

Wine Spectator

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SPARKLERS

STEAM AHEAD

Powered by Prosecco, sparkling wine is more popular than ever before

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ITALY

THE BOOT IS BRIMMING WITH DISTINCTIVE, FLAVORFUL BUBBLES

91 | \$37 | NINO FRANCO | Brut Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore Vigneto della Riva di San Floriano 2017 | Rich and creamy, enlivened by juicy acidity, this offers baked apricot, pastry cream, almond biscotti and spiced orange flavors. (A.N.)

90 | \$28 | BORTOLOMIOL | Brut Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore Ius Naturae 2017 | Elegant and creamy, with sleek acidity, this offers well-meshed flavors of poached pear, spring blossom, mandarin orange peel and wet stone. (A.N.)

88 | \$20 | LE COLTURE | Brut Valdobbiadene Prosecco Fagher NV | This mouthwatering, delicate Prosecco underscores ripe pear, nectarine and ginger flavors with a minerally streak. (A.N.)

87 | \$24 | DESIDERIO BISOL & FIGLI | Brut Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore Crede 2017 | This sleek Prosecco has a zesty edge, with flavors of pear, ground ginger and Meyer lemon peel. (A.N.)

“There is a sparkling craze. Everyone is trying effervescent things.”

ETTORE NICOLETTO



Historic Bisol Desiderio & Figli, in Veneto's Valdobbiadene region, makes a range of Proseccos, including extra dry and brut styles.



Ettore Nicoletto of Santa Margherita acknowledges that Prosecco's success has been driven largely by a low price point and says consumers care little about brand distinction.

It took an Italian bubbly to make sparkling wine an everyday drink. In years past, Americans' idea of Italian sparkling wine was sweet—Riunite Lambrusco or Asti Spumante. Most hadn't heard of Prosecco unless they had visited Venice. In the City of Canals and its surrounding province, Prosecco has long been the prologue of lunches and dinners, the regional aperitivo. It's bubbly, but the resemblance to Champagne ends there. It's light, with bright floral and fruity flavors.

“As an Italian who understands the difference between the appellations, I understand the price difference,” explains Nicoletto. “But I think the consumer is not very interested in the differences.”

Consorzio di Tutela



“The Prosecco DOC is the largest appellation in the world, volume-wise,” says Nicoletto, of Santa Margherita. The appellation, which stretches across nine provinces in north-eastern Italy, produces an average of 38 million cases a year. “You have to manage this success.”

Many leading Prosecco houses are excited about rosé Prosecco, made from Pinot Noir and legal for the first time with the 2019 vintage. They also hope they can entice consumers to trade up to higher-quality (and higher-priced) Italian sparklers, including D.O.C.G. wines from historic Prosecco regions or Trento D.O.C. or Franciacorta, these latter two making bubbles in the traditional method.



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