

THE GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION AND VOCATION FOR QUALITY
OF THE VINEYARDS AND WINE CENTERS IN OLTENIA – ARGUMENTS
FOR THE DESIGN OF WINE TOURISM

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ABSTRACT

With the exception of the high areas of the Oltenia mountains, vines are cultivated in all localities, from the Danube to the Parâng mountains, from the charming Porti de Fier to the legendary Olt river. It is cultivated on small and scattered areas in all the provincial villages, but it is not absent from the eaves of the houses, bringing them a unique architectural charm in the country. The wine plantations concentrated in the vineyards and wine centers are the ones that ensure the production of good quality grapes from which the famous red, white and aromatic wines of superior quality are obtained. The vineyards and wine centers of Oltenia are geographically located in the five counties (Mehedinți, Gorj, Dolj, Olt and Vâlcea) where, under the influence of different environmental conditions, they offer the chance to obtain practically all types and categories of wine.

INTRODUCTION

Oltenia, rich in hills, hills and sands, is a vast amphitheater opening to the Danube, with a sub-Mediterranean climate, which extends to the foothills of the mountains. Oltenia does not lack the reservoirs for capturing the summer climate from long and deep depressions, through which autumn is prolonged into winter, winters are mild and springs are early. Through their generosity and finesse, the wines have made many places in Oltenia famous: Drăgășani, Sâmburești, Segarcea, Banu Mărăcine, Runcu, Bălănești, Oravița, Golul Drâncei, Corabia and many others. Viticulture in Oltenia, with the exception of the Drăgășani vineyard, is an insular one, its viticultural centers being located geographically in all four horizons. The multitude of microclimates, landforms, soil types offer the chance to obtain all types and categories of wines in this province (white, red, rosé, aromatic-dry, demi-dry, sweet and even liqueur wines, sparkling wines and wine distillates stale-brand). All these certainties were demonstrated through scientific works, treatises, monographs (Teodorescu 1964, Cotea 1995; Marinică 2000, Teodorescu & Gheorghită 1970; Popa et al. 2015, Popa 2005, 2007, Teodorescu et al. 2022; Macici 2008, Iorga 1906; Giugea et al. 2020). As the vineyards and wine centers in Oltenia are geographically located near buildings of great tourist interest, we found it appropriate to present the necessary arguments for the opening of a wine road. In

the present work we capture some aspects related to the geographical location and the vocation for quality of the vineyards and wine centers in Oltenia.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to find the scientific data related to the geographical location and the vocation for quality of the vineyards and wine centers in Oltenia, we consulted scientific works, treatises and monographs, recognized for their scientific content, which are found in the Library of the Romanian Academy, the Academy of Agricultural Sciences and Forestry “Gheorghe Ionescu Sisesti” and the Universities of Craiova. We also considered the provisions of the Vine and Wine Law and its application norms in our country.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

On the hills and hills of the Getic plateau are located the vineyards and wine centers of Mehedinți county, which continue in Dolj county, then follow each other on the slopes of the hills in Gorj and Vâlcea counties, extending with those in Olt county, the last being those in Argeș county (where the Getic Plateau ends, at Valea Dâmboviței). The plains of Halânga, Dealul Viilor, Șimian, Poroina, belonging to the Drobeta Turnu Severin Viticultural Center, where brown and reddish-brown forest soils predominate, and in the centers of Vânju Mare – Oravița, Golul Drâncei on light and warm soils, rich in limestone, constituted from alluvial gravels have an obvious vocation for quality (Tab. 1).

Table 1

The geographical location and vocation for quality of vineyards and wine centers in Mehedinți county

Vineyard / Winery Center	N latitude	Altitude (m)	The vine varieties recommended to be cultivated	The types of wine that can be obtained
Drobeta Turnu Severin	44°38'	116	Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Pinot noir, Fetească neagră, Syrah, Negru de Drăgășani, Novac, Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Tămăioasă românească, Fetească regală, Riesling italian	Mainly red and aromatic wines, secondarily high quality white wines.
Vânju Mare Orevița	44°25'	86		
Golul Drâncii Oprișor	44°18'	130		
Corcova	44°35'	150		

Compositional characteristics and sensory properties of wines

The red wines of Mehedinți captivate with their imposing appearance, their intense color, their exciting characteristics of aroma and bouquet, as well as their taste of great nobility where robustness and firmness meet with roundness and softness. In white wines, the distinctive features are finesse, harmonious composition and aromatic character.

