

THE MASTER'S NOSE CLUB

“Mountain-fresh wines from Italy's Alto Adige”

SIX WINES PACKED WITH MOUNTAIN PURITY AND FRESHNESS

FROM “ITALY'S BEST WHITE WINE REGION” – PER JANCIS ROBINSON MW

HOME TO THE WORLD'S FINEST PINOT BIANCO WINES

WINES WITH LONG AGEING POTENTIAL

FROM THREE DIFFERENT PRODUCERS AND SUBREGIONS

EXCITING QUALITY AT ATTRACTIVE PRICES!

Real Wines 



MANINCOR


NALS MARGREID
— 1922 —


EISACKTAL
VALLE ISARCO
KELLEREI CANTINA

BACKGROUND

ABOUT THIS WINE PACKET

After an in depth tasting of the new vintages of Alto Adige's best known wine producers at a major wine fair in March, I was so impressed that I immediately arranged a visit to the region. Wow! I can truly say that the fantastic wines, beautiful scenery and friendly people of Italy's most northerly wine region, Alto Adige, have captivated my heart! The time is absolutely right to offer you a selection of my favourites, which I hope you will enjoy as much as I did!

In a recent article about the white wines of Italy in the Financial Times, Jancis Robinson MW concluded that

Alto Adige, the narrow valley that leads up to the Alps via Bolzano, overlooked by the Dolomite mountains to the east, has taken over Italy's white-wine crown. Alto Adige (known as Südtirol in German) is home to some of the freshest, most characterful white wines in the world; wines packed with mountain air purity and a beautifully refreshing acidity which gives many examples wonderful ageing potential. Gently aromatic white grapes such as Pinot Bianco, Pinot Grigio, Kerner, Gewurztraminer and on occasion even Sauvignon Blanc reach heights of quality here (and also of vineyard

altitude!) unmatched elsewhere in the wine world. The region's red wines are also fast becoming more interesting due to climate change; as well as fruity elegant, lighter bodied reds from Pinot Noir and the local Schiava grapes, you also now find very good quality Lagrein, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and even Cabernet Sauvignon-based wines from this area.

The six wines in this wine packet are perfect for drinking over the summer months ahead, although most of the whites should develop beautifully in bottle for another 6 – 10 years. All five whites can be enjoyed on their own or with white asparagus or most seafood dishes, while the Manincor red would be perfect with simple pasta dishes or make an excellent barbecue companion.

A little bit of history

Alto Adige has a complicated history. Until the First World War it formed part of the Austro Hungarian Empire, but as part of the post war peace treaty it was handed to Italy. In between the wars, as a result of a pact between Mussolini and Hitler, the region's German-speaking inhabitants were forced to choose between two options; either stay and learn to speak Italian or leave their homeland and move up to Austria or Germany. This period, called "the option", split families and caused a huge amount of inter-familial strife. Today, German remains the predominant language in much of the region, and the culture, buildings and food are an intriguing mix of Austrian and Italian.



BACKGROUND

ALTO ADIGE'S GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

This mountainous zone stretches approximately 135 km from just north of Trento in the south up to the Brenner Pass and the Austrian border in the north, with Bolzano as its capital city. It is a great lifestyle and gastronomic destination, containing many of Italy's most famous ski resorts, top Michelin-starred restaurants, and wonderful wellness hotels. As well as its thriving wine industry, it is one of Europe's most important apple producers, with apple orchards spread across vast swathes of its valley floor.

