

Villa Russiz: where wine excellence and concrete solidarity come together

scritto da Fabio Piccoli | 20 Novembre 2024



I only recently learned about Villa Russiz's commitment to **solidarity**, embodied in their **Casa Famiglia** project, a **refuge of hope** and **growth** for **children and teenagers in difficulty**, offering them a **safe and family-like environment**.

I felt **ashamed** of my ignorance, but at the same time, I understood even more the **value** of this historic winery in the heart of **Collio**, which has never sought to **boast** about such an extraordinary and socially impactful project.

The history of **Casa Famiglia** has deep roots. It originates from the **charitable work** of **Countess Elvine Ritter de Zahony** and **Countess Adele Cerruti**, who transformed Villa

Russiz into a **military hospital and lazaret** during the **Great War**. Today, the **Fondazione Villa Russiz** continues this tradition of **care and hospitality**, investing the **profits** from its **agricultural and real estate operations** into the **care and education** of the children it welcomes.

In short, **Casa Famiglia** at **Villa Russiz** is more than just a **shelter**: it is a place where **children and teenagers** can regain **hope**, develop their **skills**, and build a **better future** thanks to the **loving care** and **educational support** they receive.

However, it was during a **recent visit** to Villa Russiz, guided by the **excellent storytelling** of its director **Giulio Gregoretti**, that I fully grasped the **many values** that make this a **unique reality** in the **Italian wine landscape**.

The story of **Villa Russiz** is a truly fascinating one, intertwining **love, passion for the land, and dedication to winemaking**. Founded in 1868, the estate was born from the union of **Elvine Ritter de Zahony** and **Count Theodor Karl Leopold Anton de la Tour Voivrè**. Given to them by **Elvine's father**, the **Russiz estate**, nestled in the **gentle hills** of the **Collio Goriziano**, became the heart of an **extraordinary winemaking venture**.

Theodor, an **expert agronomist and winemaker**, immediately recognized the **potential** of the **territory**. Introducing **innovative cultivation techniques** and **French grape varieties**, he laid the foundation for the **future success** of **Villa Russiz**. Legend has it that the count **transported French vine cuttings** in **bouquets of flowers** as gifts for his wife, symbolizing the **union of love and labor**.

In the following years, under the leadership of **Edino Menotti**, the **winery** underwent **renovation** with the **support of the local community**, aiming to **produce wines of the highest quality**.

Its inclusion in the Consorzio Collio in 1964 and the achievement of DOC status in 1968 marked key milestones in the pursuit of excellence at Villa Russiz.

Today, the Foundation continues to innovate and receives prestigious awards, such as the Gambero Rosso prize for Gräfin de La Tour and the Cangrande della Scala medal at Vinitaly. The Cru line dedicated to Theodor De La Tour and the Limited Edition Sauvignon Bleu are clear testaments to its ongoing commitment to quality and elegance.

But Villa Russiz also perfectly embodies the exceptional wine-growing vocation of Collio, a territory with few rivals in the world when it comes to enhancing the quality of wines, especially white wines.

The tasting experience I had within the charming historic rooms of the Villa allowed me to truly understand how this winery serves as an outstanding interpreter of the oenological values of Collio, which can be summed up as: elegance, finesse, drinkability, and longevity.

Achieving the perfect balance between extreme elegance and immediate pleasure is no easy feat, yet the wines of Villa Russiz express this beautifully. Take the Friulano, for example, which is sometimes underestimated but which I like to describe as a “Democratic Nobility”—an excellence accessible to all. This is a rare quality, one that only a few wines worldwide can claim.

Not to mention that in these very gentle hills, Sauvignon Blanc has found an ideal habitat, reaching qualitative peaks that I have rarely encountered, even in international terroirs considered highly suited for this variety.

Yet, I would fail to fully capture the identity of Villa Russiz if I did not mention its strong hospitality vocation and constant commitment to developing its wine tourism offering.

Already today, **Villa Russiz** is an **unmissable stop** for those **seeking authentic wine destinations**—places that **speak of history** yet remain **constantly contemporary**. Places where one can **admire a captivating rural and vineyard landscape**, witnessing the **visionary courage of entrepreneurs** who have **preserved it at its best**.

In these weeks, **renovation work** on the **Villa** has begun, further **enhancing its hospitality** and positioning it as a **cult destination** on the **global wine tourism scene**.



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