



The Release of the Single Vineyards

“This year we will release the single vineyards Barbaresco 2023 and the single vineyards Barolo 2022: two opposite vintages that offer us the chance to reflect.”

Not so much on what we did in the cellar, but on what the vine experienced, day after day. 2022 was a tough, severe, yet remarkably coherent year.

We had never seen a vintage so hot and dry: temperatures constantly above average, a lack of water from beginning to end. The conditions were extreme, but stable. No real surprises. The vine was able to adapt and keep that pace all the way through: it grew little, developed small leaves and compact clusters, with berries whose thick skins proved highly resistant to sunburn.

It became an early vintage — harvest began around mid September — but surprisingly different from other warm vintages of the past. The wines do not



show cooked fruit, nor balsamic excesses or burning alcohol. On the contrary, they display freshness, vibrant fruit, structure, and elegant tannins. They are almost classic wines, which is incredible for such an un-classic vintage. Fleshy, earthy, compact, powerful — especially in Serralunga, where that power is expressed with particular intensity. It was a vintage of continuous stress, but consistent stress. And it was precisely this consistency that allowed the vine to organize itself, to find its own proportion.

If 2022 was the year of silent endurance, 2023 was something else entirely: it felt as though we lived through five different vintages in a single season.

Winter was mild and dry, enough to make us fear a repeat of 2022. Then, from May to July, abundant rainfall arrived along with below average temperatures. In early July a violent hailstorm hit the area, sparing most vineyards almost by sheer luck. August brought a sharp drop in temperatures, followed by a wave of scorching heat in the last week of the month. September and October, finally, felt like summer again. Ripening slowed down, and Nebbiolo harvest began only in early October. There is no linear trajectory in this vintage, but a constant alternation of stops and starts. So how does one make it to the end of such a year? Not through linearity, but through the capacity to respond. The vine, phase by phase, learned to regain balance each time that balance was challenged. Perhaps this is the most surprising aspect: the most discontinuous, seemingly the most difficult year is also the one that gives unexpectedly balanced wines.

Refined, elegant wines with intense notes of fruit and flowers, extremely soft tannins, a structure that is not opulent but well defined. Wines where the grace and delicacy of Nebbiolo emerge in full.

Both vintages were extreme. Both resolved themselves in balance. What emerges most clearly is the resilience of Nebbiolo — and of the territories it grows in — the ability to transform difficult conditions into complete, harmonious wines. In 2022, that balance takes the form of compactness and fullness. In 2023, it expresses itself as grace and elegance. Two different expressions, yet both deeply true.” *Gaia Gaja*

2023 Vintage Report

We seriously feared of reliving the drought of 2022 as from October through April we suffered a severe scarcity of water. In March the Tanaro river was dry and the hills barren. From May 1st the character of the vintage suddenly changed completely.

Abundant rainfall and temperatures lower than usual in May and June led to vines greater productivity and, as a result, extended the period for full grapes maturation. July and August were hot and dry, on the 7th of July a violent hailstorm affected the region, fortunately hitting us only marginally. The weather in August was erratic, with drops in temperature, extreme heat and then storms. Despite the grape bunches being larger than usual due to the abundant rains, the summer heat caused greater concentration which balanced the proportion between the skins and the pulp. Harvest of the white grapes began on August 21st. Grapes showed high levels of malic acid and moderate sugar levels, resulting in wines with exceptional freshness and complex aromas.



SORÌ SAN LORENZO

“Sorì San Lorenzo has a vertical, distinctly defined character giving life to a wine that exquisitely expresses the personality of the land where it comes from. Full-bodied, complex, dense textures, and a warm austerity, like the Langa parents who’d never indulge you with a gratuitous smile, but instead show you their love through their commitment day after day.” *Giovanni Gaja*



In the local Piedmontese dialect, Sorì refers to the south-facing hillside, while San Lorenzo is the patron saint that protects Alba’s Cathedral. The Sorì San Lorenzo vineyard was church property until 1964 when it was purchased by the Gaja family. The vineyard occupies an area of 3.88 ha (9.6 ac) and is located on the southwestern side of a narrow valley that leads to the Tanaro River. The proximity to the river regulates the temperatures and mitigates the winter cold. In summer ventilated currents are always formed in this valley, helping to lower the temperatures compared to the center of Barbaresco. The river also increases the brightness by bringing a double reflection of the sun’s rays.

