Winemaker: Markus and Thomas Pitzner
Generation: 2nd

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St. Magdelener Malanders

From brothers Markus and Thomas Puff - young, hip garagistes from the Südtirol DOC - comes this nano-production rendition of one of Bolzano's most historic, autochthonous grapes. Made from 95% Vernatsch (aka Schiava), this St. Magdelener has low alcohol and naturally light tannins but runs long on personality. Mountain berries, fresh herbs, and dark violets grace both the nose and palate, and low yields guarantee a smooth, integrated mouth feel. Crafted from grapes growing on less than a single hectare of land!

WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

Producing tiny batch wines by themselves on their 5-hectare farm above Bolzano, second generation winemakers Markus and Thomas Puff have become our new favorite garagisti - although technically, their cellar was an old arms factory, not a garage! Their wines are harmonic, high altitude, and uncompromising - everything we've come to expect from Alto Adige.

ENOLOGIST

Markus and Thomas Pitzner

TASTING NOTES

Color	Light ruby
Nose	Tart pie cherry and red currant, flanked by notes of dark chocolate, almond skin, and wood smoke
Palate	Fresh, with bright fruit and a solid structure
Finish	Gentile, but lingering

VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

Vineyard Location	Alto Adige - Südtirol DOC, Trentino-Alto Adige
Vineyard Size	1.5 ha
Varietals List	95% Schiava (Vernatsch) 5% Lagrein
Farming Practices	Sustainably farmed; grapes dry-farmed and picked by hand
Elevation	350 m
Soils	Mix of sandy clay and porphyry (red volcanic soil that enhances minerality)
Maturation Summary	In neutral barrels for 3 months, in Steel 3 months and bottled 12 months
In Steel	3 months
Alcohol	12.5 %
Acidity	5.3 g/liter
Residual Sugar	1.8 g/liter
Annual Production	7,000 bottles

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PITZNER

Second generation winemakers Markus and Thomas Puff are young, hip, and full of hop... so rather appropriately, their sub-alpine wines, while serious, have plenty of moxie. As one prime example, their "Buchsenoffner' white cuvee is an amazing, high altitude creation. An endless array of aromas - from kumquat to petrichor - greet the nose, and the palate might just stop you in your tracks with its lush, artisanal mouth feel and long, lemony, DNA dance of a finish. And yet, the two brothers elect to put it in a bottle with a bold, architectural font and an orange screw cap. We love it! Looking at their website, their omnipresent joie de vivre continues: they have openly nicknamed this wine “the cheeky one” and the name on the bottle, "Buchsenoffner", itself translates roughly to “can opener” (presumably as this wine is their favorite way to begin an evening). In our book, this coexistence of stratospheric winemaking and down-to-earth sense of humor and humility makes for a fantastic one-two punch.

Located just outside Bolzano in the town of Cornedo all'Isarco, their small Südtirol estate weighs in at just 5 hectares, with non-contiguous vines growing on both sides of the Iscarus River. The altitude is high (about 400 meters), the soils sandy moraine, and the view spectacular. From their cellar - part of which is 700 years old - you can enjoy a wide open view of the valley below. "Between the two, this place holds a lot of emotional power", says Thomas. With a total annual production between 3500 and 4000 cases, Markus and Thomas do virtually everything themselves on their estate. When asked whether they are their own enologists, we get a sly grin in response: "We do a lot of barrel tastings with friends." Despite the lack of pretense, these two brothers are keenly intuitive in both field and cellar and appear to be on the cusp of something truly spectacular. Their father, Martin, who purchased the vineyard in the 1970s and raised his sons to be the farmers they are today, must certainly be as happy as he is proud.

REGION

TRENTINO-ALTO ADIGE

Italy’s northernmost region of Trentino-Alto Adige is surrounded by the Alps and 99% of it is made up by mountains, therefore agriculture has always been a great challenge here. Only 5% of the agricultural land is situated under 500 meters altitude and only 15% of the stony and rocky fields are actually suitable for growing crops. The region is divided into two zones: Trentino, located towards south, barely touching the northern tip of Lake Garda, with Trento as the capital of both the region and the zone... and Alto Adige, which takes its name from the Adige river, is located north of Bolzano and is also known as South Tyrol.

Archaeological findings reveal that the activity of producing wine dates back to around 2700 BC. It has been discovered that Romans used wooden barrels for producing and transporting wine. Archaeologists also found vines tightened around wooden frames, the precursors of espaliers, which can still be seen today, as they are used between South Tyrol and Verona.

Although terrific wonderful wines, such as from Chardonnay, Sauvignon and Pinot Grigio grapes, are produced in the area, Trentino-Alto Adige is best known for its red wine. However, white wines have gained ground recently and can be compared to the best white wines in Europe. The chilly Alps offer great opportunities to cultivate a refined red wine, and for some time now, producers have focused on single vineyards wine, with very promising results.

The local grape of Alto Adige is Lagrein, while Teroldego and Marzemino are varieties representative of Trentino. These grapes offer distinctive red wines which match the quality of Merlot, Cabernet and sometimes Pinot Nero. Other varieties are also grown, such as Schiava, with quite promising results.

ALTO ADIGE - SÜDTIROL DOC

Home to stunning alpine landscapes, Alto Adige (aka Südtirol) lies underneath Austria and due west of Switzerland. Dominated by mountain ranges, over 85% of this primarily German-speaking region sits above 1000 meters! Although the DOC proper only represents some 1% of Italy's wine production, in terms of geography it's a reasonably large zone, encompassing 50 communes along the length of both the Adige and Isarco rivers. These corridors form a "Y" north to south, with plantings spanning from tranquil valley floor up to dramatic mountain slope. These countless meso-climates ensure a vast array of styles, with soil types varying just as widely, from limestone and clay to volcanic red porphyry and dolomite rock. While it may seem counterintuitive given the northern latitude, most of this DOC tends to have a warm, semi-continental climate including hot summer days (between 30-40 degrees Celsius), cool evenings, and dry, chilly winters. Most of the sub-region's rainfall occurs between June and August, with winds blowing up off of Lake Garda also helping to mitigate the heat. Autumn days are cool, with less precipitation than summer, helping to prolong the growing season and coax extra ripeness from the vines.

Known for some of Italy's most sophisticated and mineral-driven wines, roughly two-thirds of the Südtirol DOC is planted with 20 approved white varieties, including Pinot Grigio (12%), Chardonnay and Gewurtraminer (11% each), Pinot Bianco (10%), and Sauvignon (7%). Only 3 red varieties are permitted, however: Lagrein, Pinot Nero, and Schiava (aka Vernatsch, to which 3 of the DOC's sub-zones are exclusively devoted). With their earth-driven fruit, pronounced acidity, and vertical tannins, Alto Adige's reds are sometimes compared stylistically with those of Alsace. White or red, any DOC wine including the variety on the label must contain at least 85% of