

# Vodopivec



Each bottle of Paolo Vodopivec's wines that we open solidifies something we sensed in our very first encounters: there is nothing on earth quite like these. It's not just that the wines are outstanding – they indisputably are – they seem to operate on their own existential plane. Through his own admission, Paolo strives to efface the grower's ego and render wines that are faithful translations of Karst earth. It's not as if Paolo is new to the scene. His father worked the same brutal, wind-battered terrain in the Carso, and Paolo achieved early notoriety for making heavily macerated wines long before skin contact became the phenomenon it is today. However, those who know only his early-2000's vintages and feel they have a handle on his style should consider an updated review.

Vodopivec has found, over time, that Vitovska's capacity for mineral expression can be obscured through an abundance of tannin, and the newfound gentleness in his wines allows them to speak with shocking clarity. Yes, all the wines are skin-macerated, but these are adamantly not "orange wines." Paolo employs skin contact because it best expresses the limestone into which his Vitvoska plumbs, and because it better allows him to work without the manipulations of temperature control, outside yeasts, sulfur, and filtration, which to him are anathema. Vodopivec has also embraced, with total confidence, the buried amphora as an ideal vessel for fermenting his cherished Vitovska. There is no stainless steel in Paolo's cellar, no high-tech pneumatic press, no method of manipulating temperature. The man doesn't even like having his photograph taken. But, again, these are technical details—details which may satisfy our craving for authenticity and rectitude, but things which feel a bit trite in the face of such singular, awe-inspiring wines.

## Viticulture:

- **Farming:** Practicing organic with some biodynamic practices
- **Treatments:** Copper sulfate only
- **Ploughing:** Annual ploughing to maintain vineyard health
- **Soils:** Pure Karst limestone with naturally occurring iron-rich topsoils and significant flint deposits
- **Vines:** Trained in Alberello (Gobelet) and planted at 10,500 vines/ha, vines average 20 years old.
- **Yields:** Controlled through severe winter pruning and debudding
- **Harvest:** Entirely manual, usually in late September
- **Purchasing:** Entirely estate fruit



## Vinification:

- **Fermentation:** After total destemming, crop ferments spontaneously on its skins in buried, 14-25 hl Georgian Terracotta amphoarae. Cuvaison lasts c. 6 months. Origine cuvée ferments in 30-hl tronconic Slavonian oak tini for c. 2 weeks.
- **Extraction:** Wines see c. 4 punchdowns per day during fermentation, no bâtonnage during élevage
- **Chaptalization and Acidification:** None
- **Pressing:** Vertical basket press
- **Malolactic Fermentation:** Spontaneous, following with alcoholic fermentation

## Aging:

- **Élevage:** 24-36 months in 30-hl, neutral Slavonian oak botti
- **Lees:** Wines remain on their fine lees during élevage.
- **Fining and Filtration:** Wines are unfinned and unfiltered.
- **Sulfur:** Applied only at bottling, with c. 30-35 mg/l total sulfur

# Vodopivec



## Vitovska Origine



### At a Glance:

- **Appellation:** IGP Venezia-Giulia
- **Uvaggio:** Vitovska (100%)
- **Average Annual Production:** 3,800 bottles
- **Average Alcohol by Volume:** 12.5%
- **Average Residual Sugar:** <5 g/l
- **Average Total Acidity:**

### In The Vineyard:

- **Parcel Names, Slopes, and Locations:** From gently sloped south-southwest facing parcels surrounding the town of Coludruzza/Koludrovca
- **Soil Types and Compositions:** Iron-rich red limestone endemic to the Carso/Karst with significant flint deposits
- **Vine Age, Training, and Density:** Trained in Albarello (Go-belet) and planted at 10,500 vines/ha, vines average 20 years old.
- **Average Yields:** 35-50 hl/ha
- **Average Harvest Date and Type:** Exclusively manual, usually in late September

### In The Cellar:

- **Fermentation:** After total destemming, crop ferments spontaneously on its skins in open-top, Slavonian oak tini without temperature control. Cuvaison lasts c. 2-4 weeks.
- **Pressing:** Vertical basket press
- **Time on Lees:** Wine remains on fine lees during *élevage*
- **Malolactic Fermentation:** Spontaneous, following alcoholic fermentation
- **Élevage:** 36 months in 30-hl neutral Slavonian oak casks
- **Press Wine:** Blended after pressing
- **Fining and Filtration:** Unfined, unfiltered
- **Sulfur:** Applied only at bottling, with c. 30-35 mg/l total sulfur

### In The Glass:

The one wine in Paolo's cellar that doesn't spend time in amphorae, Origine is fermented in open-top wooden casks, and spends three years in large Slavonian botti before bottling. What it perhaps lacks in textural *je ne sais quoi* compared to its terra-cotta-aged brethren it makes up for in a stricter, more vividly limestone-driven mineral character—almost a Chablis-like saltiness and snap. There is an arresting purity here, reminiscent of pure mountain water, and the very long finish recedes slowly and elegantly, framed by a note of dried honey and a persistent whisper of chalk.