The uniqueness of this vineyard creates the perfect combination of the microclimate and the soil. Near the river, the soils are very light, with a good presence of sand and

limestone where there is a morning humidity that rises from the river. There is no dawn in the summertime when the leaves of the vineyards are not covered with dew. The oldest part of the vineyard is located higher on the hill (*Sopra la Rocca*), with vines that are more than seventy years old producing grapes with thick and resistant skins.

Thanks to the western exposure, this area experiences a longer period of sunshine, making it ideal for a cold and rainy year. In the lower part (*Sotto La Rocca*), the vines are between forty and seventy years old. Since it is the lowest part of the hill and closest to the river, it is the most suitable for dry years. As you move away from the river, the microclimate becomes drier, the exposure turns south, and the soil is deeper, with more silt and clay. This is the area we call Masuè because it was once a sharecropper's farm, which in Piedmontese dialect was called "masuè."



2023 Sorì San Lorenzo Tasting Notes

Deep garnet red, the nose is compact and elegant with intense notes of blood orange, enriched by a sweet finish of cinnamon and clove, where the sweet oak is perfectly integrated. On the palate, the entry is enveloping, supported by dense yet finely polished tannins that enhance the sense of fullness, leading to a rich, persistent mouthfeel. Overall, it reveals a wine of character, well balanced, with lively acidity and a consistent aromatic profile that echoes the same citrus and spicy nuances perceived on the nose.

SORÌ TILDÌN

“There’s a person who has made a remarkable difference in our family’s history, someone who has identified Gaja’s path of excellence and quality. She was a French elementary school teacher who knew nothing about wine. Her name was Clotilde Rey, and she arrived in Barbaresco in 1905. She was also my grandmother.” *Angelo Gaja*

Sorì is a Piedmontese dialect word describing the sunny hillside with the best exposure for Nebbiolo, where the snow melts early, rainwater evaporates quickly, and the grapes can ripen perfectly. Tildìn is the family nickname of Clotilde, Angelo’s esteemed grandmother.

Sorì Tildìn has a surface of 3.10 ha (7.6 ac), and it is located at the top of the hill where further down sits the Costa Russi vineyard. The vineyard of Sorì Tildìn is one of the highest vineyards we have in the village of Barbaresco, with a maximum altitude of 290 m (951 ft). The full exposure to the south and southwest, the position at the top of a hill with a view of the wide valley, and the amphitheater shape of the vineyard are the reasons why Sorì Tildìn has a maximum sun exposure and the microclimate is warmer and drier than the others.



Harvest in the Sorì Tildìn vineyard.

It is divided into two parts, the oldest, planted in 1961, is called *Bricco Pini* and has a south/southwestern exposure. Compared to the Sorì San Lorenzo area, where there is more sand, it has a significantly higher amount of clay and silt, causing ripening to occur 15 days later than in Sorì San Lorenzo. Grapes from Bricco Pini possess a high number of anthocyanins and polyphenols, helping to provide optimal color and tannin. Next to Bricco Pini begins an amphitheater with south/southwest exposure that extends to *Cascina Roncagliette*. The density of this portion is above average at 6,000 plants per hectare. The vines have grown very deep and have low vigor. Everything about this area goes in the direction of concentration, maturity, fullness, and density which are the hallmarks of Sorì Tildìn. Ripe fruit, fleshy and earthy notes, hints of scrub and a tinge of saltiness on the palate are reminiscent of the perfect marriage of scent and taste.



2023 Sorì Tildìn Tasting Notes

Intense garnet red in color. On the nose, it is pure and expressive, with a warm character enriched by lively citrus notes that intertwine with well-integrated, gently sweet oak, lending delicate spice and evoking fresh hints of aromatic herbs. On the palate, the entry is warm and full-bodied, supported by dense yet polished tannins that guide the sip with elegance. The well-balanced acidity brings energy and vibrancy, while a juicy component recalls fresh nuances of pink grapefruit. The finish is long and persistent, leaving a harmonious and dynamic impression.

