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The Weekender: Franciacorta, Italy

Get to know this Southern Italian wine region and discover that there is more to Italian sparkling wine than Prosecco

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Franciacorta, Italy is an Italian wine region just about 50 miles, or an hour, outside of Milan. While Prosecco has become synonymous with Italian sparkling wine, Franciacorta is an entirely different animal — made in a Champagne-style, and completely delicious. But where to begin exploring the region? Below, find your complete guide.

Where to Stay:

The [Relais Mirabella](#) is the perfect anchor for your journey through the region. Overlooking Lake Iseo, the 29-room hotel is surrounded by amazing greenery and, yes, a pool. There's a restaurant on-premise which features fresh pastas and seafood from the region (along with other cuisine, of course). Plus, an impeccable wine list, naturally. Make sure to inquire about access — due to their picturesque setting, they host many weddings throughout the year.



Where to Eat:

Due Colombe is a Michelin-starred restaurant that seriously wows. Located at Borgo Antico and set in an ancient village, it was recently restored and is upscale without being stuffy. The cuisine, by Chef Stefano Cervenì who won the prestigious Michelin star in 2008, takes its cue from traditional recipes (including ones from the chef's family) and highlights it with a modern take.

Filari Dispari in the town of Brescia, a city in the northern Italian region of Lombardy and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is a concept restaurant where you can select a wine and their sommeliers and expert chefs will pair it with different meals for an unforgettable meal.

Da Nadia was awarded a Michelin star in 2019, and is definitely worth a visit. Delicious dishes with a focus on fresh seafood take center stage, while the bright and airy dining room makes for a truly great experience.

What to Do:

It's a wine region — so you'll want to taste some wines. Here, some top wineries to check out:

Ca' del Bosco — Spacious and super modern with amazing art scattered throughout the premises, this winery and vineyard is located near Lake Iseo and is the highest vineyard in Franciacorta. It's a stunner, for sure.

Majolini — This winery overlooks its vineyard and feels like a charming home-away-from-home. Owners and cousins Simone and Elena inherited the winery from their grandfather who originally bought the vineyard on top of the hill in 1960s. The mostly female-run winery is on top of a hill made from limestone, which means their wines take a bit of time to age to reduce the acidity.



Corte Bianca — This place is absolutely stunning (and *made* for Instagram). At its heart, it's an organic and sustainably-focused winery owned by Marina Tonsi, an architect and interior designer who brings her passion and eye for design to Franciacorta. The vineyards are nestled in the heart of Franciacorta, between the hills and the lake, and the winery was renovated from a traditional Lombardy farmhouse with the most advanced green architecture. Try and email to get a visit — they only open when they're there, and it's worth the extra effort, promise.

Lastly, if you're into classic cars, try to visit 1000 Miglia race while it's in Brescia — AKA the “the most beautiful race in the world.” It's seriously cool (and charming).

