

## Press release

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### **The 2016 Harvest in Alto Adige**

A Good, Exciting Vintage for Both Red and White

After the 2016 harvest, Alto Adige's winegrowers and winemakers are expecting a very exciting, and good quality vintage with juicy, lively, and multilayered white wines and promising Alto Adige red wines.

The capricious summer of 2016 posed a good many challenges to Alto Adige winegrowers: aside from a few hot summer days, there were numerous wet days with above-average rainfall. The strain of fungal infections, such as from Peronospora, rose substantially as a result of this. This required a great deal of attention and diligence in the vineyard. The growers had to exercise great care. What was necessary was a very precise observation of the vines as well as targeted measures, such as pruning the bunches. All of that meant hard work and a particularly large amount of effort in the vineyard.

#### **Ideal Autumn Weather Before and During the Harvest**

In the end, the lovely, dry weeks from late August through early September were like a blessing, with warm days and cool nights. "The period before the harvest is enormously important," reports Max Niedermayr, President of the Consortium of Alto Adige Wine. "The warm, dry weather brought tranquility to the vineyards once again and provided all of the conditions necessary for a targeted, high-quality harvest."

In addition, the cooler temperatures at the beginning of maturity slowed down the maturation process of the grapes. For that reason, the 2016 harvest began around ten days later than in 2015. The first white wine grapes were harvested in the Bassa Atesina and around Terlano starting from September 5. First in line were the Pinot Grigio, Pinot Blanc, and Sauvignon Blanc.

#### **Perfect Ripeness of the Grapes**

The quality of the grapes as they arrived at the wineries was perfect. The acidity and sugar values were promising, and the pH levels were low. For Niedermayr, that represented "the basis for juicy, lively, and multilayered white wines and promising red wines with a great potential to develop."

In spite of the weather, which was worse in comparison to 2015, growth in the vineyards was very good in 2016. For that reason, the quantities harvested were at or, in some cases, even above the average level of recent years.

#### **Ideal Balance between Acidity Values and Sugar Levels**

For Wolfgang Tratter, winemaker at the St. Pauls winery, the grapes that were delivered in 2016 were "of very high quality and in perfect, healthy condition, with an ideal balance

between acidity values and sugar levels.” The efforts in the vineyards paid off. And the major problems that had popped up in recent years with spotted wing drosophila (*Drosophila suzukii*) “could be kept under control quite well in 2016.” For Tratter, 2016 in Oltradige is “a great vintage with wines that are ripe, freshly fruity, and invitingly appealing.”

### **An Exceptionally Good Vintage**

For Stefan Kapfinger, winemaker at the Merano Winery, the caprices of the 2016 summer weather also did not have any noteworthy effects upon the quality of the grapes in that vintage. “This year, the quality of the grapes is unexpectedly great, with excellent phenolic ripeness and ideal values.” For Kapfinger, the white wines, and especially the Pinot Blancs, Chardonnays, and Sauvignon Blancs, present themselves as particularly typical. “We are expecting an exceptionally good vintage with both white wines and red wines.”

### **One of the Most Exciting and Loveliest Wine Harvests**

For Clemens Lageder of the Alois Lageder Winery in Margreid, after the extremely difficult summer 2016 developed into one of the most exciting and loveliest wine harvests ever. “Never before have we been able to have so much time to harvest the grapes, to select them without hurry, and in that way to be able to play with the individual varieties and plots.” The results are “well-balanced, fresh, and light, but nevertheless mature wines with very succinct aromas and an unbelievable liveliness.” Lageder assesses 2016 as a vintage in which the varieties show their typical characteristics. “The wines score a hit without exception, and that holds true in particular with the Pinot Blanc and Gewürztraminer just as much as with the Merlot and Cabernet, with a great aromatic quality and freshness with, at the same time, a moderate alcohol content. What more could we want?”

### **Great Schiava and Lagrein**

“The autumn of 2016 could not have gone any better,” said Hannes Pfeifer of the Pfannenstielhof in Bolzano, with pleasure. Schiava (Vernatsch) and Lagrein caught up enormously as a result of the lovely weather before the harvest, and it was possible for them to be harvested at full maturity and with ideal sugar and acidity values. According to Pfeifer, 2016 is an ideal vintage in particular for the red wines. “Healthy grapes, excellent sugar levels, and invitingly fruity aromas promise an accessible, full, and strong 2016 vintage for Schiava and Lagrein.”

### **Fresh, Well-Structured White Wines**

It was also possible to harvest all of the varieties across the board with ideal values in the Isarco Valley. For Hannes Baumgartner of the Strasserhof in Varna, Sylvaner, Veltliner, Riesling, and Müller Thurgau all displayed surprisingly good quality. “This year, we completely took advantage of the maturation phases and harvested extremely healthy grapes with acidities that were super for the Isarco Valley.” Since the yields also once again settled down to those of a good average year, Baumgartner expects “fresh, well-structured white wines from a super vintage.”