COSTA RUSSI

“The name Costa references the side/slope of a hill, while Russi means Russian and was the nickname of the farmer who worked this vineyard and died in the Russian invasion of World War II in 1941.” *Rossana Gaja*

Located below Sorì Tildìn, on the lowest part of the hill, Costa Russi has an area of 4.16 ha (10.3 ac) with a south/southwest exposure. While Sorì Tildìn has a concave shape, Costa Russi is convex, pot-bellied, with an exposure that turns from west to south. Although it is at the bottom of a hill, usually considered an unfortunate exposure, the vineyard is an exception because it has a wide view in front of it, not obscured behind another hill. It enjoys a beautiful exposure and is very sunny; however, the climate is cool because it experiences shade before Sorì Tildìn.

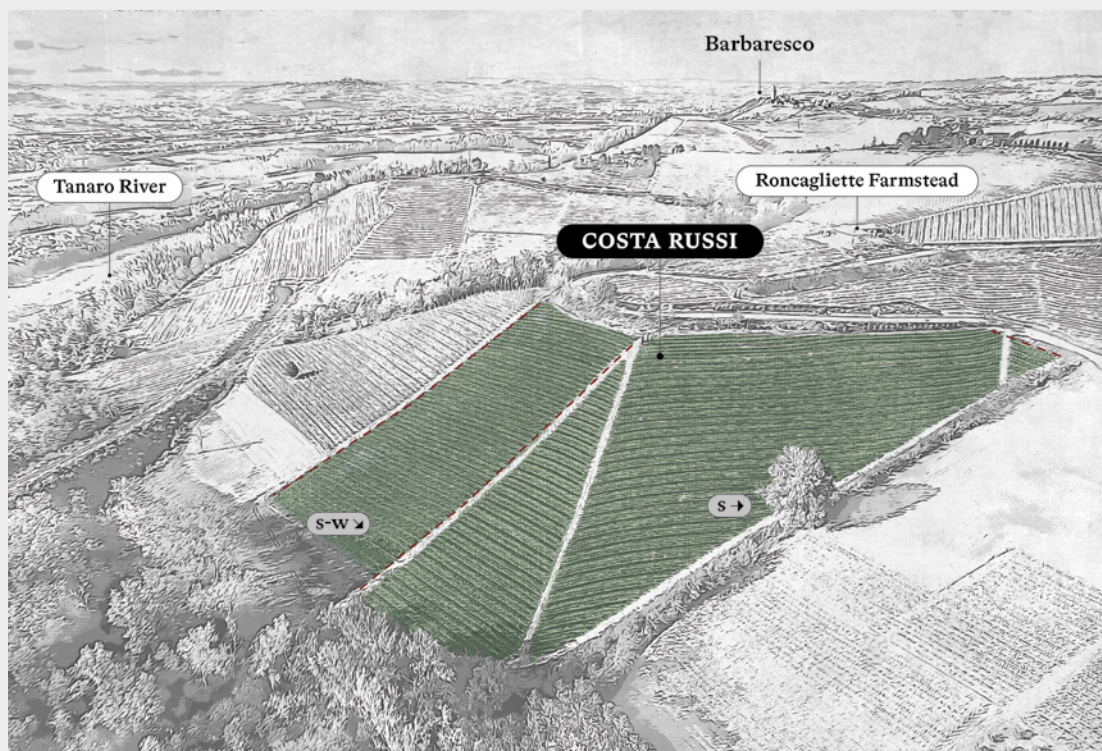
The soil of Costa Russi is very clayey and compact and takes a long time to warm up post-winter. The compact soil and delayed development are reminiscent of the conditions of the Barolo area, making it one of the last vineyards we harvest.



Vines in bloom, with some already at the fruit set stage.

It is one of the most historic vineyards we have, planted with horizontal rows with a density of 4,200 plants per hectare.

Costa Russi often expresses fragrant aromas of fresh crisp fruit, flowers, and aromatic herbs. From this vineyard, we carried out a mass selection that ended in 2021 and led to very interesting results.



2023 Costa Russi Tasting Notes

Medium-intensity garnet red. On the nose, it stands out for its finesse and elegance, with a clean, well-defined profile unveiling sweet notes of marzipan and white pepper, accompanied by delicate floral hints of violet and a subtle touch of vanilla on the finish. On the palate, the entry is fresh, supported by a well-integrated tannic structure that provides persistence and leads to a pleasantly surprising savory note on the finish. The overall impression is balanced, with a fresh and easygoing character that gives the wine elegance and immediacy, faithfully echoing the refined, sweet notes perceived on the nose.

