

## ***Bressanone, Province of Bolzano***

*Established: 1990*

*Owners: Pliger family*

*Winemaker: Simon Pliger*

*Production: 27,000 bottles*

*Hectares under vine: 6*

*Viticulture: Natural*

*Vegan Friendly*



Located in Valle Isarco (Eisacktal in German) northeast of Bolzano about 50 kilometres from the Brenner Pass to Austria, the pioneering Peter Pliger created one of Italy's best white wine estates. Compared to the rest of Alto Adige, Valle Isarco has a more continental climate with steep stony vineyards containing schist, quartz and morainic layers of crushed rock. The vineyards are on the west side of the Eisack River, all terraced with stone walls painstakingly built by Peter.

The first thing that strikes you about Peter are his sky-blue eyes and you can feel a peaceful energy and in the man. A former Zen student, at one with himself and nature, he describes his viticulture as being neither organic nor biodynamic, but 'sustainable'. Peter asserts that sustainable farming is essential if the microflora in the soil is to properly convert the various mineral elements into the soluble form needed by the vines. Sulphur dioxide might be used, but not synthetic chemical products. The wines are fermented at natural temperatures on indigenous yeasts, but if they don't do the job, selected ones are added. Sustainability here is all about striking the right balance.

The wines are bone dry, but loaded with pure, rich fruit, plenty of extract and alcohol. They cut across the palate like a sword, but the complexity and structure is compelling and they age superbly. In many ways the wines reflect Peter's admiration for Rieslings of the Mosel and Veltliners of the Wachau but they are distinctively Italian, displaying a stony minerality that is expressive of a unique terroir. The winemaking is the same for all varieties: aged in a combination of stainless steel and acacia botti with no malolactic and fines lees for 5-7 months. Recently, son Simon has joined his dad and is taking over the winemaking.

### **Riesling DOC**

The flagship wine from Kuenhof is simply electric. There's lime, peach, ginger and white flowers, the palate, especially in its youth is nervy with laser-like Alpine focus.

### **Sylvaner DOC**

Originally from Austria, Sylvaner is perhaps better known from Franconia and Alsace but its never this complex! Rich and full bodied with stone fruits, honeysuckle, alpine flowers and spices, the palate has an undercurrent of chalk and woodsmoke that adds a sense of shape and structure. It's a superb wine with cheese.

### **Veltliner DOC**

Exuberant honeysuckle aromas, the palate is a medley of white peach, melon, herbs, fresh peas and five spice. Stylistically sitting between the Riesling and Sylvaner in terms of weight and mouthfeel, the palate is medium bodied, silky and fresh.

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