

PECORINO TOSCANO DOP

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PROSCIUTTO TOSCANO DOP



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# **Your passion for excellence.**

Cut & Share is an information and awareness-raising campaign on Protected Designation of Origin products:  
Pecorino Toscano DOP and Prosciutto Toscano DOP.

This publication intends to promote knowledge of the products and their territories  
by providing useful elements to recognize their excellence.

# DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN PRODUCTS

Designation of Origin products represents such a great heritage for Europe thanks to their consolidated tradition of production, unfailing high-quality standards, indissoluble bond with the territory from which they come and, without doubt, also the original socio-cultural and entrepreneurial context they belong to.

Information, recognition, promotion, protection, and supervision of agri-food products with Designation of Origin are fundamental aspects for preserving and continuing to enhance European culture.

All designations have great value as they are original and unique.

Alongside the culture, tradition and unique characteristics of the areas where each Designation of Origin product is made, a key role is also played by man and human creativity, which can help vitalise and drive the economy.

Therefore, protecting and promoting these products, and spreading information about them, means acting in a socially and culturally responsible way towards a priceless heritage that is not just European, but belongs to the entire world.

To protect the specificity of certain foods the European Union has launched a set of rules and created two labels: DOP (PDO - Protected Designation of Origin) and IGP (PGI - Protected Geographical Indication) with a view to safeguarding both the name of each labelled product and its specific nature and characteristics from imitation and abuse, besides supporting production and helping consumer choice, with regard to quality agricultural products and foodstuffs, by providing information and guarantees about their principal features and qualities.



# PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN - PDO (DOP)

A European label of origin assigned to those foods whose peculiar qualitative characteristics depend essentially on the territory in which they are produced.

The geographical environment includes both natural factors (climate, environmental characteristics) and human factors (production techniques handed down over time, craftsmanship, know-how) which, combined together, make it possible to obtain a product that is inimitable outside a specific production area.

In order for a product to be recognised as DOP, production, processing, and preparation stages must take place in a defined geographic area.

Those who make DOP products must follow the strict production rules established in the Production Regulation and a specific independent control body guarantees the compliance with these rules.





PECORINO TOSCANO DOP



# THE TERRITORY: HISTORY AND TRADITION

This cheese is rooted in the history of the region and in a profound relationship between the environment, the sheep and the shepherds. In Tuscany, sheep breeding, which is one of the most ancient forms of animal husbandry and of colonisation of a territory by human beings, has centuries-old roots, the fruits of which are a cheese-making tradition handed down through the generations and a type of cheese that is considered one of the best Italian specialty foods.

Pecorino Toscano DOP is synonymous with rural history and a community that in solitude, in marginal and challenging areas, from the Apennine mountains to the calanques of the Orcia Valley known as the "Crete", and in the wild reaches of the Maremma, towards the sea, has pastured for centuries their large flocks of sheep.

The unique nature of the Pecorino Toscano DOP comes from the close connection that exists between the geo-

graphical environment, the characteristics of the milk from which it is made, and the production methods which, today, combine artisan techniques and innovation. Thanks to attributes of the land on which the sheep graze, the milk produced is sweet, delicate, and balanced, and the resulting cheese is genuinely out of the ordinary.

From sheep breeding to milking, preparation and maturing, each step of the cheese-making process must meet the product specification laid down for the Pecorino Toscano DOP, strictly in the specified production area, which includes the entire region of Tuscany and the towns of Alleron and Castiglione del Lago in Umbria, and of Acquapendente, Onano, San Lorenzo Nuovo, Grotte di Castro, Gradoli, Valentano, Farnese, Ischia di Castro, Montefiascone, Bolsena and Capodimonte in Lazio. The different climate and cheese-making traditions of each community, while consistent with the guidelines contained in the product specification, nevertheless confer to the cheese varieties and nuances in flavour and aroma that make it even more inimitable.





## DISTINCTIVE COLOURS, FLAVOURS AND AROMAS

Pecorino Toscano DOP is a soft or semi-hard cheese made of whole sheep's milk. It comes in two types: fresh or matured.

The former has a yellow crust, with varying hues from yellow to straw-yellow, while the body is white or light straw-coloured. It is soft to the touch and fragrant to the taste, in a word it is "sweet".

Instead, the matured cheese has a crust with varying hues, from light to deep yellow, although the colour also depends on whether it has been treated with tomatoes, ash or oil, in which case it can appear black or reddish. The body of the cheese is straw-yellow and it is fragrant and intense to the taste, yet never piquant.

The characteristics of Pecorino Toscano DOP depend on both the environmental conditions in which the sheep are bred and the processing and preparation methods.

The key ingredient is, of course, the milk. This must be exclusively sheep's milk from sheep bred only in the DOP (PDO) area. The sheep belong to either local breeds (primarily a breed called "Massese") or imported breeds (Comisana or Sardinian).

Tuscan pastures are rich in herbs, which confer particular qualities to the milk. Each area features a unique combination of herbs, which then affect the flavour of the milk.

Unlike other Italian sheep's milk cheese, Pecorino Toscano DOP is milder and more harmonious.

Instead, compared to cow's or mixed milk cheese, it has a stronger flavour, different from generic cheese types, such as "cacio" or "caciotta". Both fresh and matured Pecorino Toscano DOP can be defined with two, almost opposite, characteristics: delicate, yet with temperament.