DARMAGI

“Darmagi represents the rebellious spirit and the need for revolutionary ideas that are the hallmark of my father.” *Giovanni Gaja*

Darmagi is a single vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon of 1.7 ha (4.2 ac) planted in the municipality of Barbaresco in 1978. It is the first post-phylloxera Cabernet Sauvignon planted in Piedmont. The first vintage produced was in 1982.

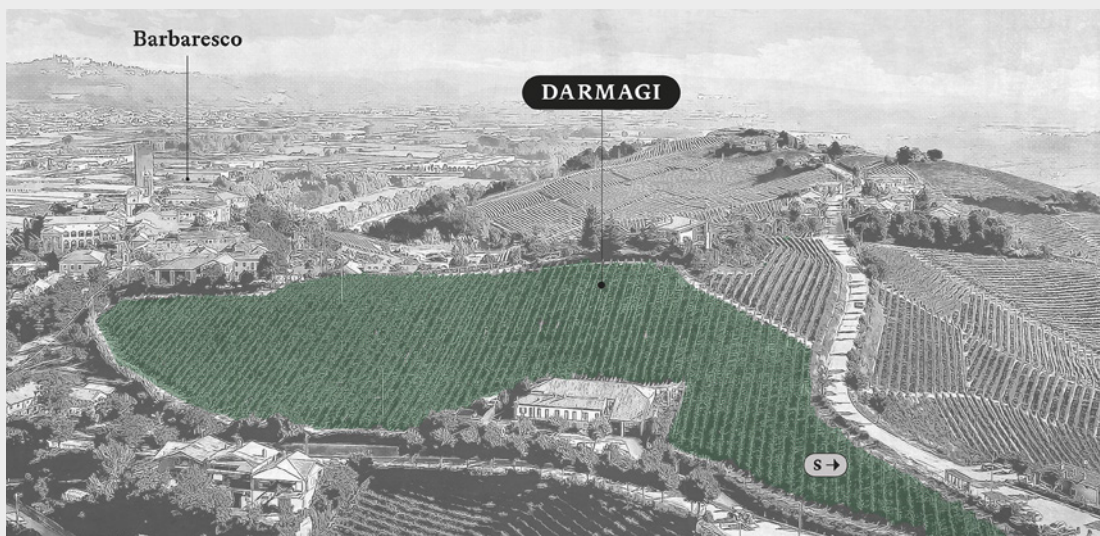
The decision was taken by Angelo Gaja both as a tribute to this prestigious variety and to demonstrate the ability of the Langa soils to imprint distinct characteristics even to international varieties. After several studies of the soils and various consultations, it became clear to Angelo that the land best suited to the production of Cabernet was indeed this 1.7 ha (4.2 ac) plot with southern exposure at an altitude of 280 m a.s.l. (918 ft), located on the central hill in the village of Barbaresco.

This hill is also where Giovanni Gaja, Angelo's father, lived at the time. He was the former mayor of the village and a great promoter of Nebbiolo and the Barbaresco appellation. It was Giovanni Gaja himself who unwittingly gave the wine its name. At the time of planting Cabernet Sauvignon instead of Nebbiolo, his first comment, in Piedmontese dialect, was “Darmagi” (What a pity!). Giovanni did not fully agree with his son's idea of planting a grape variety other than Nebbiolo on land of such high potential, but he always supported Angelo in every choice he made, aware of his son's rebellious spirit and the need for revolutionary ideas.



The Darmagi vineyard features an excellent sunny exposure, along with a balance of clay and silt, capable of retaining humidity and draining at the same time. It is ideal for full ripening—both for the grapes and the tannins of a late variety like Cabernet Sauvignon. The Cabernet Sauvignon berry has a thicker skin, is smaller, and has more anthocyanins than Nebbiolo. On average, the yields are smaller.

