

It was a great pleasure to attend a virtual tasting led by renown winemaker **Riccardo Cotarella** with **Valle Isarco wines from their winery based in Alto Adige**. It was a well explained tasting with a good presentation, discourse on the terroir and the varieties and an excellent range of Kerner and Sylvaner wines.



Valle Isarco is the smallest and youngest cooperative in Alto Adige, established some 60 years ago it now has 135 families affiliated and 150 hectares of vineyards which is just over 1ha per family! Its south- south east terraces produce 98% white varieties and 2% red varieties, which shows the importance of white varieties in Alto Adige. Out of the 14 grape varieties that Valle Isarco works with, 10 are white and 4 are red and these make up a production range of 28 wines.



Valle Isarco is situated in one of the highest and one of the last valleys of Italy near the border, just above the city of Chiusa. The altitudes of **the vineyards reach up to 900 metres above sea level on volcanic terrain, which makes this 'heroic' viticulture** with at least one third more of hard manual vineyard maintenance.



The vineyards are considered low yielding producing a range of yields between 90 quintals per hectare to as low as 40 quintals per hectare.

We tasted a range of three wines from each variety Kerner and Sylvaner. The classic range, the Aristos range and the Sabiona range. The excellence and vibrancy of the wines was notable.

### **Sylvaner Range**

All steel classic range 2020 showing nice balance of fruit, freshness and acidity with fruity aromas principally apple and some other notes of broom – great price:quality 150.000 bottles €10.20 retail

Aristos 2019 - 50% wood: steele, spicy notes with some apple and peach, full on the palate with some fresh almond notes, quite saline (mineral) good length and very balanced and harmonious 25.000 bottles Retail price €16.40

Sabiona 2018 - from a single vineyard surrounding the abbey, this is aged 100% in tonneaux and was the wine that inspired me least, though well made, but the wood was a little too noticeable for my taste. 3.000 bottles Retail price €30.00



### **Kerner Range**

All steel Classic range 2020 rich with some pineapple, lemongrass, saffron and yellow peach notes very citrus and succulent on the palate, super fresh and structured with a satisfying long finish – really excellent and great value wine, 180.000 bottles retail €12.20

Aristos 2019 100% in steel – good complexity fresh and dynamic with freshness, fruit and some floral notes on the palate it. Good balance and length showing ageing potential. 30.000 bottles retail price €17.40 also excellent value

Sabiona 2018 100% aged in wood – I found the oak better integrated on this wine. Ripe tropical fruit with spicy and floral notes and a hint of white pepper. This wine was the star of the evening for me! 30 bottles – retail price €30.000

In the reds they produce a Schiava and a Pinot Noir, which I'd be very curious to taste given the quality of the white wines!

I'm surprised that Valle Isarco exports only 15% of its wines. In my opinion it could do much better than that!



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