# Vodopivec



## Vitovska



AF | VITOVSKA 2012 | vodopivec

### At a Glance:

- **Appellation:** IGP Venezia-Giulia
- **Uvaggio:** Vitovska (100%)
- **Average Annual Production:** 7,000 bottles
- **Average Alcohol by Volume:** 12.5%
- **Average Residual Sugar:** <5 g/l
- **Average Total Acidity:**

### In The Vineyard:

- **Parcel Names, Slopes, and Locations:** From gently sloped south-southwest facing parcels surrounding the town of Coludruzza/Koludrovca
- **Soil Types and Compositions:** Iron-rich red limestone endemic to the Carso/Karst with significant flint deposits
- **Vine Age, Training, and Density:** Trained in Albarello (Go-belet) and planted at 10,500 vines/ha, vines average 20 years old.
- **Average Yields:** 35-50 hl/ha
- **Average Harvest Date and Type:** Exclusively manual, usually in late September

### In The Cellar:

- **Fermentation:** After total destemming, crop ferments spontaneously on its skins in buried, 14-25 hl Georgian terracotta amphorae. Cuvaison lasts c. 6 months.
- **Pressing:** Vertical basket press
- **Time on Lees:** Wine remains on fine lees during *élevage*
- **Malolactic Fermentation:** Spontaneous, following alcoholic fermentation
- **Élevage:** 30 months in 30-hl neutral Slavonian oak casks
- **Press Wine:** Blended after pressing
- **Fining and Filtration:** Unfined, unfiltered
- **Sulfur:** Applied only at bottling, with c. 30-35 mg/l total sulfur

### In The Glass:

Fermented in amphorae and aged two and a half years in botti, Vodopivec's Vitovska exemplifies the murmuring, layered beauty of his style. Subtle, deeply stony, and caressing on the palate, it whispers to the taster and invites contemplation as it unfolds slowly and gracefully across the palate. It seems to occupy its own aesthetic space, a pure exploration of cool-toned texture, Rothko-like in its single-minded yet comfortingly enveloping character.

# Vodopivec



## Vitovska T



### At a Glance:

- **Appellation:** IGP Venezia-Giulia
- **Uvaggio:** Vitovska (100%)
- **Average Annual Production:**
- **Average Alcohol by Volume:** 12.5%
- **Average Residual Sugar:** <5 g/l
- **Average Total Acidity:**

### In The Vineyard:

- **Parcel Names, Slopes, and Locations:** From a single, gently sloped south-southwest facing parcel near the town of Coludruzza/Koludrovca
- **Soil Types and Compositions:** Iron-rich red limestone endemic to the Carso/Karst with significant flint deposits
- **Vine Age, Training, and Density:** Trained in Albarello (Go-belet) and planted at 10,500 vines/ha, vines average 20 years old.
- **Average Yields:** 35-50 hl/ha
- **Average Harvest Date and Type:** Exclusively manual, usually in late September

### In The Cellar:

- **Fermentation:** After partial destemming, crop ferments spontaneously on its skins in buried, 8-hl Georgian terracotta amphorae. Cuvaison lasts c. 6 months.
- **Pressing:** Vertical basket press
- **Time on Lees:** Wine remains on fine lees during élevage
- **Malolactic Fermentation:** Spontaneous, following alcoholic fermentation
- **Élevage:** 30 months in 8-hl Georgian terracotta amphorae, with rackings when necessary
- **Press Wine:** Blended after pressing
- **Fining and Filtration:** Unfined, unfiltered
- **Sulfur:** Applied only at bottling, with c. 30-35 mg/l total sulfur

### In The Glass:

An exploration of the full capabilities of the amphora as an aging vessel, Vodopivec's "T" is pure Vitovska that is both fermented and aged in amphorae. Compared to the Vitovska, "T" has an immediately more intense and expressive nose, yet still with a remarkably reflective and introspective core. Subtle notes of spice, mustard seed, and dried herbs frame the palate, which displays greater concentration, power, and vibrancy than the two wines above.

# Vodopivec



## Vitovska Solo



### At a Glance:

- **Appellation:** IGP Venezia-Giulia
- **Uvaggio:** Vitovska (100%)
- **Average Annual Production:**
- **Average Alcohol by Volume:** 12.5%
- **Average Residual Sugar:** <5 g/l
- **Average Total Acidity:**

### In The Vineyard:

- **Parcel Names, Slopes, and Locations:** From a single-south-southwest facing 1.3-ha parcel near the town of Coludruzza/Koludrovca
- **Soil Types and Compositions:** Iron-rich red limestone with nearly no topsoil
- **Vine Age, Training, and Density:** Trained in Albarello (Go-belet) and planted at 10,500 vines/ha, vines average 20 years old.
- **Average Yields:** 35-50 hl/ha
- **Average Harvest Date and Type:** Exclusively manual, usually in late September

### In The Cellar:

- **Fermentation:** After total destemming, crop ferments spontaneously on its skins in buried, 14-25 hl Georgian terracotta amphoarae. Cuvaison lasts c. 6 months.
- **Pressing:** Vertical basket press
- **Time on Lees:** Wine remains on fine lees during *élevage*
- **Malolactic Fermentation:** Spontaneous, following alcoholic fermentation
- **Élevage:** 30 months in 30-hl neutral Slavonian oak casks
- **Press Wine:** Blended after pressing
- **Fining and Filtration:** Unfined, unfiltered
- **Sulfur:** Applied only at bottling, with c. 30-35 mg/l total sulfur

### In The Glass:

Paolo produces “Solo” from what he considers his greatest vineyard, a 1.3-hectare parcel of pure limestone. Aged like the basic Vitovska, it comes across as almost weightless on the palate, an offering of pure texture and pure stone divorced from the burden of viscosity or alcohol. The finish is saline and incredibly long, fading from perception as slowly and as focused as light receding at the rear end of a tunnel.