

Wine Lover's Guide to Italy's Prosecco Region

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Thanks in part to the recession, economical Americans began switching from Champagne to Prosecco, a more affordable alternative with the same effervescence and celebratory spirit, and never looked back. Its fresh, light quality makes it easy to enjoy with any cuisine (even brunch). While many visitors look forward to the bubbling vino offered throughout Italy, we suggest visiting the countryside where it comes from.

Although a day trip (via tour or hired driver) to the Prosecco region is feasible from Venice, it's worthy of its own long weekend getaway. We recommend renting a car so you can visit multiple towns and drive out to the vineyards. However, you can also take the train to visit the provinces of Veneto and purchase a [Eurail](#) pass to visit multiple destinations.

After a week of tastings, we determined that you truly can't go wrong with Prosecco, Prosecco Superiore, Brut, Dry, or Extra Dry and that half the fun comes from invoking the spirit of the winemaker, the Italian culture, and the ambiance of the sun-soaked vineyards while you imbibe. In addition to popping bottles, we also uncovered an array of sights to see in between vineyard visits, from UNESCO World Heritage Sites to Michelin-starred restaurants to charming accommodations. Here are four of our favorite provinces and recommendations for each.

VENICE

Start your journey in [Venice](#), part of the Prosecco region. With waterways threading the entire city, no other place in the world rivals its unique charm.

What to Do: A romantic ride along its canals, a trip to the [Peggy Guggenheim Collection](#), and a visit to [San Marco Square](#) after dark are absolute musts while you're in town. Don't miss a trip to [Enoteca Mascareta](#) for fabulous wine curated by the eccentric owner, Mauro Lorenzon.

Where to Stay: Converted to a hotel in 1908, [Hotel Saturnia](#) has been owned by the same family for more than a century. Just steps from San Marco Square, it's the perfect blend of ancient Venetian style and modern convenience. If you're looking for a design hotel, check out the Saturnia's sister property, [Ca Pisani](#), which boasts contemporary elegance in the heart of the art district. If you're looking to stay outside the hustle and bustle, the [Hilton Molino Stucky Venice](#) is a quick ferry ride from San Marco Square. The Hilton offers killer views of the Venice skyline and a rooftop pool where guests can enjoy them.

Where to Eat: If you're looking for a romantic meal in an alfresco garden, try [La Caravella](#) or check out [De Pisis](#) for a fancy dinner along the canal. For the perfect traditional Venetian cuisine, check out [Al Covo](#). For outstanding pizza, stop by [Rosso Pomodoro](#). Save room for gelato at the famous **La Boutique del Gelato** (Salizzada San Lio; +39 041 522 3283).

Vineyard to Visit: Thirty-five minutes from Venice proper lies [Venissa Wine Resort](#) (on the minor island of Mazzorbo). Sample the only wine in the world made from the native Venetian Dorona grape. Less than 5,000 bottles are produced per year, and each one is bottled in limited edition Murano glass bottles finished with a gold leaf, which pays homage to the grape variety, which means "gilded." Guests can tour the vineyard, dine at its Michelin-starred restaurant or more casual *osteria*, and spend the night at the resort.

VICENZA

Amidst a city surrounded by fortified walls lies a medieval landscape created by famed architect, Andrea Palladio. [Vicenza's](#) unique architecture led to the town's designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Stroll through [Piazza dei Signori](#) at the heart of the city to find Vicenza's most famous landmarks: the Basilica Palladiana (the medieval courts) and the Torre di Piazza. Enjoy drinks on La Terrazza di Vicenza for sweeping views of the city.

Where to Stay: [Villa Michelangelo](#) is nestled in the Vicenza countryside as a haven for those in search of peace and quiet. Guests are spoiled with luxurious, individually decorated rooms, views overlooking a lush green valley, and a pool among olive trees. Sign up for a class with the chef for the perfect souvenir: the skill of Italian cooking.

