



lonely planet

Friuli Venezia Giulia

Expert
recommendations
Local secrets
Best planning
advice

Food & Wine

The cuisine of Friuli Venezia Giulia is the lovechild of Venetian, Slavic and Central European flavours, and its culinary traditions are fiercely protected and flaunted. From the mountain specialities of Carnia to the lagoon specialities of the Adriatic, each corner of the region offers its own distinct culinary experiences. Many recipes have humble origins, created in times when necessity demanded the use of leftovers and the storage of food for the winter. The result is simple but friendly. Of course, there's nothing meagre about the region's wines. Here, 20,000 hectares of vines claim no less than 10 DOC and four DOCG areas. From the vino and salumi (cured meats), to the cheeses and the honey, the common factor in Friuli is excellence.

Coffee & Grappa

The people of Trieste are the largest consumers of coffee in Italy, guzzling up to twice the national per-capita average of 5kg. In this town, coffee is culture and its history is indelibly tied to its timeless cafes, customary meeting places for literary conversations. How you choose to sip your *caffè* will depend on a number of (at times highly idiosyncratic) factors: serving size, roast, brewing technique, whether you want your brew 'corrected' (a splash of grappa, perhaps?), right down to the shape and material of the cup. Since the 19th century, coffee has arrived here in the form of raw beans, then roasted at the plethora of *torrefazioni* (coffee roasters) scattered across the region.

In Friuli, grappa is called *sgnape* and its tradition runs parallel to that of wine. Pomace brandy was already being distilled at the time of the barbarian invasions, the practice possibly introduced by the Burgundians. Nonino is one of the most famous and historic distilleries in the region (and in Italy), founded in 1897 and still in operation. It was the first company to market grappa in eye-catching bottles, leading to its widespread popularity. Today, numerous Friulian distilleries produce excellent grappas using the pomace of indigenous and non-indigenous grapes.

It's believed that grappa was first produced in the Friulian town of Cividale, in the 6th century CE.