

Review: Sparkling Wines of Martini & Rossi, 2017 Releases

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You're probably singing it right now — Martin and Rossi / Asti Spumante. Well, Italy's Martini & Rossi is still around and, it turns out, is trying to slowly move upmarket, God bless 'em. Yes, Asti Spumante is still here too — they just call it Asti now — but the brand has its sights on grander designs, namely the release of its first vintage-dated Prosecco, under the "Martini" brand.

Below please find thoughts on the upcoming 2016 Prosecco — to be released in early 2018 — and three of the Martini & Rossi nonvintage wines... including the classic!

2016 Martini Prosecco DOC

As noted, this is the first vintage-dated Prosecco from M&R, labeled on the front with only "Martini" (sorry, Rossi!). Surprisingly fizzy and effervescent, this bottling benefits from letting the bubbles settle down a little, which allows the stone fruit and crisp green apple notes to come through more clearly. As it warms a bit, a fragrant lavender note emerges, with perhaps a touch of rosemary on the back end. Priced to move! **A-** / \$20 to \$25

NV Martini & Rossi Sparkling Rose

A blend of Moscato Bianco, Brachetto, and Malvasia from northern Italy. Pleasant and uncomplicated, the wine is effervescent, fresh, and a bit floral, but lacking in any other truly defining character aside from the strawberry notes that hit on the finish. Nothing that will blow your mind, but not at all bad at this price. **B** / \$12

NV Martini & Rossi Prosecco DOC

This nonvintage version of M&R's Prosecco isn't half as much fun as the 2016 bottling, and you'll save just a few bucks on the price. A bit gummy, with a heavy pear flavor, it's a simplistic and over-sweetened version of Prosecco that misses the floral fun of the 2016. **B-** / \$12

NV Martini & Rossi Asti DOCG

100% muscat, and sweet as the dickens. That said, it's better than expected, the muscat's peachy notes complementing a core that tastes like pure honey. The fizz cuts the sweetness enough to make one see why people gravitated to this stuff in the '70s. **B** / \$12