The last wine-growing center in Mehedinți is Crasna, located in the northern part of the hilly area Plaiurile de vii Crasna Tg. Jiu -Scoarța, Runcu, Bălănești, Drăgotești, Bustuchin and Stejar, on the brown forest and clay-clay soils stand out for the special quality of their white wines (Tab. 2)

Table 2

The geographical location and the vocation for quality of the wine centers
in Gorj county

Vineyard / Winery Center	N latitude	Altitude (m)	The vine varieties recommended to be cultivated	The types of wine that can be obtained
Crasna	247	47°09'45"	Chardonnay, Fetească albă, Fetească regală, Riesling italian, Tămâioasă românească, Muscat Ottonel, Sauvignon, Negru de Drăgășani, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Novac	Mainly white and aromatic wines, secondarily red wines
Runcu	367	45°07'35"		
Târgu Jiu – Băresești	420	45°54'38"		
Scoarța				
Bălănești	331	45°05'04"		
Drăgotești	172	44°49'18"		
Bustuchin	328	44°54'08"		
Stejar	232	44°45'57"		

Compositional characteristics and sensory properties of wines

The white wines of Italian Riesling, Sauvignon, Muscat Ottonel, Feteasca albă impress with their fine and persistent aroma and especially with their lingering refreshing and pleasant taste. Among the red wines, the Merlot ones stand out with their fruity tonality and aroma similar to that of forest fruits.

A little further north of Drăgășani, on the left bank of Olt, in a similarly hilly land, lies the Sâmburești (Olt) vineyard, located on forest-reddish soils, present in the famous Bolindețu and Bolovanu hills, where the better red wines (Tab. 3).

Table 3

The geographical location and vocation for quality of the Sâmburești vineyard and the viticultural centers in Olt county

Vineyard / Winery Center	N latitude	Altitude (m)	The vine varieties recommended to be cultivated	The types of wine that can be obtained
Sâmburești with the centers: Sâmburești and Dobroteasa	44°32'	285	Cabernet Sauvignon, Fetească neagră, Novac, Merlot, Negru de Drăgășani, Pinot noir, Syrah, Chardonnay, Fetească regală, Riesling italian, Sauvignon, Pinot gris,	Mainly red wines and secondarily white wines.

Compositional characteristics and sensory properties of wines

Sâmburești red wines, especially Cabernet Sauvignon, are distinguished from other wines (from other areas of the country) by an extra vigor, by a robust character and firmness, by their great personality given by the compounds that participate in the formation of the color, aroma and taste. They are wines that appeal to all the senses: sight, smell, taste, and that demand to be savored, being hard to forget. The white wines are extractive and full-bodied, the Sauvignon wines have a very pleasant, discreet and soft aroma, reminiscent of the scent of elderflowers. The

Chardonnay wines have a distinct finesse and a harmonious composition, being velvety, tender, their aroma reminiscent of freshly cut hay.

The great wine-growing region of Drăgășani, the last one from the northern part of Oltenia, where Banii Craiovești and Frații Buzești had their vineyards in ancient times, covers, over a length of over 60 km, the slopes of three rows of hills, parallel to Olt (Dealul Olt, Călina, Verdea), located on brown and reddish-brown forest soils, some medium podzolic, rich in limestone, located on alluvial shale. The recognized fame of these areas is ensured by the exceptional quality of the de Drăgășani and Sauvignon aromatic wines (Tab. 4)

Table 4

The geographical location and vocation for quality of the Drăgășani vineyard and its wine-growing centers

Vineyard / Winery Center	N latitude	Altitude (m)	The vine varieties recommended to be cultivated	The types of wine that can be obtained
Drăgășani with the centers: Drăgășani, Gușoieni, Măciuca, Jiblea	24°18'	182	Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot noir, Syrah, Fetească neagră, Novac, Crâmpoșie, Negru de Drăgășani, Tămâioasă românească, Chardonnay, Pinot gris, Riesling italian, Sauvignon, Novac, Fetească neagră, Muscat Ottonel, Fetească regală	Top quality red and aromatic wines. Top quality dry, semi-dry and sweet white wines. Raw material wines for sparkling wines.

