



Winemaker: Damiano Sicca
Generation: 3rd



Barolo DOCG

A phenomenal value from stem to stern, this classic Barolo delivers a complex nose of black cherry, plum tobacco leaf, mint and fall forest floor... with the dark fruit and earthy components repeating across a taut, juicy, and correct palate. Its telltale tannins are firm yet integrated, increasing toward the wine's pleasantly dry finish. 9 growers from Novello, Monforte, and La Morra contributed to this small-batch offering from the Clavesana co-operative. 94 Points - JS

WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

Against a backdrop of snow-covered Alps, this collective of 150 small, sustainable farms focuses their efforts squarely on the Dolcetto grape, and most especially the Dogliani DOCG. Clean and correct - yet highly accessible - wine remains their mantra!

ENOLOGIST

Damiano Sicca



TASTING NOTES

Color cherry skin with brick highlights
Nose black cherry, black and red plum, tobacco leaf, hints of mint and fall forest floor
Palate correct and clean, with an old-school mid-palate
Finish pleasant, with dry vertical tannins



VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

Vineyard Location	Barolo DOCG, Piedmont
Vineyard Size	20 ha
Varietals List	100% Nebbiolo
Farming Practices	Sustainably farmed, including dry-farmed; grapes picked by hand
Elevation	250-300 m
Soils	Marly clay; blue marl
Maturation Summary	In neutral barrels for 18 months, in Steel 12 months and bottled 12 months
In Steel	12 months
Alcohol	14.5 %
Annual Production	60,000 bottles



REGION

PIEDMONT

As the name might suggest, Piedmont (trans. 'foot of the mountain') lies in the NW corner of Italy, with Alps shielding it on two sides. 40% of the region is in fact mountainous, and an additional 30% covered in subalpine hills. Borders are shared with Switzerland to the north and France to the west, with the Mediterranean coastline just 90 minutes south. This dual proximity lends itself to bold, structured wines that stand the test of time: ice-cold air from the Alps blows down at night, replacing the warm afternoon temperatures afforded by Mediterranean breezes. These significant diurnal swings allow grapes to develop over longer periods of time, often deepening their natural tannic structure.

Often described as the "Burgundy" of Italy, few would fail to place Piedmont among the world's very finest wine regions. This reputation has been earned in part thanks to its numerous small-scale, family-operated wineries and a near obsessive focus on quality. With entire villages dedicated to the production of wine, it's not unusual to hear stories of winemakers who "sleep amongst their vines", or profess goals such as "making better wine than the French".

Importantly, the region is home to more DOCGs than any other in Italy. Barolo and Barbaresco (accounting for just 3% of Piedmont's production) are just the tip of the iceberg. The Nebbiolo grape alone makes up 13 DOC/DOCG certified wines, and, thanks to topographical variation, the differences between one tiny town and the next can be astounding. With their different altitudes and expositions, for example, the Langhe hills around the town of Alba are Italy's answer to the Côte d'Or. Even though Nebbiolo has a reputation for big tannins and long-term aging, many of the sub-regions (i.e. Langhe, Alba) produce softer styles with a similar weight to whole-cluster Pinot Noir. Single vineyards in close proximity can produce very different wines, which is also why we see so many single-vineyard bottlings.

BAROLO DOCG

Historically known as "the wine of the King and the King of wines", Barolo hails from Nebbiolo vineyards located on the southern side of the Langhe. The designation overlaps 11 villages overall, however only vineyards on southern facing slopes enjoy DOCG status. While differences run wide from one hill to the next, Baroli from the western villages of La Morra and Barolo tend to be a bit lighter and more open than those of Castiglione Falletto, Monforte d'Alba and Serralunga d'Alba to the east and north.

Since the late 19th century, efforts have been made to identify which Barolo vineyards produce the highest quality wine. Inspired by the prestige of Burgundy's Grand Crus, producers began separating their holdings into individual lots and labeling the wines with these single vineyards. In 2010, the Barolo Consorzio introduced the Menzioni Geografiche Aggiuntive (additional geographic mentions), or MeGA subzones for short. 181 sites were officially recognized, ergo the term Vigna (Italian for vineyard) can now be used on labels if the vineyard lies within an approved micro-zone.

Although it's geographically close to the Barbaresco DOCG, Barolo enjoys a different meso-climate that can yield very different wines. Local laws require extremely low yields, and Barolo must be aged for a total of 38 months, including 18 in the barrel. Riservas, in turn, are aged for a minimum of 5 combined years.



CANTINA CLAVESANA

With 150 members and roughly 320 combined hectares under vine, this hard-working, multi-generational co-operative is based in the town of Clavesana – in turn located just south of Monforte d'Alba in the province of Cuneo. Here, plants typically enjoy more altitude than the next-door Barolo district (the co-op's vines span 280 to 600 meters), and while Nebbiolo exists, Clavesana's focus lies firmly on their beloved Dolcetto grape. While the average member's farm is tiny (less than 2 hectares), as a collective, Cantina Clavesana has positioned themselves as the largest producer of Dolcetto in the Langhe. Beyond this, small amounts of Nebbiolo, Arneis, and Pinot Noir are also grown – and in true Piemontese form, they also count honey and hazelnuts amongst their agricultural products.

Despite the geographic proximity to Alba, Clavesana's hilly sub-zone has a cooler, fresher mesoclimate and is known for its streak of white clay which contributes to the acidic and tannic structure of Dolcetto. (Overall, the Dogliani DOCG is considered to be ground zero for more substantive, complex expressions of the small, tannic grape.) In a landscape of increasingly expensive Piemontese wines, we found theirs to have a fantastic cost-to-quality ratio, and we applaud their tendency to create wines of a clean, traditional style.