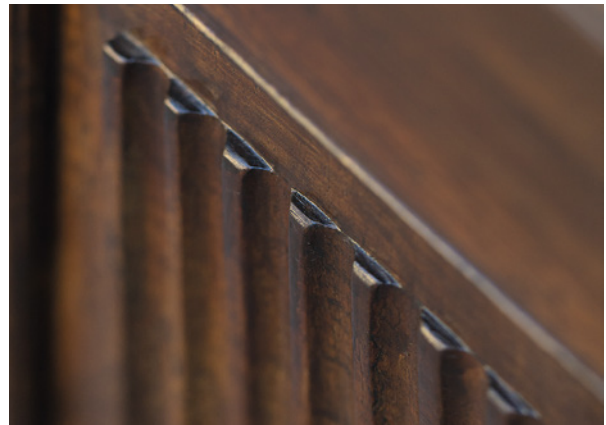
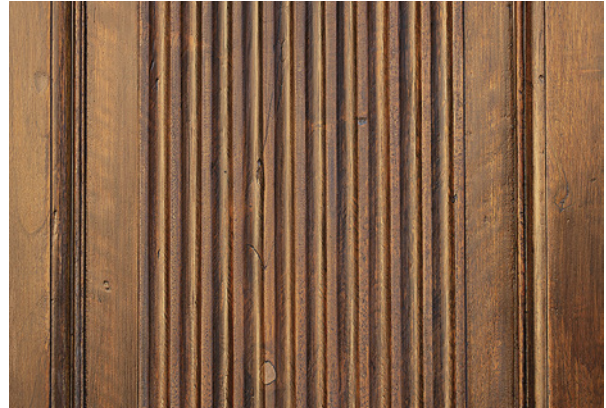
In conjunction with our massal selection project, we have collaborated with a geneticist to pursue the selection of plants that are more resilient, therefore better adapted to the region. Darmagi is a Cabernet of its own, rarely showcasing the classic pyrazine notes but instead expressing red fruit and a distinctive freshness of the tannins. The aging potential for Darmagi is excellent, and many older vintages have shown remarkable drinkability and enjoyment. With time, the wine develops floral, delicate notes with elegant and fresh structure.



2023 Darmagi Tasting Notes

Intense ruby red color with violet highlights. On the nose, it opens fresh, with notes of blackberry and blueberry enriched by hints of licorice and wild mint. The oak is refined, delicately recalling vanilla notes. On the palate, it is rich, smooth, and enveloping—almost vinous in character thanks to its lively freshness—with echoes of blackberry and violet, leading into a refined mentholated finish. Silky, well-balanced tannins support a long, satisfying finish and contribute to the wine's overall harmony.

GAJA



"It is with the osteria, our tavern, that everything started. It's been one hundred and sixty-four years since then, but to get to our cellar, to enter our house, you still need to open that door. The tavern was opened by Giovanni Gaja, first in the family dynasty, in 1859 and closed its doors in 1933. Since then, the tables, chairs, and kitchen have disappeared, but the wooden door of the osteria remains. That door, with its linear grooved texture created by a centuries-old process called "grissinatura," shares its name with the traditional long, thin breadsticks famous in the region as grissini. This became the inspiration for our wooden wine boxes."

Angelo Gaja

2022 Vintage Report

The 2022 vintage will be one that will leave an indelible mark on the Langhe. The extreme drought that we experienced has no historical precedent. From November 2021 to September 2022, 300 millimeters of water fell in the Barbaresco area and almost 400 in Barolo. The historical average in Piedmont is between 800 and 1200 mm. Winter was very dry, on December 8th there was a small snowfall that was followed by 113 days of complete drought. Consequently, the budding was delayed and started after the 30th of March. April continued to be very dry and finally water came in May which was immediately absorbed by the soil and helped the formation of the bunches. Then we experienced a very hot June and even hotter July.

Green harvesting during July was instrumental to reduce the stress and allow for a complete maturation of the grapes. During August we had two rainfalls on the 7th and on the 17th that saved the vintage, refreshing the weather and giving relief to the vines. The first part of September was still characterized by warm weather and then finally starting from the 15th temperatures dropped and diurnal shifts increased. Harvest started on August 19th for the whites and ended on October 9th for Nebbiolo. It was one the most anticipated harvest we have ever experienced. We compare this vintage to 2003, which was initially underestimated but turned out to be an excellent vintage after aging in the bottle.



SPERSS

“When we think of Sperss, we are reminded of a quiet Langa, the forests of truffle hunters and the scent of aromatic herbs that grow in the vineyards with hints of camphor, balsamic, graphite, fresh mushrooms, bark, and musk. As the name implies, a true expression of nostalgia.” *Rossana Gaja*

In 1988 the family made its first acquisition in the Barolo region, in one of the best positions in Serralunga. This single vineyard of 6 ha (14.8 ac) is partly in *Marenca* and partly in *Rivette*, and it was named Sperss, a Piedmontese word that means “nostalgia”. Sperss pays homage to Giovanni Gaja (Angelo’s father) and his childhood memories of his time harvesting in Serralunga.

