

Peak Prosecco? Don't be so sure, says Bisol president



John Stimpfig
July 27, 2018

There is still plenty of scope to promote the quality image of the best Prosecco wines, according to Bisol's management team, which has revamped its range and believes the term 'peak Prosecco' underestimates this part of the market.



Vineyards in the hills of Valdobbiadene, where grapes for top quality Prosecco DOCG are grown. Credit: Mattia Mionetto / Bisol

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Premium **Prosecco** (<https://www.decanter.com/wine/wine-regions/prosecco/>) producer Bisol recently unveiled its new image and product range at Quaglino's restaurant in London, four years after the brand was acquired by the Lunelli Group that also owns the Trentodoc sparkling wine company Ferrari.

The move comes at a time when some people have suggested the UK is now approaching 'peak Prosecco'.

Last year, category growth slowed to the smallest increase in sales since 2011. Analysts are predicting that sales will continue to rise for the next two to three years after which the rate of increase will continue to decline.

Matteo Lunelli, CEO of the Lunelli Group and vice president of Bisol shrugged off such concerns.

‘Prosecco is still growing at a global level, but so far consumers have really only focused on the category rather than the producer.’

‘We see a brand opportunity for Bisol by highlighting the difference in quality between Prosecco and Prosecco Superiore. Essentially, we want to take Bisol to the next level once again in the UK, especially in the on trade and independent merchants.’

Bisol’s President, Gianluca Bisol, whose ancestors first tended vines in Valdobbiadene in 1542, was one the first to conquer the UK market.

He recalled a very different era.

‘When I joined the family company in 1987 Prosecco was only sold in Lombardy and Rome.’

‘Thirty-one years ago, there were just 30 producers and only about 25 million bottles produced. People thought that was the high point of Prosecco and that the UK would never be weaned off Champagne. And look what happened.’

‘Now we want to make Bisol the reference point for Superiore and lift the image of premium, terroir-focused DOCG Prosecco.’

With Ferrari’s investment, Bisol has made big investments in quality over the last four years and has revitalised the range, which now includes five different styles of Superiore made from five different soil types in Valdobbiadene’s steep hillside vineyards.

Bisol also owns 1.5 hectares of vineyard in the famous Cartizze hill.

The Jeio range has also been revamped and now consists of two styles, Brut and Extra Dry, aimed more at casual dining and celebrations.

The UK was and will remain a key market for Bisol, along with the US where a similar strategy will apply.

‘We’re not interested in the low end of the Prosecco market and we’re never going to be the cheapest,’ said Lunelli.

‘You can’t really grow the overall Prosecco production but with a brand like Bisol you can change the focus from quantity to quality. That’s what we want to pioneer. In the long-term, we are looking to achieve double digit growth for both Bisol and Jeio.’

Bisol has no plans to produce a rosé Prosecco (<https://www.decanter.com/wine-news/prosecco-rose-wine-moves-closer-reality-394253/>), although Gianluca Bisol has previously said that he understands why some producers are keen to go down that route.

‘[At Bisol] we are a traditional house and want to focus on the message of Glera, the steep hills of Valdobbiadene and the idea of particular crus and Rives,’ he said.