

THE CHALK REPORT

Food, Wine, Travel

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WINE REVIEW: Le Rughe, 'Rivaj', Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore, DOCG, Extra Dry (\$15)

Here is an example of the future of Prosecco. Traditionally, Prosecco was a cheap and cheerful sparkling mixer for Bellinis or quaffing straight. Determinedly pursuing this strategy, Prosecco producers took over the low-price end of sparkling wine (<= \$15/bottle).

The criticism of those wines was that they were simple and undifferentiated. Prosecco makers could afford to scoff at this criticism, if they had wanted to, they were selling millions of bottles a year. Their product had global acceptance. They had their name 'Prosecco' legally protected to refer to a specific small area in Italy where the grapes could be grown.

Now, they decided to expand the market and do it by lifting the lid at the top of the quality range. In the center of the Prosecco region is an area on the hills around the two towns of Conegliano and Valdobbiadene designated with Italy's highest quality certification - DOCG. Prosecco made from this sub-area grows on stony soils, which have great drainage, have the best aspect ratio to the sun, and the best access to breezes off the Adriatic. These factors contribute to a different standard of wine. This example is a DOCG Prosecco (that set of initials on the label is the marker) and brings vibrant lemon flavors and a weighty mouthfeel that gives it presence. The price is surprisingly reasonable, making this wine recommended.



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