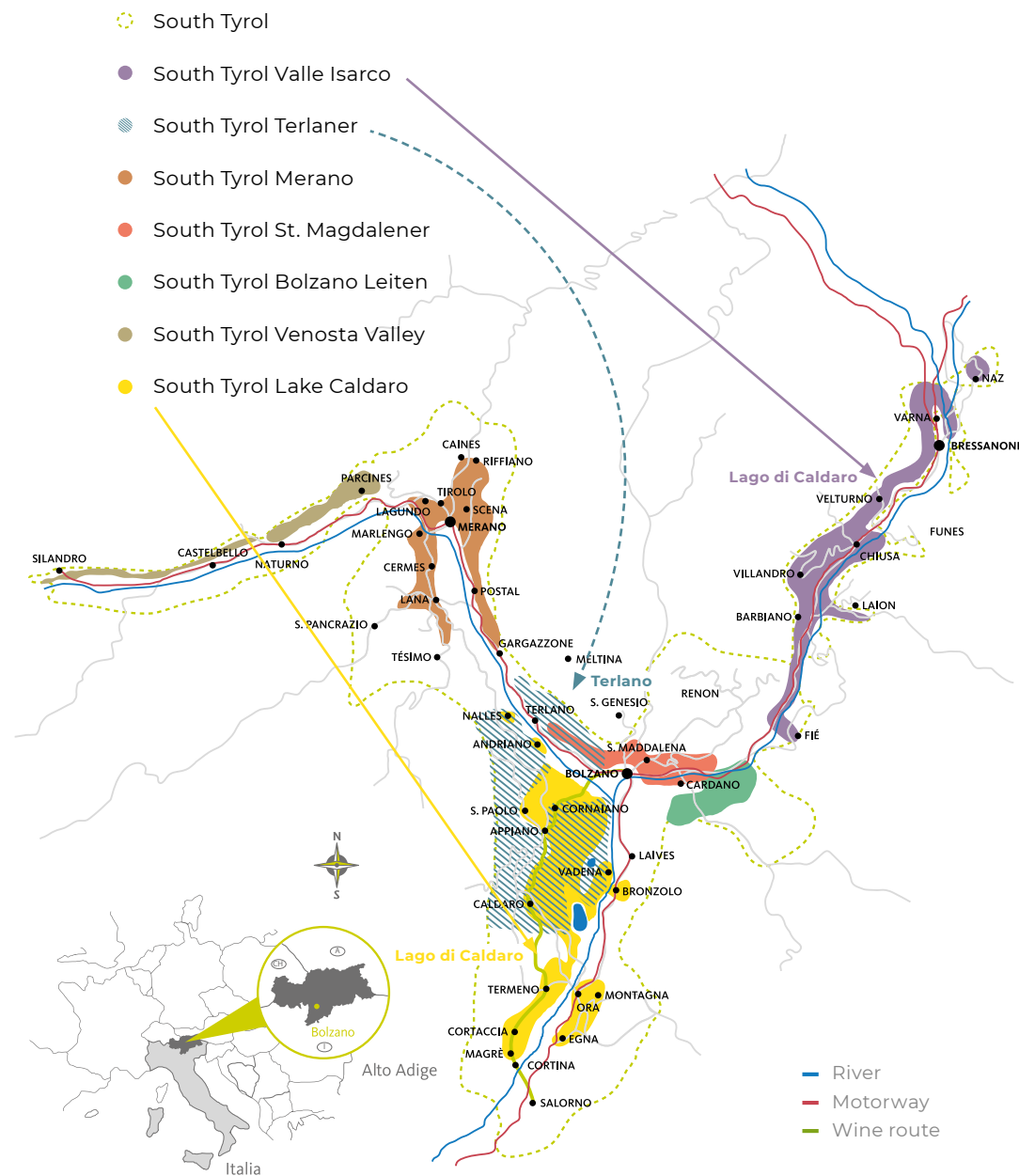
The climate in Alto Adige can best be described as Alpine-Mediterranean, a land where north meets south. The Alps to the north protect the region from excessive rainfall, so it is surprisingly dry, with only 500mm – 600mm rainfall per annum in the Valle Isarco district in the far north. It is also very sunny, receiving around 300 days of sunshine per year; in the summer Bolzano is often one of the warmest cities in Italy! But it is also windy, cooled by cold northerly winds from the Alps overnight and in the mornings, then warmed up in the afternoons by a warm wind known as the Ora, which blows up from Lake Garda in the south. These cause significant day-night temperature swings in the summer; temperatures often reach 35°C in July and August in

the heat of the afternoon, but at night they rarely rise above 15°C. This gives the region's wines an extra intensity of aromas and flavours and accentuates their acidity.

