

Alto Adige Quality Products

An Overview

The term “Alto Adige quality products” is a **collective name** for **agricultural products** with a **mark of origin** and **quality seal**.

It comprises:

Products with a European Designation of Origin

- Alto Adige DOC Wine
- Speck Alto Adige PGI (PGI = Protected Geographical Indication)
- South Tyrol Apples PGI (PGI = Protected Geographical Indication)
- Stelvio or Stilsfer PDO Cheese (PDO = Protected Designation of Origin)



The **European Designations of Origin** and the **EU Quality Logos** were introduced with a **European regulation** and are regulated by the **EU Commission**.

(https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/schemes_en)

Products with the South Tyrol Seal of Quality

- Milk and dairy products
- Bread
- Grappa
- Vegetables (potatoes, cauliflower, asparagus, radicchio, beets, iceberg lettuce, cabbage, sauerkraut, red cabbage, and turnips)
- Berry fruits (strawberries, raspberries)
- Stone fruits (sweet cherries, apricots)
- Fruit products (fruit juice, fruit vinegar, fresh apple pieces, dried fruit, jams, fruit spreads)
- Honey
- Herbs and spices
- Meat (beef, pork)
- Free-range eggs
- Beer



The **South Tyrol Seal of Quality** was introduced in **December 2005** with **Provincial Law No. 12** of that year and is **regulated by the provincial government** (<https://www.marchioombrello-altoadige.it/>)

History

In the food sector, the names “Alto Adige”, “South Tyrol”, and “Südtirol” have always meant the embodiment of **high quality**.

That **outstanding image** is based on one hand upon the **natural production processes** that date back centuries and which have been maintained to this very day. On the other hand, this top image of Alto Adige products is also the result of years of **consistent and serious activities with inspections and publicity** which the Province of South Tyrol carried out with the Bolzano Chamber of Commerce and with EOS since 2007 and has continued to carry out with IDM Südtirol since 2016.

The **legal requirements** for the use of the names “Alto Adige”, “South Tyrol”, or “Südtirol” in the food sector were created in **1976** with the introduction of a separate **seal of approval** of local products, the “**South Tyrol trademark**”.

This was introduced upon the initiative from the Commissioner for Trade by **Provincial Law No. 44 of November 10, 1976**. With this, Alto Adige became the **forerunner** in Europe.

On the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary, the provincial commissioner of agriculture at the time, Werner Frick, outlined the significance of the Südtirol trademark as follows: “Right during these periods of food scandals, consumers are seeking precise information about the origin, composition, and processing of products. This guarantee is offered by the Südtirol trademark as a testimony to the quality and origin of the food.”

That statement is now more current than ever. The good reputation and the high level of recognition which Alto Adige quality products enjoy in South Tyrol and beyond are the proof that the decision by the province of South Tyrol for the “Südtirol trademark” was absolutely the right one as a guarantee of **high, proven quality**.

The round Südtirol label was first introduced in 1976 for Alto Adige apples and pears. Milk, speck [traditional Tyrolean farmer's bacon], bread, vegetables, berries, grappa, and honey little by little expanded the palette of quality products.

Every protected product has to meet **strict criteria** in order to be able to carry the inscription “Südtirol”: the products must be produced in Alto Adige under the adherence to strict rules and are constantly tested through rigid inspections.

For the **producers** or those who **make use of the trademark**, the use of the seal of approval brings along the advantage of a **higher market value**.

The **consumers in Alto Adige** are willing to pay more money for Alto Adige quality products (Apollis studies 2008 and 2015).

Soon after the introduction of the Südtirol trademark, the goal was already being pursued of achieving the best possible **synergies** between the individual business areas so that in the future, a **stronger market presence** would be guaranteed both within the country and abroad under the **single umbrella brand “Südtirol”**.

In **2005**, that **umbrella brand “Südtirol”** was introduced.

As a result of that, further synergies have been built up, and Alto Adige is not perceived in a **succinct and uniform** manner over all **means of communication**. Alto Adige is thus a **very successful** example of **cross-linked regional marketing** in Europe.

In 2005, the seal of quality “Qualität Südtirol” superseded the trademark – the addition of the German word for “quality” indicates the **high level and inspected quality** of the products, while the message “Südtirol” indicates their **origin**.

The **seal of quality** thus forms a **unified whole** with the **umbrella brand of Südtirol**, making possible a strong, uniform presence of local quality products and services.

Twelve products or product categories currently carry the “Qualität Südtirol” mark.

The Special Case of Milk

In the milk sector, we have on one hand the **seal of quality** for the **entire branch**, and on the other hand, a **product** with a **European Designation of Origin**, the **Stelvio or Stilsfer PDO Cheese**.

Legal Regulations for the European Designations of Origin and the South Tyrol Seal of Quality

Products with a **European Designation of Origin** may **NOT** additionally carry the **South Tyrol Seal of Quality**; in the publicity campaigns, those products have their own image (see wine!)

With **joint appearances of all quality products**, such as at a tradeshow or at an Alto Adige festival in trade, the **umbrella brand Südtirol** is used as a unifying theme.

The **connecting elements** are the **guaranteed origin** and the **quality standards** that go beyond the legally required minimum standards as well as the obligatorily prescribed **inspections**.

All products are regulated by **production requirements** or **specifications**.

The **difference** is that the **European Designations of Origin** (South Tyrol Apple PGI, Alto Adige DOC Wines, Speck Alto Adige PGI, and Stelvio or Stilsfer PDO Cheese) are registered in the **European Database of Origin and Registration (DOOR)** (<http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/door/list.html>) and belong to and are supervised by the **various consortia** as group marks, while the **South Tyrol Seal of Quality** is a **group mark** that belongs to the **province** and is registered by it which, according to the **mark usage contract**, is transferred to the users of the mark (associations in the case of fruit, and otherwise individual producers) with conditions.

In summary, the following can be emphasized:

- **All products taken together** (products with the seal of quality, products with a European Designation of Origin for speck, apples, Stilsfer cheese and wine) are designated as **Alto Adige Quality Products / Südtiroler Qualitätsprodukte / Prodotti di Qualità Alto Adige**.
- Speck Alto Adige PGI, South Tyrol Apple PGI, Stelvio or Stilsfer PDO Cheese, and Alto Adige DOC or PDO Wine carry a **European Designation of Origin**.
- The **South Tyrol Seal of Quality** is first and foremost a **quality seal** (the standard of quality must be higher than the legal minimum) and is secondly a **guarantee of origin**.
- The **main raw materials** for products with the South Tyrol Seal of Quality have to originate in **Alto Adige**.
- The products and producers are subjected to **regular inspections** (of the production sites and of the products themselves). The quality criteria and inspection regimens for all products are established in the **specifications**.
- The **owner of the seals of quality** is the **Autonomous Province of Bolzano**, while the **European Designations of Origin** are registered in a separate **European database** and are managed by the corresponding consortia.
- Every year, **IDM Südtirol** is assigned the execution of the **publicity program** of the individual product groups or the advertising of the seals of quality.
- In the **publicity**, the **seal of quality itself** must be at the forefront, not the individual producers and their own respective brands.

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