

The Wines of Zuani

Charles Scicolone (September 22, 2012)



A Winery from Friuli That Produces Only Two Wines

It is very unusual to discover a winery that produces only two wines--both from the same white grapes. The name of this unique winery is Zuani. Patrizia Felluga, the daughter of the legendary producer, Marco Felluga, is the owner. I met Patrizia a few years ago when I was working as a sommelier and though I liked her wines, I did not know much about the winery.



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A few months ago Patrizia's children Antonio and Caterina invited me to lunch to taste their new vintages and to tell me about the winery. They said that they and their mother had looked for many years to find the perfect vineyard site. Finally in 2001 they found a 30-acre vineyard whose soil and climate along with the grape varieties would produce a wine, as Antonio put it, "similar to a cru."

Caterina said that it is named Zuani because of a geographic name found on an ancient map of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The estate is set in the hills of Giasbana in the municipality of San Fioriano del Collio – also known as Collio Goriziano.

Antonio told me that the vineyards, all sustainably maintained, are situated on a medium to steep slope with marl and mineral soil. This mineral rich but poor soil produces well structured age-worthy wines. Collio's mild climate and proximity to both the Adriatic Sea and the Alps create a vast difference in the nighttime and day temperatures allowing for a long ripening season.

Friuli is a region that is known for its single variety wines, but at Zuani they created a blend from indigenous Friulano grapes plus international ones, which they feel thrive in this region. Antonio made it clear that their winery was the first in the region to follow the "cru" concept. All of the grapes come from a single vineyard, where Friulano, Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio and Sauvignon thrive.

The Wines

Zuani Vigne Collio Bianco DOC 2011

2009 and 2007 made from Friulano, Chardonnay, Pinot Bianco and Sauvignon Blanc. The percentage of each variety depends on the vintage. Each variety is vinified separately. Cold maceration takes place and fermentation is in stainless steel vats. The wine matures in stainless steel vats until it is ready to be bottled. This is a soft but complex wine with nice fruit, mineral notes and good acidity. It has a long finish and a pleasing aftertaste. I liked all three vintages. The 2011 needed more but the 2009 and 2007 were drinking very well. \$22



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Zuani Zuani Collio Bianco Riserva 2010

2009 and 2008 Grapes- same as above. Cold maceration is followed by maturing in small new French oak barrels with the daily stirring of the lees in the beginning and then weekly. The main difference in the two wines is the grapes for the Zuani Zuani are picked later and it is aged in wood. This gives the wine more concentrated flavors, with hints of citrus fruit, a touch of vanilla and a roundness and fullness that results in a very long finish and lingering aftertaste. This is a white wine that can age. At the lunch, the 2009 was showing the best. \$30

It is also very rare these days when one can taste a wine and say it must be from a certain region. Tasting and drinking these wines I knew that they were from Friuli!

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