Where to Eat: After a long drive up a winding hill you'll reach [Spinechile](#), the brainchild of Michelin-starred chef Corrado Fasolato and his wife Paola. Spinechile is a culinary adventure you'll never forget, with some of the most imaginative dishes you'll ever have.

Vineyard to Visit: Take a tour of [Zonin1821's](#) wine cellar and visit the museum to learn about the history of the vineyard through the Zonin family's journey. Also, check out the unique stamp collection dedicated exclusively to vines and wines. End your visit with a wine tasting with enthusiastic sommelier, Gabriele, who will guide you on a passionate journey through Prosecco's many flavors and sensations.

TREVISO

Only twenty miles north of Venice lies the charming province of Treviso. Although its city center bears a resemblance to Venice, with its meandering canals and breathtaking churches, it's missing one thing: the crowds. This tranquil town, where water wheels idly turn and locals leisurely amble its narrow, cobbled streets, offers a quiet place to enjoy life as the Italians do. Your time here is best spent watching the streams gush by as you sample a glass of Prosecco and nibble on traditional Veneto cuisine at local restaurants and osterie.

What to Do: Visit the [Museum of Antonio Canova](#). Canova was once the finest sculptor in the world, and his work is exhibited worldwide in museums like the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The Temple of Canova, a grand structure across the road where Canova is laid to rest, is also a must

see. Sample Italy's national beverage at [Castagner Italian Distillery](#), one of the finest grappa producers in Italy. But don't expect your typical "firewater." Owner and master distiller, Roberto Castagner, creates innovative grappa for discerning consumers.

Where to Stay: If you're looking for luxury, check out [Hotel Villa Cipriani](#), once home to Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The hotel is located in the small, affluent town of Asolo, known for its stunning mountainous views and its seasonal garden. If you're looking to stay closer to the grapes, you can't go wrong with [Borgoluce's](#) farmhouse. Wander the green landscape of meadows, woods, and vineyards, interrupted only by the property's great castle. Cool off in the bioorganic swimming pool that looks like a small lake and is carefully curated with plants handpicked to purify the water.

Where to Eat: Sample charcuterie, cheeses, and fresh handmade sandwiches at [Dai Naneti](#), a traditional osteria filled with locals of all ages. For a lovely meal along the canals, check out [Odeon alla Colonna](#) and try their coffee pasta for a rush. If you're looking for fancy fare, head to the small town of Oderzo and try [Gellius](#), housed in a prison from the Middle Ages. During construction of the restaurant, Roman and Byzantine ruins were unearthed, and after three years of restoration, you can now dine among priceless archeological remains in the Michelin-starred restaurant.

Vineyards to Visit: Book a guided tour at Villa Marcello, located in the foothills of the Veneto Prealps. Here, you can visit the cellars, sample the Prosecco, and learn about its history in a small museum dedicated to the estate's evolution. [Borgoluce](#) is another family-owned vineyard, and its commitment to environmental responsibility is evident in its sustainable farming techniques. Visit its osteria or Borgoluce Frasca where you can enjoy dishes made with seasonal products from its farm.

PADUA

Art, spirituality, and science coalesce in [Padua](#). It is home to the first botanic garden in the world (now a UNESCO World Heritage Site) and Italy's second oldest university (where Galileo used to teach).

What to See: Book tickets at least a few weeks in advance for the [Scrovegni Chapel](#), a UNESCO site and Padua's version of the Sistine Chapel. Giotto's frescos are truly artistic masterpieces. A visit here is guaranteed to be a trip highlight. [The Basilica of St. Anthony nearby](#), burial place of St. Anthony and a major pilgrimage site, is also worth a stop.

Where to Stay: [Hotel Villa Goetzen](#) is a charming, family-run hotel with a hospitable atmosphere and simple, yet lovely accommodations.

Where to Eat: For a romantic evening, try [Belle Parti](#) in the historical heart of Padua, inside the aristocratic Prosdocimi Palace.

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