In general, the further south towards Trento you go, the warmer the climate, and the further north towards the Brenner, the cooler it gets. But different altitudes and exposures create a multitude of unique microclimates. East facing vineyards are cooler than west facing, as they are shaded from the warm late afternoon sun in the summer, and the higher the vineyard, the cooler its climate. Vineyards are planted from around 300 m up to above 1200 m in some areas! Alto Adige has the most – and the best quality – cooperatives of any of the world's wine regions; around 70% of the region's wines are produced by cooperatives. Vineyards in this steep and mountainous area tend to be very small because space is so limited, meaning that most grape farmers don't have the financial means to produce and bottle wines themselves. Instead, historically they have sold their grapes to cooperatives. These cooperatives are extremely well managed and produce some of the best quality wines in the region. In this wine packet, two of the three producers are cooperatives – Nals Margreid and Cantina di Isarco.

D.O.C. GROWING AREAS

- South Tyrol
- South Tyrol Valle Isarco
- South Tyrol Terlaner
- South Tyrol Merano
- South Tyrol St. Magdalener
- South Tyrol Bolzano Leiten
- South Tyrol Venosta Valley
- South Tyrol Lake Caldaro



PRODUCERS AND WINEMAKING

MANINCOR, MANINCOR

LAGO DI CALDARO, ALTO ADIGE

(SÜDTIROL KALTERERSEE)

Established in 1608, Manincor is a hugely impressive family winery, owned and managed by Count Michael Goess-Enzenberg (Il Conte) and his wife Countess Sophie (La Contessa). Manincor in Latin means “hand on heart” and a hand holding up a heart forms part of the family’s coat of arms. The name is totally appropriate to the overall ethos of the winery as (almost) all vineyard work is done by hand and the wines are truly wines of the heart! When Count Michael took over the running of the winery in 1996, it still sold all its grapes to the local cooperative. He immediately started

bottling and selling his own wines, from 2001 – 2004 built an amazing new, sustainable winery into the hill underneath their main vineyard, and from 2005 – 2009 converted the vineyards to organic and then biodynamic viticulture. Manincor is now one of the two leading biodynamic producers in the Alto Adige (the other is their neighbour Alois Lageder), with 50 hectares of vineyards based in the south of Alto Adige around the village and lake of Caldaro. No chemicals have been used in the vineyards since 2005 and sheep and chickens roam freely in the vineyards – a fantastic example of biodiversity in operation.



Manincor also own 40 hectares of oak forests on the opposite side of Lago di Caldaro which they use to make their own oak casks, even seasoning the oak themselves for three years outside the winery. You very rarely, if ever, see such meticulous attention to detail, but Count Michael started life as a carpenter and is clearly very gifted when it comes to oak management! The winery is built over three floors so that gravity alone is used to transfer the must from one stage of the vinification process to the next. Fermentation occurs naturally using wild yeasts from their vineyards in their large, home-produced oak casks.

“La Contessa” white is a blend of 55% Pinot Bianco, 28% Chardonnay and 17% Sauvignon Blanc coming from two vineyards; one a warm, west-facing site on volcanic porphyry soils at 300m altitude near Terlan, the other a cooler east-facing site on rich, clay soils at 500m near Caldaro. The wine is matured on its lees for nine months in cask before blending and bottling. “Il Conte” red is a blend of 41% Merlot, 38% Lagrein and 21% Cabernet Sauvignon coming from two of the warmest vineyards in the Alto Adige, facing southeast and overlooking the Lago di Caldaro on soils rich in limestone, gravel and clay. The wine is matured for 12 months in 225l used oak barrels before blending and bottling.



