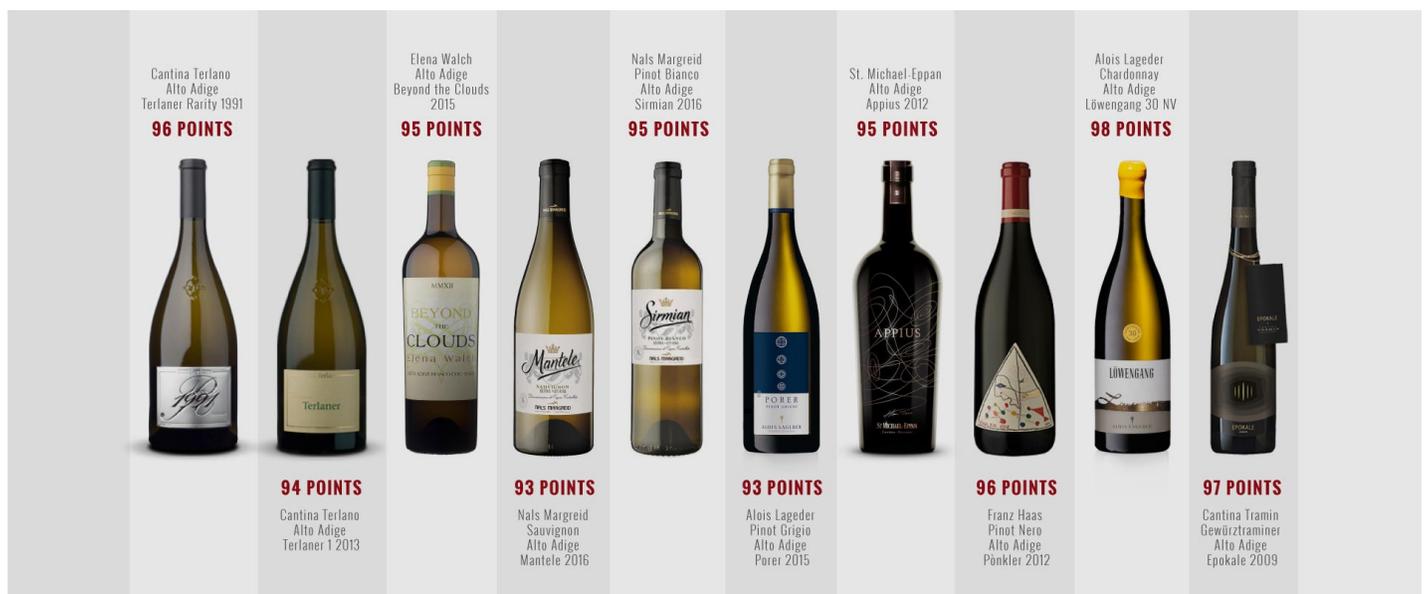


10 MIRACULOUS WINES FROM ALTO ADIGE — A GUIDE TO THE BEST BOTTLES BEHIND THE MOVIE



Monday, July 2, 2018



I can't imagine producing a documentary with a Hollywood director is ever easy. However, when your film set is the top of a rugged cliff, and your job is making sure James Orr gets from one side of the valley to the next on time — and safely through a series of suspension bridges and cavernous mountain passes — being the production manager takes on a whole new meaning!

Even so, while working for much of last summer in Alto Adige with the celebrated filmmaker on “The Miracle of Alto Adige,” it was his approach towards familiar winemaking topics that took the most getting used to.

James is a storyteller. Known more for his work on “Three Men and a Baby” and “Mr. Destiny” than his penchant for wine, he was intent on discovering the personal stories behind each and every bottle. He was less interested, as I often am, in viticultural minutiae, but rather what inspires these German-speaking Italians to make wine in one of the most extreme regions on earth.

Farmed by the intrepid and passionate *altoatesini*, the towering, lusciously green mountains and precipitous mountain terroirs are enough to stoke anyone's sense of awe when captured on film. I think James did a fabulous job bringing it all to life.

Anyhow, getting back to the more earthly realm of scores and notes, we thought that it was about time to share some background and our top picks for wines made by producers in the movie.



The JamesSuckling.com team scaled a 2100-meter mountain to capture the best shots for the documentary.

Alto Adige's wines are unique and characterized by a trademark purity of fruit and energy. In fact, I remember drawing a comparison to the region while writing a note for a Chilean chardonnay just the other day. It shows how the region is now truly a benchmark for white wines, especially those made in relatively warmer climates.

Despite similarities, a "house style" or specialty becomes more evident as you get to know each of the individual producers. The wines are a product of the twists and turns of this Y-shaped valley and the myriad of different exposures and soil types it has to offer.

Alois Lageder

Of all the innovators in this miraculous landscape, none have left as much an impression as Alois Lageder. The pioneering yet soft-spoken viticulturist first started exploring biodynamics in the '90s, around the same time the late Robert Mondavi paid him a visit and inspired him to take the region's wines to the next level. Lageder feels that expanding the diversity of this alpine ecosystem is necessary in the fight against climate change, while also adding to the complexity of each bottle.

His son Clemens, now at the helm of the family estate, is equally passionate about this cause. The latest experiments underway are

explored in the new Cometa or Comet range: one label is a tribute to the nearly extinct Blatterle grape, another is a wine that ferments for two years (!), while another still is a blend of more than 100 distinct grape varieties.

The wine we had to recommend here though — if you can get your hands on it, that is — is the 30 years Lowengang. Lowengang is the top chardonnay from Lageder, harvested from a warm vineyard in Magré not far from the cellars; it's quite underrated as far as we're concerned. I had the 1994 just the other day and its Meursault-like aged character was quite a surprise, given that most wines from my birth year are, unfortunately, very poor! This 98-pointer is a non-vintage special release and a blend of 2013, 2014 and 2015.

Every entry in this top-ten list of wines from the movie is, in its own way, awe-inspiring. These are wines that personify the "Miracle of Alto Adige." Buy a bottle or two and see for yourself! — *Contributing Editor Jack Suckling*



Jack Suckling and James Orr take to the skies to shoot opening footage of the documentary.

SORT BY: WINE (A to Z)

 | Show All Tasting Notes

ALOIS LAGEDER CHARDONNAY ALTO ADIGE LÖWENGANG 30 

Country

Italy

Score

Region

Northeast

98

Vintage

No Vintage

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The nose oozes elegance and panache. Aromas of dried citrus rind, chalk, light stone fruit, cloves and spices, vanilla, cream and guava peel. Full body, driving, vibrant acidity, layers upon layers of fruit and an expansive, phenolic and long finish. A blend of 2013, 2014, 2015 Löwengang chardonnay with limited battonage during the first six months. Bottled in May 2017 and released in September 2017. Drink now. From biodynamically grown grapes. 2,500 bottles made.

[Enlarge Tasting Note](#)

ALOIS LAGEDER PINOT GRIGIO ALTO ADIGE PORER 2015 

CANTINA TERLANO ALTO ADIGE TERLANER 1 2013 

CANTINA TERLANO ALTO ADIGE TERLANER RARITY 1991 

CANTINA TRAMIN GEWÜRZTRAMINER ALTO ADIGE EPOKALE 2009 

ELENA WALCH ALTO ADIGE BEYOND THE CLOUDS 2015 

FRANZ HAAS PINOT NERO ALTO ADIGE PÖNKLER 2012 

NALS MARGREID PINOT BIANCO ALTO ADIGE SIRMIAN 2016 

NALS MARGREID SAUVIGNON ALTO ADIGE MANTELE 2016 

ST. MICHAEL-EPPAN ALTO ADIGE APPIUS 2012 