

THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS

★★★★

This might appear to be a film about rare and expensive fungi, but Italian truffle hunters and their canine companions prove to be the real subjects of this tender documentary. Without narration or any direct-to-camera interviews, American directors Michael Dweck and Gregory



Kershaw expose the arduous conditions endured to collect the culinary delicacy in the northern Italian region of Piedmont, where the prized Alba white truffle grows – before it's excessively marked up when re-sold. Truffle hunting, as explained by the aging men, is demanding work. It's dangerous for their dogs too, who risk eating poisonous bait traps. The mutual love story between man and dog forms the emotional core, while the filmmakers investigate the predicament facing the hunters, who operate in a shifting industry. With symmetrical framing and muted pastels that evoke a whimsical Wes Anderson aesthetic, and hysterical sequences of scavenging through the forest from the dogs' point-of-view, *The Truffle Hunters* delights and charms. **JAMES MADDEN**