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NALS MARGREID, NALS MARGREID 1932 NALS, ALTO ADIGE TERLANO (SÜDTIROL TERLANER)

Nals Margreid is an excellent quality cooperative with its headquarters based in the village of Nals in the Adige Valley, about halfway between Bolzano to the east and Merano to the west. It is fairly large, with 138 members owning 160 hectares of vineyards spread between Nals and the village of Margreid in the far south of the region. It has a wide range of vineyards with different terroirs and microclimates under its supervision, and there is not a single wine in its entire range which does not deliver or over-deliver in quality at its respective price point.

It gained worldwide recognition in 2013 when its Sirmian Pinot Bianco was awarded “Best Italian White Wine” by the Gambero Rosso, which is THE reference guide to Italian wines. Having tasted the Sirmian 2022 vintage in this wine packet, I fully understand why this wine was so highly awarded! The winery itself is a cleverly designed mix of traditional and modern, built on the same site as the former Campi Estate Winery, which formed a key part of Nals village since 1764. You can still see many relics of the original winery throughout the building.

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Punggl Pinot Grigio is grown on the Punggl hill, south of Margreid village in the most southerly part of Alto Adige, at a fairly low altitude for the region of only around 250m. This is a relatively warm site with an almost Mediterranean climate, heated by the warm Ora wind in the afternoon. The soils here are rich in clay. Due to its warm climate, this is one of the earliest wines to be harvested each year, usually around the start of September.

Sirmian Pinot Bianco comes from ten hectares of vines grown at higher altitudes of 500 – 700m on

cool, east-facing slopes up above the winery in Nals. The soils here are a mix of limestone, slate and marble on top of porphyry, the typical Alto Adige volcanic bedrock. The climate here is much more typically Alpine, with mild summers and long, cool Autumns. These grapes are usually the last to be picked of all Nals Margreid's vineyards, usually in mid October.

Each vineyard's grapes are hand-picked, wild-fermented in large old oak casks, then matured on their lees for a further eight months before blending and bottling.



PRODUCERS AND WINEMAKING

CANTINA VALLE ISARCO – CHIUSA, ALTO ADIGE VALLE ISARCO

(KELLEREI EISACKTAL) – (SÜDTIROL EISACKTALER)



The Valle Isarco wine commune is the most northerly in Alto Adige and the closest to the beautiful Dolomite mountains. It is a place of extremes; steep terraces, ancient farms and castles, and vineyards up to 1,000m high – one of the highest grape cultivation areas in Europe. Wine culture in the area dates back to the fifth century BC, and by the Middle

Ages its white wines were celebrated by the famous Germanic poets of the day. Cantina Valle Isarco is the youngest and smallest cooperative in Alto Adige, founded in 1961, uniting 121 winemaking families who cultivate their vines on steep, mountainside vineyards between Bolzano and Brixen. Its focus is on producing high



