

Alois Lageder, Aldo Adige, Italy

Our European Wine Man 2009

Words: Patrick Skinner
Wine Notes: George Kassianos.
Pictures: courtesy of Alois Lageder

It was the wine that attracted us at first, when Xenophon and Sally Lambrou, owners of Cava Protasis waxed eloquent about them. The first sip told us these were something special. All have the commonality of being remarkably fresh, clean, crisp and enjoyable, with a positive tasting sensation and satisfying finish. Seeking information about the winery, a positive mass of information was forthcoming, showing that the land, properties and resources surrounding the fifth generation winemaking family, the Lageders, are more than the creation of fine wines, they are the heart of a centre of art and design, music and culture, with a further consuming interest ecology and sustainability.

So it is fitting that the word "artistry" comes to mind when approaching the wines of Alois Lageder. In what one might term the "popular" category, in their estate wines and "Single Vineyard Selections", the attention to detail, the quality of the grapes and vinification are powerfully evident.

The Alois Lageder wine business is located at Tenuta Löwengang, 35 kms south of Bolzano in the Alto Adige region of north-east Italy. It is the country's most northern wine growing region, on a geographic level with parts of Burgundy. But the number of grape varieties grown is a lot more: Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Müller Thurgau, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc and Gewürztraminer



Alois Lageder in one of his vineyards

are among the whites (together with half a dozen little known varieties), and Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Lagrein and Petit Verdot among the reds. At this latitude and location the wines may be considered along with those of France, Germany and Austria, rather than other parts of Italy. But then, they have a remarkable individuality that makes them seem "New Old World".

Alois Lageder makes around 1,600,000 bottles a year; 75% white, and with 65% of production exported to 68 markets around the world. In each country a dedicated specialist retailing firm is appointed.

The twin responsibilities of vine growing and wine making are shared. Alois Lageder is a true man of terroir, tirelessly researching, studying and experimenting to find the best location for each grape variety and then to produce the finest possible fruit. Luis von Delleman is the winemaker and the range of wines and their consistency is testimony to his abilities. A team of many talents supports them in the production and marketing of the wines and the operation of the company's many other activities

The Cyprus Gourmet "European Wine Man of the Year 2009" is for something more than outstanding modern wines, it is also recognition of

the Lageder philosophy, best expressed in his own words: "Our name stands for an entrepreneurial culture where many elements meet. History and the future, visions and their realisation, as seen through two interpretations of one idea: the Tor Löwengang and the Cason Hirschprunn wineries. A holistic approach and fidelity to nature combined with long-term thinking; all come alive in authentic wines. The end result of a comprehensive concept, coupled with sustainable agriculture. One of respect for nature, appreciation of the world in which we live, and a sense of responsibility to future generations".

From the range of 38 Alois Lageder wines imported and sold by Cava Protasis, CG's tasters selected five with which to start sampling.

WHITE

2007 Rain Riesling ** €11.75 VFM 8/10**

Clean, quite pronounced Riesling notes with refined peach and pear fruit. Dry, medium bodied and well balanced, grapey flavour with crisp refreshing fruit and nice lively acidity. It would pair very well with all kinds of seafood and poultry.

2006 Am Sand Gewürztraminer ** €14.75 VFM 8/10**

Complex aromas showing late harvest characteristics. Notes of tropical fruit combine with floral and herbal undertones, a touch of citrus fruit. Full-bodied, vinous, with grapey flavour, dry. The characteristic delicate bitter twist suggests matching with sausages, pâté and terrines, seafood and Asian food.

RED

2006 Pinot Noir ** €14.30 VFM 9/10**

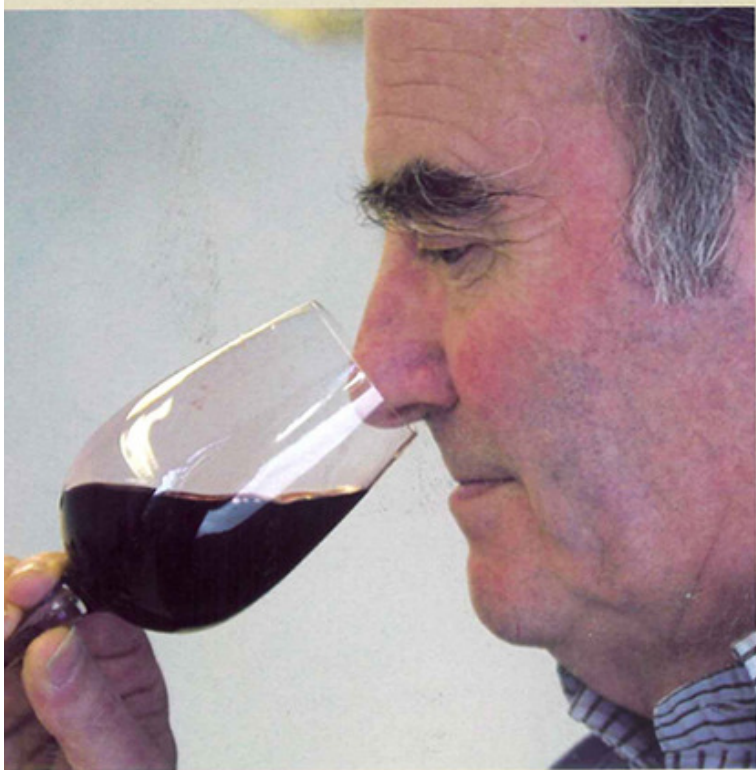
Clean and uplifted wine with somewhat earthy varietal aromas of red fruit, cherries and some spiciness. On the palate it is fruity, mild flavour and medium bodied; an elegant style with fresh finish and a good length to enjoy with white meat, poultry and particularly duck.

2005 Krafus Pinot Noir ** €32.50 VFM 7/10**

This Estate wine has a clean uplifted varietal aroma of red berry fruit impressions, cherries along with oak and spice – white pepper and cinnamon. Quite pronounced flavour on the palate, medium bodied, with the presence of spicy tannin. Elegant style, fresh finish with good length, to enjoy with poultry or roast pork, duck or venison.

2004 Cor Römigberg Cabernet Sauvignon – Cabernet Franc *** €49.00 VFM 9/10**

Pronounced complex aroma, first spicy and floral, reminiscent of tobacco, violets and mint, then fruity – cherry and blackcurrant combined with elegant oak spice. Powerful and rich on the palate, strong tannins, full bodied with intense strong taste, and a long, lasting, fresh and fruity after-taste. Strictly for roast or grilled red meat



Winemaker Luis von Delleman



Krafus

