

2012 Barolo

Giacomo Fenocchio, Piedmont, Italy

Product details

Vintage:	2012	Drinking:	Now 2024
Producer:	Giacomo Fenocchio	Alcohol:	
Region:	Piedmont	Variety:	
Country:	Italy		

Tasting notes

Modern but restrained fruit with a tremendous floral scent, dark chocolate and leather. Manages to tame the wild tannins of Nebbiolo, giving a fine abrasion on the palate and bright acidity. Remarkably delicate structure, and very much drinkable now

About the producer

GIACOMO FENOCCHIO WINE

Since 1864, five generations of the Fenocchio family have been producing wine in the heart of Barolo - most of them born in the same yellow house in Monforte d'Alba, at the top of a hillside covered in Nebbiolo grapes.

In 1947, the young Giacomo Fenocchio took control of the estate, and built up the winemaking significantly. In the 1960s, he acquired parcels of land on different hillsides around Alba and the Giacomo Fenocchio label began gaining international recognition.

Giacomo Fenocchio passed away in 1989 and, like his father, Claudio Fenocchio had a steep learning curve (albeit supported by his brothers Albino and Alberto). This coincided with the "Barolo Wars"... modernisers shortened maceration periods, encouraged malolactic fermentation and aged the wine in small barriques - all with the aim of softening the traditionally robust tannins of Barolo and making it a wine for drinking young rather than ageing. Faced with the choice between a commercial approach and maintaining the philosophy of his father, Claudio opted for something else: "radical traditionalism".

Claudio says, "Perhaps somebody up there advised me to be true to the tradition of our terroir." But, while he planted foundations in the "traditional" camp, he did not set out to simply preserve his father's legacy, but to build on it. The 1989 estate's 7 hectares have grown to 14 now, all in grand cru locations. While the majority are still in Bussia Sottana, close by the winery, Fenocchio also owns vineyards in Cannubi, Castellero and Villero in Castiglione Falletto.

Fenocchio has not taken up organic or biodynamic farming methods but, on the other hand, the estate never took to chemical fertilisers or herbicides, so diverse ground cover and natural predators protect the vines, which grow at their own pace. And in the winery, fermentation is similarly driven by nature and the local micro-flora.

Technically, Claudio has found a way of producing wines which have approachable fruit when young, yet built around a strong tannic structure which does not overwhelm early on, but encourages the development of the wine over years. It is partly due to some green harvesting and careful selection, partly due to enzymatic reaction (ironically) during the long fermentation, which melds the fruit and tannin seamlessly. Barolos are aged for five months in stainless steel, two years in



Slovenian oak and a further year in the bottle before release.

More than defining itself as traditional or modern Barolo, Giacomo Fenocchio wine is an expression of terroir. As well as the excellent lead Barolo, there are specific bottlings from Fenocchio's different vineyards. Bussia's compact clay and limestone has subtle notes of tobacco, cherry and orange; Cannubi's and Castellero's lighter, sandier soils have similar flavours but with drier fruit; and Villero's iron-rich clay and limestone comes through in a leafy, ferrous, rich wine. The vines closest to the family home also receive special treatment in the Bussia Riserva - velvety tannins gently carry truffle, herbs and spices through the nose, onto the palate and into a pleasingly long finish.

In addition to Nebbiolo, the Fenocchio team also works with other traditional Piedmont grape varieties - notably Dolcetto (fresh and fruity, with balancing dryness and bitter notes) and Barbera (full-bodied, with an intense bouquet and distinct acidity).

The Fenocchio family is fiercely proud of its Langhe background. However, in the past decade, Claudio has crossed not the Rubicon, but the Tanaro river to acquire a parcel of land in the Roero region of the Piedmont. Here he has again opted for the traditional approach - rather than plant Chardonnay, as many in the region do, he has stuck with indigenous Arneis, resulting in a pale yellow wine with tropical fruit on the nose, and crisp apple on the palate, although with a creamy texture. Again, rather than being a compromise, it is a wine that achieves two different targets - just like the Giacomo Fenocchio Barolo.

All of these wines have been available in the UK, imported by Armit Wines since 2010.

Explore our full selection of Giacomo Fenocchio wines online.

GIACOMO FENOCCHIO WINE