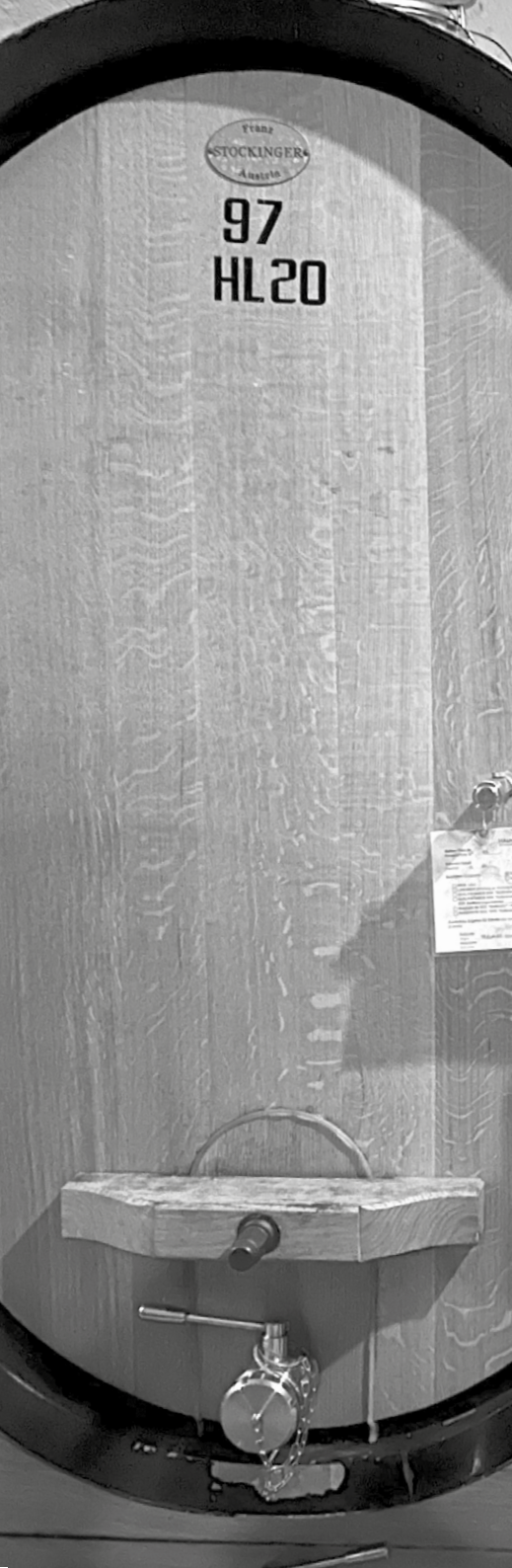
quality white wines with an unmistakable taste of their unique mountain terroirs; 95% of its production is white wine from classic cool climate grapes such as Kerner, Sylvaner and Grüner Veltliner as well as international white grapes like Pinot Bianco and Pinot Grigio. Conditions for the grape growers here are severely challenging, but the wines are absolutely worth the effort; these are white wines of great purity, elegance, minerality and finesse and potentially some of the most interesting white wines in Europe!

The dramatic Sabiona monastery (see photo on the front cover), in whose walled vineyard the Sabiona Kerner Riserva is grown, is perched on a rocky outcrop at 680m altitude which you can't miss as you drive past Chiusa on the motorway. It was built in 1600 and for many years was home to the Bishops of Alto Adige; it became known across the Austro-

Hungarian empire as the “acropolis” of the Tyrol. The south facing vineyard is planted with the Kerner grape – a crossing between Riesling and Schiava – which conveniently (at this altitude) is resistant to frost! The wine is fermented in large acacia wood casks then left on its lees for 15 months to gain in intensity. It is aged in bottle in the Cantina's cellars for a further nine months before release.

Only 26 hectares of the white Grüner Veltliner grape are planted in the whole of Italy, and the Cantina Isarco owns 14 of these! Their “Aristos” Grüner Veltliner comes from two very steep, southeast-facing vineyards between 550 – 600m altitude planted on deep clay soils. The grapes are hand-picked and very gently crushed before fermentation and then ten months' ageing on their lees in a mix of wooden casks and stainless steel tanks.





ABOUT THE WINES

OUR EXQUISITE SELECTION



**Manincor La
Contessa 2023,
Terzano DOC**
CHF 22.90/bt
(one bottle)

Certified biodynamic. A blend of 55 % Pinot Bianco, 28 % Chardonnay and 17 % Sauvignon Blanc.

On the nose this has enticing, floral, ripe apple and apricot aromas. The palate is quite rich and dry with a delicious mineral, salty acidity which gives freshness and backbone. Gently fruity, pure, intense and with a long, fresh, fruity finish. 12.5 % alcohol.

5,500 cases were produced.

This would be excellent served with roasted fillet of salmon with a herb and breadcrumb topping or white meats.

