



ABBAZIA DI NOVACELLA GRÜNER VELTLINER PRAEPOSITUS

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Located at the entrance to the Dolomites, high in the Isarco Valley near Italy's border with Austria, the Augustinian monastery Abbazia di Novacella was founded in 1142, making it one of the world's oldest active wineries, with papal documents from 1177 recording the abbey's ownership of vineyards.

Today it is still a functioning monastery with a focus on adding the local community by growing a wide range of

crops, including vineyards on high altitude terraces clinging to the valley walls. It is also one of the finest wineries in the quality-focused Alto Adige region, regularly receiving the top Tre Bicchieri (3 glasses) award from the most influential Italian wine guide, the Gambero Rosso.

The wines are sourced from a combination of their own 21 hectares of organically-farmed vineyards alongside 50 or so small growers, reflecting the tradition of a region where the co-operative model holds sway. This allows them to produce a wide range of wines from their modern cellars which straddle both the Germanic varieties found around the Abbey in the Isarco Valley, and the Italian varieties from growers further south around Bolzano.

The high altitude (up to 750 metres) and resulting luminescence, cool nights and

long growing season can lend the wines from Alto Adige a clarity and precision unmatched elsewhere in Italy, which isn't to say the wines are delicate – the long growing season, largely granite soils and miniscule yields per vine ensures there is no shortage of concentration, especially from this winery.

The Alto Adige region may not be the first place people think of when considering Austria's signature white grape, Grüner Veltliner, but with the border just a few miles away, the Isarco Valley has a small, but significant, 27 hectare concentration of vines. This brilliant, Tre Bicchieri-awarded dry white made from the finest, high altitude sectors of vineyard is as good as anything from over the border. 1/3 is aged in 3,000 litre oak barrels to add texture, complexity and longevity.

A really varietal nose with

white pepper, passionfruit, apple, nuts, fresh mint, smoke. Powerful, textured, long and spicy - great concentration and richness; a brilliant white. Extremely versatile, it will be at home with rich fish dishes and white meats, as well spicy food.

