



VALUE BRANDS OF THE YEAR 2004



Alois Lageder

Pinot Grigio doesn't have to be dull, even for less than \$15. Ask Alois Lageder. The man is passionate about every grape the Alto Adige grows, because he believes in the land his family has tended since the early 1800s. He works most of those vineyards with sustainable viticultural techniques (a quarter of them biodynamically), and encourages the over 150 grape growers he buys grapes from to do the same; and he makes the wines in an ultra-modern but low-impact winery designed by local architects, which runs mostly on solar and geothermic energy. All this sounds expensive (and some of his wines are), but at the "Classic" level, Lageder's wines are uniformly affordable. Our favorites this year included the '02 Chardonnay, a wisp of a white, with leesy lemon-meringue flavors, and the Pinot Bianco, taut and orange-scented with far more vivacity than most. The real head-turner, however, was his '02 Pinot Grigio, a lively, spicy white with the freshness of Alto Adige's mountain air and a toasty, mineral richness. It would be a beautiful Pinot Grigio at any price, but it happens to be just \$14.99.

91 2002 Alto Adige Pinot Grigio	\$14.99 (4/04)
87 2002 Alto Adige Pinot Bianco	\$12.49 (4/04)
87 2002 Alto Adige Chardonnay	\$12.49 (4/04)
GV 2002 Alto Adige Riff Pinot Grigio	\$10.99 (4/04)