Drink now – 2030.



**Manincor Il Conte
2023, Vigneti delle
Dolomiti Rosso IGT**
CHF 23.90/bt
(one bottle)

Certified biodynamic. A blend of 41 % Merlot, 38 % Lagrein and 21 % Cabernet Sauvignon.

This has a rich, seductive nose with hints of berries, violets and spice. Medium bodied with plenty of juicy damson fruit flavours, spice and white pepper and fresh balancing acidity. With its silky, smooth tannins it feels almost Burgundian in texture. Beautifully made, this is a guaranteed crowd-pleaser and the perfect wine for barbecues or other social gatherings! 13 % alcohol.

6,500 cases were produced.

Drink with well-seasoned Mediterranean starters, peppered lamb cutlets or other grilled red meat.

Drink now – 2030.



**Nals Margreid
Punggl Pinot
Grigio 2022,
Alto Adige DOC**
CHF 23.50/bt
(one bottle)

Made from 100 % Pinot Grigio grapes grown on 80 year old vines on sandy, clay soils.

This wine has a fairly deep, straw yellow colour. On the nose it has exotic aromas of apricot, lychee and wild thyme. The palate is dry, nutty and rich, with lovely balancing acidity and minerality. A seriously impressive Pinot Grigio; racy, fine and packed with character! 14.5 % alcohol.

94/100pts James Suckling

3,300 cases were produced.

Enjoy with mushroom dishes, pastas or stuffed vine leaves and souvlaki.

Drink now – 2029.

ABOUT THE WINES



**Nals Margreid
Sirmian Pinot
Bianco 2022,
Alto Adige DOC**
CHF 29.90/bt
(one bottle)

This is a wonderful example of the Pinot Bianco grape from the Alto Adige region.

It has gently fruity, pink grapefruit and floral aromas, then on the palate a delicious mix of exotic fruit and salty minerality. It is dry and has an extra richness and depth of flavour from the warm and sunny 2022 vintage, but this is balanced by a fine, racy Alpine acidity. It finishes long, leaving a wide array of flavours in the mouth. Definitely a wine you want to drink more of! 14.5% alcohol.

97/100pts Decanter Magazine; 95pts James Suckling
3,300 cases were produced.

This wine would pair well with white asparagus, spaghetti with sardines or a white fish stew.

Drink now – 2032.



**Cantina Valle
di Isarco Aristos
Grüner Veltliner
2023, Alto Adige
Valle Isarco DOC**
CHF 22.90/bt
(one bottle)

This is one of the very few Grüner Veltliner wines grown in Italy!

The night time temperatures at this northerly latitude and high altitude are very cold throughout the growing season, giving the wine a steely core of acidity with amazing purity and mountain freshness. It is dry with gentle flavours of honey, stone fruits, white pepper, herbs and spice. It finishes long and has good ageing potential. 13.5% alcohol.

1,000 cases were produced.

Enjoy with soft cheeses, fish and white meat dishes.

Drink now – 2031.



**Cantina Valle
di Isarco Sabiona
Kerner Riserva
2020, Alto Adige
Valle Isarco DOC**
CHF 39.90/bt
(one bottle)

This 100% Kerner was grown in one of the most dramatic single vineyards in the world, perched precariously on a volcanic-rocky outcrop at 680 m altitude.

On the nose it is already intense, with aromas of peach and apricot

This intensity of flavour persists on the palate; for a cool climate wine it has surprising depth, body and concentration. Slightly honeyed, very spicy and with gentle stone fruit flavours, its delicious, vibrant acidity gives it a very long finish. This is truly unique, and a wonderful example of a mountain wine! 14% alcohol.

Only 208 cases were produced.

This would be perfect served with spicy Asian dishes, fish, herb risotto or white asparagus.

Drink now – 2032

THE MASTER'S NOSE CLUB

FRESH, MOUNTAIN WINES FROM ALTO ADIGE

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Real Wines

