

## **San Leonardo (Avio), Province of Trento**

*Established: 1770*

*Owners: Carlo & Anselmo Guerrieri Gonzaga*

*Winemakers: Carlo Guerrieri Gonzaga & Carlo Ferrini*

*Production: 145,000 bottles*

*Hectares under vines: 21*

*Viticulture: Conventional*



When you visit Trentino's Tenuta San Leonardo, described by Gambero Rosso as one of the "fifty wineries that changed Italy", it is impossible not to be captivated by its sheer beauty. Tenuta San Leonardo is located midway between Verona and Trento, with the Dolomites serving as an imposing backdrop to its breathtaking landscape. The lovingly tended 300 hectares include manicured lawns, parkland, a stunning villa, a museum, the original Roman road to Austria and a cellar to rival any Bordeaux chateau. The comparisons with Bordeaux do not end there, for the wine could easily pass as cru classé left bank, but this is no insurance company owned chateau. Tenuta San Leonardo has soul, and you can feel it: in the place, the wine and the people.

Founded in 1770, grapes were grown here as early as 900 AD, when monks from a monastery on the estate made wine for mass. Part of the ancient monastery survives today and has been incorporated into the winery and its old hospice is now used as a cellar. One would need to write a book on San Leonardo's history to do it justice, as the Tenuta has witnessed some extraordinary events. The history of the property dates back 1500 years to when a group of prisoners from Trentino, captured by the Frankish army, erected a chapel nearby dedicated to the patron saint of prisoners, Saint Leonard, following their release. In the First World War, it was here that Austria made a formal request for an armistice and, during the Second World War, the family's villa was the headquarters of the counterespionage section of the German high command.

It wasn't until Carlo Guerrieri Gonzaga took over the Tenuta in the 1970's that San Leonardo began to make viticultural history. The estate has been in his family since 1724. Following his extensive experience in France and at Bolgheri's Tenuta San Guido, Carlo set about replanting the vineyards to craft a wine that would become an Italian classic. The blend in 1982, as it remains today, is mostly Cabernet Sauvignon with Carmenère and Merlot, selected from the best barriques and only made in the finest vintages.

### **Terre IGT**

San Leonardo's junior sibling, Terre is a blend of mostly Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot with dark berry and plum fruit and the classic spice and mineral notes of the region. An elegant entry level wine that captures the flavour of San Leonardo's terroir.

### **San Leonardo IGT**

**2013** *The flagship wine from this celebrated Trentino estate was not produced in 2012. This vintage is large in scale and has immediate intensity, and I am somewhat surprised by the volume and seamless bouquet that appears this early in the game. This vintage shows balanced ripeness with plummy fruit aromas that are carefully contrasted against spice, leather and fine tobacco. The blend is Cabernet Sauvignon, Carmenère and Merlot, and San Leonardo is always aged in barrique for four years (of which only 25% of the barrels are new). This is a bottle to keep long (extra long) in your cellar. 96 points, Monica Lerner*

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