# THE CONSORTIUM

The Consortium for Protection of Pecorino Toscano DOP was founded on 27 February 1985, bringing together the fabric of skills and expertise of producers who share the love for their region and the desire to achieve excellence in their production. This “family of Pecorino Toscano DOP” comprises 900 sheep breeders, 20 dairies, two cheese maturing expert and a packaging facility.

For over 30 years now, the Protection Association has guaranteed that only the cheese that meets the product specification is called and sold as Pecorino Toscano DOP, handing down the production tradition and strengthening its identity, both nationally and internationally.

The Protection Association is responsible for protecting and overseeing the production and marketing of the DOP (PDO) cheese and the use of the DOP (PDO) designation; therefore, it promotes any project or initiative that can safeguard the uniqueness and peculiar characteristics of this cheese from abuse, unfair competition, food frauds and im-

itations, improper use of the DOP (PDO) designation and other illegal behaviour; it collaborates with the Ministry of Agriculture in overseeing, protecting and safeguarding the DOP (PDO) through inspections by its staff; it also collaborated with the EU, the Italian Government, the Regions and Autonomous Provinces, public and private entities and the DOP (PDO) supervisory bodies, for the purpose of valorising and protecting the DOP (PDO) designation, making available its staff and organisation; it supports its members in updating and self-monitoring the production process and promotes the consumption and dissemination of the Pecorino Toscano DOP brand nationally and internationally, through events and marketing campaigns, including online campaigns.



## THE LOGO

Pecorino Toscano is easy to recognise thanks to the DOP (PDO) mark in ink for fresh cheeses and hot-marked for aged cheese. The logo contains the words “Pecorino Toscano DOP” and the ID number of the producer, as well as a stylised “P” and “T.” The Pecorino Toscano DOP label affixed on the cheese wheels or packages, as authorised by the Protection Association, must have the following minimum characteristics: the wording “Pecorino Toscano DOP” must stand out in respect of other wording on the label in terms of size, font and position; there must be the DOP logo.





PROSCIUTTO TOSCANO DOP



# THE TERRITORY: HISTORY AND TRADITION

In Tuscany, men, animals and plants have a form, a language, a sentiment, they have colours and joy to express. It is our passion for history and traditions that drives every action, whether large or small, and the process of creation is always transformed into a "ceremony".

Pig breeding in Tuscany has a very long history and our processed meats and cold cuts are genuine, tasteful and savoury, characteristics that reveal their excellent quality. Our meat processing tradition probably developed in the early Middle Ages, even from the times of Charlemagne. In the winter months Tuscan farmers would slaughter their pigs, fattened with loving care for the entire year, and process the meat so that it could be kept for the family to eat.

The whole process was something of a feast, in which genuineness, taste and flavour achieved remarkable levels of excellence. However, it was in the 15th century, at the time of the Medici, that specifications were introduced for the entire production process.

Thanks to its flavour and aroma, Prosciutto Toscano DOP is inimitable, but the success of this ham lies first and foremost in the perfect climate for the maturing process, thanks to the light winds, from land and sea, that blow across a territory protected from the cold northerly winds by the Apennine Mountains. Its delicate flavour is masterfully enriched with the typical special maquis herbs of Tuscany, comprising lentisk, myrtle and juniper, the secret ingredients of the prosciutto producers. This simple authenticity of Tuscan products, which the entire world acknowledges us, is true also of our hams.



## **DiSTiNCTiVe COLOURS, FLAVOURS AND AROMAS**

Prosciutto Toscano DOP is made exclusively from fresh pigs legs (it is forbidden to use deep frozen or other processed or preserved meats), in production facilities located in Tuscany.

The pigs must have been born, bred and slaughtered in Tuscany, or other bordering regions. Each pig must be at least 9 months old and weigh between 144 and 176 while still alive. The meat is then dry-cured, using salt, pepper and the natural herbs and aromas of Tuscany.

The resulting flavour is characteristic: delicate and masterfully heightened by the special aromas of Tuscany, which have made Prosciutto Toscano DOP famous around the world. Production oversight is carried out by a certification body authorised by the Ministry of Agriculture, which controls compliance with the product specification by the producers.





# THE CONSORTIUM

In 1990, a group of Tuscan producers, conscious of the need to protect Tuscan Prosciutto from the uncontrolled proliferation of other cured hams, which have very little in common with the Tuscan tradition, established the Consortium of Prosciutto Toscano DOP, a body whose mission it is to promote, valorise and protect the product on the domestic and foreign markets, while maintaining close ties with the region of Tuscany.

In 1996, Prosciutto Toscano was granted the important DOP (PDO) – protected designation of origin – label, thanks to the commitment and respect of all the Protection Association members of the Tuscan food traditions, having accepted and followed, with great pride, the rules laid down in the product specification. At present, there are 20 consortium members that represent 98% of the certified production of Prosciutto Toscano DOP.



## THE LOGO

The logo of Prosciutto Toscano DOP is a stylised map of the region of Tuscany, with, in the middle, the words "Prosciutto Toscano DOP" and four stars on the right-hand side of the map; the ID number of each producer is an integral part of the mark.



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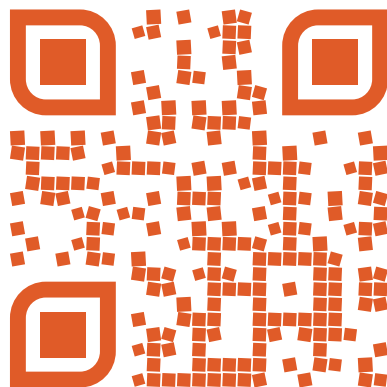
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