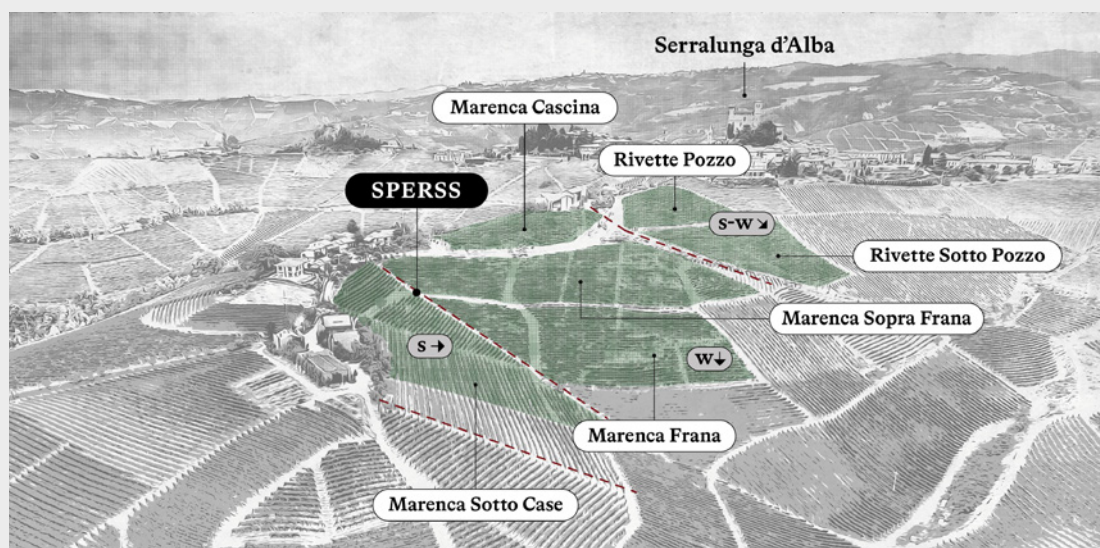
The vineyard has an altitude of 360-380 m a.s.l. (1,181-1,246 ft) and the vines were planted between 1966 and 1978. The different complexity of soils and microclimates are divided into six distinct harvest periods.



Marenca makes up the main part of the vineyard. It extends for 4.4 ha (10.9 ac), and it is a special sub-area with a compact shape, protected from the Alta Langa winds to the east by the hill of Vigna Rionda. In the last thirty years, we have never experienced a hailstorm or other extreme atmospheric phenomena in Marenca.

Rivette, the remaining part of the vineyard, extends for 1.69 ha (4.2 ac). The soil at the beginning of Marenca is almost white, but moving towards Rivette, it starts to change color, getting progressively darker as the clay content increases, and creates denser vegetation, resulting in larger grape clusters.

Sperss expresses dense notes of earth, herbs, and dark fruit, from blueberry to mugwort (artemisia, which grows in the vineyard) and peat.



2022 Sperss Tasting Notes

Deep garnet with ruby highlights, the nose reveals a warm and compact expression, highly articulate, with earthy and sanguine notes intertwined with black pepper, sweet spices, and elderflower; the perfectly integrated oak adds elegance and a refined hint of leather. On the palate, it is deep and persistent, with a fresh entry showing notes of blueberry and blood orange, enriched by a pleasant sapidity; the tannins, incisive yet elegant, are seamlessly integrated into a balanced and satisfying structure, providing intensity and volume, while the finish unfolds in a smooth and harmonious sweetness.

CONTEISA

“The Piedmontese word Conteisa (contest) recalls the dispute which lasted for over 100 years between the municipalities of La Morra and Barolo for the possession of this area. The dispute was finally settled with an agreement signed in 1275.” *Gaia Gaja*

Located between the municipalities of La Morra and Barolo, Cerequio is one of the most prestigious areas for the production of Barolo, so much so that in the past, it prompted continuous claims by these two municipalities for its ownership.

