge but downy-mildew pressure to manage
May–August	A slight, well-distributed rainfall deficit (summer rain 219 mm, –7.6%): for the Consorzio a "balanced, not torrid" summer, with rains "at times intense but never harmful"; mean temp. 19.9 °C (+1.4 °C), 5th-warmest in 68 years, minima in 4th place on record
June	Exceptional: +3.4 °C anomaly, the 2nd-warmest June on record; for the first time since 2002 June was the hottest month of the summer → strong phenological advance
July–August	Short heatwaves (3–6 days); peak on 10 August; absolute maximum 38.8 °C (Acqui Terme) — hot, but without the excesses of 2023
September	On the whole favourable to ripening; intense localised storms on 21–22 (Alessandria Apennines, outside the Langhe area)
October–November	Marked rainfall deficit (60–70%) — a dry late-harvest window

Data: Arpa Piemonte regional averages (reports "Il clima in Piemonte – Anno 2025" and "Estate 2025").

5.2 The 2025 harvest and the official rating

- A wet spring + a hot, early summer = accelerated ripening and an early harvest in almost every area (in sharp contrast with 2024, which slipped into October); healthy grapes and modest yields.
- **Official rating by the Piedmont Region / Vignaioli Piemontesi:** overall vintage "eight and a half stars"; by variety: 9 stars for Nebbiolo from Langhe/Roero, Arneis, Favorita, Brachetto; 8.5 stars for Pelaverga, Dolcetto, Cortese, Nascetta, Chardonnay; 8 for Barbera, Moscato, Freisa, Ruché, Vespolina.
- **Regional production picture:** ~2.15 million hl (93% under appellation); the consolidated year-end balance indicates a 7–10% drop on 2024.
- **The official "Vendemmia 2025" release by the Consorzio di Tutela Barolo Barbaresco Alba Langhe e Dogliani** sets out the local picture: budbreak and flowering about two weeks ahead of the historical average (flowering finished by mid-June even on late varieties); harvest starting in mid-August with early varieties and sparkling bases, whites and Dolcetto in the first ten days of September, followed closely by Barbera, and Nebbiolo from late September after the late-August temperature swings; a largely dry and stable September; yields below initial estimates but healthy, balanced grapes, with very high expectations and "extraordinary ageing prospects".

5.3 How to read 2025 in Verduno DOC (keys for the tasting)

From data to reading hypotheses — to be checked in the glass with the 2025 samples:

- **Fruit and readiness:** the hot but not extreme summer (a single 38.8 °C peak, short heatwaves) and the early, healthy harvest lead us to expect a 2025 of full fruit, bright colour and immediate drinkability.

- **The pepper question:** rotundone is heat-sensitive (berries above 25 °C, water stress and aggressive leaf removal penalise it) and accumulates in the final weeks: the scorching June pushed against it, but April's water reserves in the deep marls, the cool exposures, the Tanaro-ventilated September nights and the producers' prudent canopy management worked in its favour. The comparison of 2024 (a cool, wet vintage → high expected spice) vs 2025 (a hot vintage → spice to be measured) is a fascinating tasting exercise.

5.4 The appellation’s official data (Consorzio di Tutela Barolo Barbaresco Alba Langhe e Dogliani, August 2026)

2025 vintage year: 38 hectares; 274,345 bottles produced; 234,248 bottles bottled; 25 producing estates (growers and bottlers).

Year	Hectares	Hectolitres produced	Bottles produced (potential)	Bottled (strip-labelled)
2015	20	1,129	150,533	150,105
2016	21	1,168	155,724	150,928
2017	22	1,137	151,543	157,316
2018	22	1,193	159,040	151,352
2019	25	1,192	158,998	156,153
2020	27	1,350	179,980	153,518
2021	29	1,569	209,160	178,013
2022	32	1,756	234,129	204,874
2023	34	1,837	244,979	234,136
2024	35	1,947	259,593	230,419
2025	38	2,058	274,345	234,248

Source: Consorzio di Tutela Barolo Barbaresco Alba Langhe e Dogliani, "Dati Verduno DOC", August 2026.

A preview comparison between the first halves of 2025 and 2026 confirms the acceleration of demand:

Verduno Pelaverga	Bottles
January–June 2025	154,951
January–June 2026	183,399
Change	+28,448 (+18%)

Stock at 1 July 2026 (Verduno Pelaverga 2025): against a vintage production of 2,058 hl (274,400 bottles), 754 hl remained in stock — 100,473 bottles, or 37% of production.

Growth against the trend. The Consorzio’s official data (reported above) tell of an appellation that has nearly doubled surface area and production in ten years and has grown without interruption since 2019: 2025 posts +5.7% bottles produced just as overall Piedmontese production falls 7–10% on 2024, and as world wine consumption drops to 208 million hectolitres (–2.7% according to the OIV, at its lowest since 1961), with reds in structural decline. The driver is demand: two thirds of the 2025 vintage was already on the market four months after release.

6. The international view: how professionals tell the story of the wine

A summary of the 2025 professional essays by four international authors — Jen Causton (United Kingdom, wine educator), Sebastian Wöll (Germany, sommelier), Martin Reinhofer, Vinícius Santiago (Brazil) — final papers of the Barolo & Barbaresco Academy / Langhe Wine School: four views on how the world already perceives Verduno DOC.

- **Market positioning.** Total agreement among the four authors: Verduno DOC taps **the global trend of light, fresh, moderate-alcohol reds**. Santiago calls it the "**industry darling**" of New York and London sommeliers; the recurring comparisons are lighter Pinot Noir (Reinhofer) and Nerello Mascalese, Schiava, Pousard (Wöll). A precious observation by Wöll: served lightly chilled, Verduno DOC plays the role of rosé in a region not known for rosé.
- **The food angle.** Causton stresses a pairing territory almost off-limits to other reds: the rare **affinity with vegetables** (grilled peppers, aubergines and courgettes, tomato salad, even raw fennel) and its **tolerance of chilli** (spaghetti with garlic, oil and chilli) — in tune with **plant-based** diets and sustainability, and a natural bridge to the **cuisines of the Asian markets** (Japan, Korea, China).
- **The economics of the appellation.** An entry-level price into the **Langhe** and steady income for estates while their Barolo ages in the cellar (Causton); producers have no trouble selling and would like to plant more (Wöll interviews, 2025); growth in the number of bottlers (Reinhofer).
- **The changing climate.** For Marco Buttignol (Castello di Verduno, quoted by Reinhofer) warming **has so far helped Pelaverga Piccolo ripen** on the north-facing slopes; Causton recalls late budbreak as frost protection and the gypsum as a water reserve in droughts — an independent confirmation of the soil-and-climate picture in section 4.

The Italian voices. Diego Morra (WineCouture, 2024):

"Barolo has opened many doors, but Verduno Pelaverga has been able to walk through them with its head held high... for its uniqueness, for its unique and recognisable identity".

Three symbolic facts:

- the appellation accounts for 0.3% of the Consorzio's production;
- within 38 hectares there is an aromatic zonation (east/Sant'Agata more fruit-driven, ridge/gypsum more peppery);
- the grape is suitable throughout Piedmont, but claimable in one DOC only: that of the producers who believed in it even when it was out of fashion.

Main sources

Scientific

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