Compositional characteristics and sensory properties of wines

At the top of the hierarchy of Drăgășani wines are those of Sauvignon and Tămâioasă românească. Dry or sweet Sauvignon wine is characterized by great finesse conferred by a very pleasant, discreet and soft aroma, reminiscent of wildflowers and vine pollen. It has a perfectly balanced taste, where alcohol and acidity harmonize in the happiest way. The Tămâioasă românească wine is placed in an absolutely honorable position, it is extremely fine, its aroma is reminiscent of acacia flowers or sweet rose petals. The wines from Crâmpoșie are supple, with an obvious freshness, only in Drăgășani are they so typical. They can be a valuable raw material for sparkling wines. The red wines of Pinot noir, Negru de Drăgășani and Novac impress with their pleasant aromas, velvety taste and bright color.

On the hills in the northern part of Dolj county, the vineyards from Banu Mărăcine, Brădești, Brabova, with the vineyards around Craiova and those on the hills of Jiului and Amaradia, on the forest-reddish and brown soils, stand out. This vineyard offers good quality red and aromatic wines (Tab. 5).

Table 5

The geographical location and vocation for quality of the Banu Măracine -Dolj vineyard

Vineyard / Winery Center	N latitude	Altitude (m)	The vine varieties recommended to be cultivated	The types of wine that can be obtained
Banu Măracine with the centers: Banu Măracine, Brădești, Brabova	44°19'	195	Cabernet sauvignon, Cabernet franc, Merlot, Pinot noir, Negru de Drăgășani, Novac, Syrah, Tămâioasă românească, Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Fetească regală, Riesling italian	Mainly high quality red and aromatic wines. Secondary white wines of superior quality.

Compositional characteristics and sensory properties of wines

Red wines are distinguished by a subtle finesse, full of temperament, the tonality and intensity of the color give them an authentic personality. By aging, it acquires a typical custard of the great red wines. The Tămâioasă românească, Sauvignon and Chardonnay wines stand out with their fine and discreet aromas, with a special compositional balance. They are great wines, especially when they also have a small sugar content.

In the southern part of Oltenia, on sandy-calcareous soils, the Segarcea vineyard is located with the Drănic, Calopăr, Valea Stanciului plains, here exceptional red wines of Pinot noir, Cabernet Sauvignon and aromatic Tămâioasă românească and Tămâioasă roză, noted especially at the numerous large international wine competitions (Tab. 6).

Table 6

The geographical location and vocation for quality of the Segarcea-Dolj vineyard

Vineyard / Winery Center	N latitude	Altitude (m)	The vine varieties recommended to be cultivated	The types of wine that can be obtained
Segarcea with centers: Segarcea Drănic, Calopăr, Valea Stanciului	44°05'	145	Merlot, Pinot noir, Fetească neagră, Syrah, Tămâioasă românească, Tămâioasă roză, Negru de Drăgășani, Novac, Chardonnay, Pinot gris, Viognier	High quality red and aromatic wines. Second, quality white wines.

Compositional characteristics and sensory properties of wines

Pinot noir red wines are extremely fine, generous, have an impressive shade of color, are rich in glycerol and alcohol, by aging in glass they acquire beautiful and intense aromas similar to those of forest fruits. Those of Cabernet Sauvignon impress with their coloring intensity and a beautiful shade of color. They are extractive, full of taste, have a high glycerol content that gives them an obvious softness. After aging (1-2 years), they surprise with the taste of iodine – characteristic of great red wines. It can be said that the red wines here cannot be imitated

anywhere else. The wines of Tămâioasă roză impress with their finesse, with a seductive aroma reminiscent of rose petals for sweetness. They are velvety, have an unmistakable color, similar to that of a partridge's eyes (pink tinted with yellow), being part of the rare wines that cannot be forgotten.

CONCLUSIONS

Oltenia has preserved more vestiges and testimonies of antiquity and continuity in economic and social activity than the provinces south and east of the Carpathians, as a result of its central position in the Dacian state, the Roman colonization that was more intense in this region and of its more protected position, i.e. between the bend of the Carpathians, the Danube and the Olt, which defended it better from the incessant invasions that perpetrated the territories of Moldavia and Wallachia during the first millennium of our era;

The geographical location, the landforms, the hydrographic network, the specific topoclimates with the Mediterranean influence, the multitude of soil types of Oltenia are decisive factors of the location of the wine plantations in the vineyards and wine centers of Oltenia and especially of their vocation for quality;

The viticulture of Oltenia is an insular one, the vineyards and wine centers are found in all compass point, on ridges and hills, near the old and famous monasteries, protected nature reserves, parks and botanical gardens, numerous edifices-monuments of nature, caves and salt pans, important hydrotechnical constructions or museums of national interest, as a consequence all these and red, aromatic and white wines, already well recognized as being part of the class of great wines, can have a common path.

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