

Costadilà

Visits

This visit at Costadilà took place in April, 2012.



Words by Jules Dressner, photos by Lauren Feldman, Shawn Mead and Ian Becker.

From our hotel in Conegliano, we were immediately greeted by Ernesto Cattel, the brainchild of Costadilà.



He easily recognized us since we were the only obnoxious, loud Americans screaming in English.

For the most part, we here at Louis/Dressner haven't put up too much info on Costadilà (check out their [meticulously detailed profile](#)), so I'm glad that we can finally shed some light on what Ernesto has been doing since 2006 (the first wine was in 2007). The Costadilà project is the combined effort of Ernesto, Mauro Lorenzon (who owns the famous Osteria Mascareta in Venice), their oenologist Leonello (didn't catch his last name) and a few silent partners/investors; it's truly a labor of love, since all three currently have full time careers. The goal is to valorize and rejuvenate the rich agricultural traditions of [Tarzo](#) by reintroducing natural farming -however small the scale- to the region. The scope of the project goes well beyond wine, and emphasizes polyculture: the long term goal is to have vines, fruits, vegetables, cereals and livestock coexist on the same plots of land. They hope that by creating this example, they can create a model farm for the region, so other farmers who are trapped in monoculture can see the way out. Completing this cycle, the produce grown from Costadilà land is then used and sold in local businesses, such as Osteria la Muda where we had dinner.



Nestled in the little mountain village of [Cison di Valmarino](#), Osteria la Muda is one of the oldest restaurants in Italy, dating back to the 1470! When the last owner decided to sell the space, Ernesto and 6 other partners didn't hesitate to remodel and keep this landmark alive. They are currently touching up the upstairs and planning to open an agriturismo. Also, the place is open till 1am almost every night.

The next morning, it was time to visit the first of many vineyard sites.



Our first stop was a completely isolated plot, only accessible by a single dirt road. Tucked away in the mountains, this little area has a rather interesting history: up until the early 70's vines had been grown here, but when the owner retired no one wanted them and the land became abandoned. It was then taken over by a [German hippie](#) commune. Then they left, and nothing really happened until Ernesto saw the terroir's potential and decided to replant vines two years ago. These vines are coming from 6 different clones, all in selection massale, and are a mix of the four traditional prosecco grapes (Glera, Prosecco, Bianchetta and Verdizo, but more on that later). The soil is composed of clay with a marn subsoil at 15-20 meters.



Ernesto is replanting the vines exactly where they were originally located in the 1970's.