

Emilia- Romagna

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In a nutshell: Variable but improving.

Main grapes: Sangiovese (red); Trebbiano di Romagna (white).

The wide plains south of the river Po are the source of a great deal of relatively dreary light red **Sangiovese di Romagna** bearing no relation whatever to top- quality Chianti Classico although, interestingly, when the Tuscans analysed the quality of different Sangiovese clones, they found the best were often of Romagnan origin. Some fine reds are now made in Romagna, mainly from Sangiovese planted in the hilly east of the region. **Trebbiano di Romagna** on the other hand tends to be dry, white and neutral. In what can only have been a political move, **Albana di Romagna** was the first white wine anywhere in Italy to be elevated to DOCG status (see [Understanding Italian labels](#)). It varies greatly in both sweetness and quality.

This large region is also home to **Lambrusco**, which in the 1980s was to Italy what Liebfraumilch was to Germany. The larger companies, supplied largely by a handful of giant co- operatives, turned Lambrusco into a sweet, low- alcohol, fizzy drink in virtually any colour which bears little resemblance to wine. Good Lambrusco exists, however, in the form of deep cherry red, lightly fizzy dry wine that can taste absolutely perfect with the porcine dishes of Bologna.

Some favourite producers: Stefano Berti, Leone Conti, Tre Monti, Zerbina.