

PROSECCO DOCG PRESS TRIP

with Susy Atkins – Sunday Telegraph & Fiona Sims - Decanter

The Telegraph

Prosecco: A toast to Italy's finest fizz

Susy Atkins escapes the crowds and heads for prosecco country – the secret "garden of Venice" where the zesty, fashionable wine is made

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Last year global sales of the Veneto's classic sparkling wine exceeded even those of champagne, but unlike the Champagne region, the heart of prosecco country remains relatively undiscovered. Photo: AFP/STOLIA

By Susy Atkins

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The vines are everywhere, right across the landscape; fresh green leaves covering the country in spring and summer, swooping down into valleys and right up and away to swathe the distinctive conical hills. It almost hurts your eyes to look at the bright, verdant vineyards in May. Aptly enough, the vine that blankets the area is called glera.

It's not a well-known variety, but glera gives us one of the world's best-loved wines – frothy, refreshing, lemon-sherbety prosecco. Last year global sales of the Veneto's classic sparkling wine exceeded even those of champagne, but unlike the Champagne region, the heart of prosecco country remains relatively undiscovered, despite its ancient castles and bell towers, excellent restaurants and mild, sunny climate. The peace is more surprising when you consider its proximity to Venice, just one hour's drive south.

Decanter



The Decanter travel guide to

Conegliano-Valdobbiadene Prosecco & Venice, Italy



FACT FILE
Planted area 6,537ha
Main grapes Glera, Verdiso, Perera and Bianchetta
Production (2013) 72,420,570 bottles
Main soil types clay and limestone
www.prosecco.it

When visiting Venice, ensure you make time to explore the Prosecco DOCG, to stock up on great wines as well as gourmet fare. Fiona Sims takes a trip

IT'S JUST A 30-minute drive north from Venice airport to Conegliano in Prosecco country, but visitors flock eastwards in their millions to the famous city in the nearby lagoon, ignoring the gentle hills whose wines have become sought-after Champagne off its perch, selling more bottles globally for the first time last year.

They're missing out. It makes a great contrast to do both. Spend the first couple of days leisurely cruising the pretty, vine-clad foothills, dotted with Palladian palazzos, former summer homes of the wealthy merchants of

Venice, and refuelling in the good-value trattorias with the region's distinctive rustic cuisine. Then finish your trip, blissfully *en-foie*, by exploring the canals in search of Venice's unique haart (Prosecco bars) and enjoying the lagoon's beautiful sunset. It's all about Prosecco here too, from the loaded bellini in the humble aperiz.

There are many reasons for Prosecco's ascendancy – but in a nutshell, we like our bubbles and most of us don't want to pay too much, or even think about it too much. Even at the very top level, single-vineyard Prosecco DOCG (the highest quality tier) won't break the bank, and you, there is complexity to be had, even ageing potential.

Not that Prosecco wants to be compared to Champagne – it's an entirely different fizz. Made from the Glera grape, at its best it has drink-me sweetness, with a mineral, sprucy

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