



Alessio Del Salvo, Head Winemaker for Mionetto; Kim Beto, VP/Prestige Accounts for Southern Glazer's of California; and Mionetto USA CEO Eno Ceola at Hotel Vitale's Americano restaurant in San Francisco.

Mionetto Is One of the World's Oldest Wine Producers

KIM BETO RELAYS HIS ENTHUSIASM FOR THIS HISTORIC PROSECCO

photos by John Curley

LET'S EXPLORE ONE of my favorite subjects: bubbles, or more specifically, Mionetto. Founded in 1887, the company is located in the small village of Valdobbiadene, which is nestled in the heart of the Prosecco area in Italy's Veneto region.

At Piperade in San Francisco, I sat down to taste base wines made from Glera, the still wine grape of Prosecco, on their own—a first for me. As I sipped wines from various areas, such as DOC wines from Friuli and Treviso and DOCG wines from Conegliano, Valdobbiadene, and Cartizze, I noticed the high acidity levels right away. Each wine, however, had a different mouthfeel depending on their soil types, altitude, and aspect. I found it educational but also eye-opening to taste the simple, fruity, and sometimes bitter Glera samples before moving on to the Prosecco line from Mionetto.

Packaged in its recognizable orange label, the Mionetto Prosecco DOC Treviso Brut is easy drinking at 11% ABV. Add that to its full mouthfeel, and the Prosecco fits the description of Mionetto USA CEO Eno Ceola: "Champagne in blue jeans."

As we move to two very serious wines—Mionetto Luxury Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG and Cartizze DOCG—you see right away how integrated the brightness is with complexity, floral tones, and texture. Both wines offer great value, and those who sell sparkling wines at their restaurant or retail store should make sure to show

off the upscale packaging. The hard-to-find Cartizze, which some call the “Grand Cru” of Prosecco, is a must try.

Alessio Del Salvio, Head Winemaker for Mionetto, has been with the winery for the last 17 years. He recently led an amazing tasting at San Francisco’s Hotel Vitale, bringing out a new wine called Valdobbiadene Millesimato 2016 Cuvée Anniversario. The “wow factor” of this Prosecco was immediately apparent; with its preternatural texture and seemingly-everlasting finish, it was unlike any I have ever tried. This is a ridiculously well-made wine from grapes sourced across three family growers who have provided grapes to Mionetto for 130 years. Del Salvio explained that he created this marque to pay homage to Mionetto’s heritage, and that the wine reflected how

he imagined Prosecco was produced back then with no access to sugar.

Attending sommelier Mark Guillaudeu from Oakland’s Commis told me he will feature this wine in a pairing, as will Kelly Sullivan from Jackson Fillmore in San Francisco after she fell in love with this small-production gem. Northern California will be lucky to get 40 six-packs.

I couldn’t stop thinking about how amazing that wine tasted, so I asked Del Salvio what secrets were behind the making of the 130th Anniversary bottle. “Everything happens in the vineyard but our growers are the best in the area,” he responded. “Some vines are 25–30 years and the key is sustainable farming, combined with pneumatic presses, impeccable yeast, and low-temperature fermentation.”

Mionetto is among the most recognizable pioneers for Prosecco in the U.S., and thanks to Ceola, the brand has been continually growing in both sales and reputation stateside since 1997. As we tasted Mionetto’s orange label wine at Hotel Vitale’s highly-acclaimed Americano restaurant—a long-time supporter of Mionetto by the glass—we all agreed how superbly it paired with Chef Josh Perez’s food. Prosecco is a great apéritif, superb in mimosas, and complements a wide variety of foods; it also ventures far beyond its usual territory as a great celebration wine while being quite affordable. I believe Del Salvio has launched a new trend in Prosecco with his no-dosage bottling—I hope you get to taste it sometime. *sj*

All the best for the holidays,
Kim Beto

From left to right, Kim Beto, Alessio Del Salvio, and Enore Ceola enjoy Mionetto with a rooftop view of the Presidio from Hotel Vitale.



DID YOU KNOW? Sergio Mionetto, grandson of Mionetto’s founder, was the first to introduce the Charmat technique to the Prosecco region after World War II. Until then, Prosecco was made using the *méthode champenoise* (secondary fermentation in bottles). Unlike Champagne’s Chardonnay, Pinot Meunier, or Pinot Noir, the delicate Glera grape lacked improvement with bottle aging but rapidly lost quality within a few months. The Charmat method, by contrast, extends the wine’s freshness and fruity personality.