

## The Year's Best Wine comes from Alto Adige

The 2010 edition of Italy's most important wine guides have just come out, with their evaluations hotly awaited, as is the case every year. The six best known publications (*Duemilavini*, *Gambero Rosso*, *L'Espresso*, *Luca Maroni*, *Vini Buoni d'Italia/Touring Club*, and *Veronelli*) have awarded their coveted distinctions, and they only agreed with each other up to a certain degree. A total of 1,579 wines enjoyed the respective top ratings, but two thirds of them appeared in only one of the publications.

So it is all the more astonishing that only one single wine succeeded in convincing all of the experts and achieving top honors in all of the publications, scoring a perfect six, as it were. The best of all of the wines comes from Alto Adige. It is the Alto Adige Gewürztraminer Terminum Spätlese 2007 from the Tramin Winery, with its balance between the full aromas of the Gewürztraminer grape, the lovely profiled sweetness, and the noble acidity leaving no doubts whatsoever about its unique quality and drinkability. The fact that the Tramin Winery, which is currently undergoing renovation, has genuinely achieved something special that was not just a fluke is shown by another record that it shares with the dean of Piemonte wines, Gaja. Their wines managed a total of eleven awards each, more than any other wineries, some of which are quite renowned. Also worthy of mention is the success of Elena Walch, with her Gewürztraminer Kastelaz 2008, and of the Köfererhof, with the Eisacktal Silvaner 2008, which was awarded the newly created "Three Glasses Plus" by *Gambero Rosso* director Daniele Cernilli.

With its cooperatives, private wineries, and winegrowers, Alto Adige wine continues to represent the qualitative peak of the country's wine production. Its total vineyard area represents only 0.7% of that of all of Italy. Yet its 82 awards constitute over 5% of the total of 1,579 wines tasted. And at the same time, if it is also taken into consideration that not all Alto Adige producers submitted their wines and that because of the weather, 2008 was not necessarily the best year for the local grapes, then the scale of this primacy in quality in one of the world's leading wine-producing nations can truly be unmistakably recognized. The number of varieties of the very top wines from the province also demonstrates substantial breadth: for the whites: 9 Gewürztraminers, 6 Pinot Blancs, 5 Rieslings, 4 each of Sauvignons and Silvaners, 2 each of Yellow Muscats and Chardonnays, 1 each of Veltliner, Müller Thurgau, and Kerner, along with 5 white cuvées, compared to the reds with 7 Lagreins, 4 Vernatsches, 3 Pinot Noirs, 2 Cabernets, 2 Red Muscats, and 3 red cuvées.

"Slowly but surely, we are getting used to the numerous awards for our wines," says Armin Dissertori, president of the Alto Adige Wine Consortium. "But with all the joy and satisfaction, it is nevertheless not the time to rest upon our laurels. The Alto Adige wine industry continues to view itself at only the beginning of its rise in popularity and is committed to exploiting the enormous potential of our unique terroir even more, year after year. Our special praise and congratulations this year go to the Tramin winegrowers and the team surrounding winemaker Willi Stürz. And everyone else is already working to make next year even better."