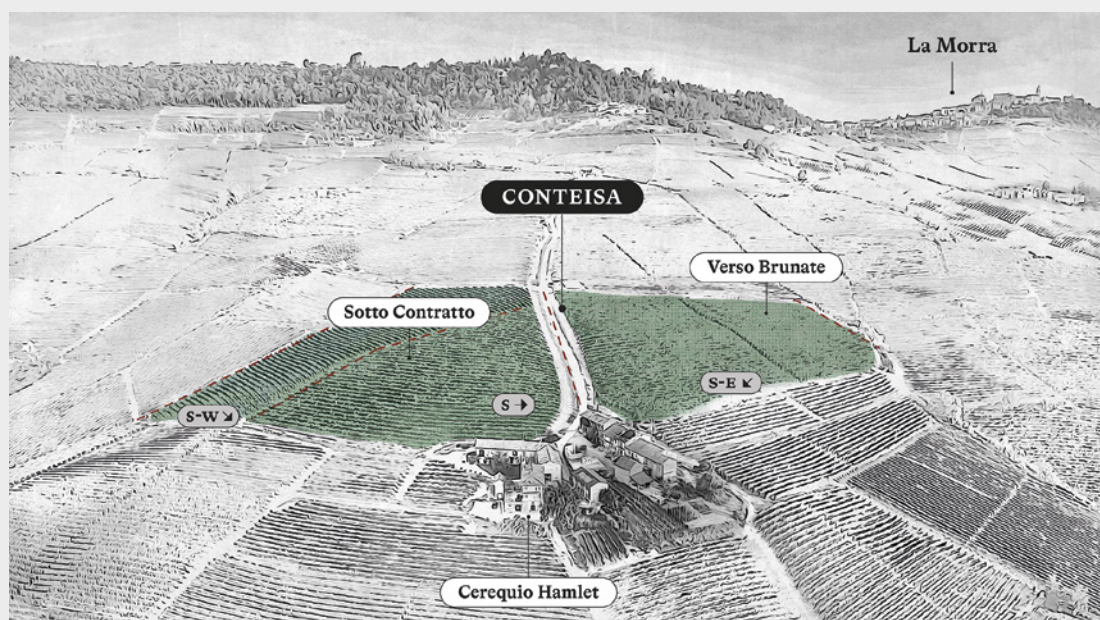
Conteisa has a size of 4 ha (9.9 ac), at an altitude of 380-430 m a.s.l. (1,246-1,410 ft). The vines are extremely old and present a complex diversity. In the 1990s, the Piedmont Region, collaborating with the University of Turin, listed the Nebbiolo clones in Cerequio among the best in the Langhe. Even today, there is still a sign indicating this.



The vineyard is comprised of two different parts: Verso Brunate and Sotto Contratto. The soils of *Verso Brunate* are rich in sand and have a high water supply, ideal for slow ripening. The sand veins, rich in magnesium and silicates are capable of absorbing large amounts of water and can cause great instability in rainy vintages. For this reason, the rows tend to curve and are never perfectly

straight. It is the oldest area of the vineyard and one of the last to be harvested. *Sotto Contratto*, on the contrary, has a lighter soil, is cooler, and has better drainage. In both hot and cool years, blending these two parcels creates the perfect combination of structure (*Sotto Contratto*), freshness, and elegance (*Verso Brunate*).

For Conteisa, quality doesn't come without challenges; unfortunately, production is often limited as the area is prone to hail, especially in July and August. The aromas of Conteisa are unique and recognizable for their freshness; it often expresses black cherry, plum, and spicy botanical scents of peppermint, scrub, and fragrant leaves.



2022 Conteisa Tasting Notes

Deep, vibrant garnet red, the nose expresses integrity and structure with ripe fruit notes of strawberry and blackberry, evolving into warmer hints of sweet cocoa and juniper, accompanied by an almost oily sensation reminiscent of Mediterranean scrub, showing excellent intensity overall. On the palate, it is compact and enveloping, with a well-calibrated balance between tannins and acidity that brings freshness to the sip; the tannins, still lively on the finish, together with delicate fruity nuances, contribute to a pleasant richness and intensity, resulting in a harmonious and dynamic wine.

GAJA



Come join us.
*We will be
expecting
you!*



GAJA

Barbaresco (CN)

Founded in 1859



PIEVE SANTA RESTITUTA

Montalcino (SI)

Acquired in 1994



CA' MARCANDA

Bolgheri (LI)

Founded in 1996



IDDA

Belpasso (CT)

Founded in 2016