

Poderi Aldo Conterno

When I was planning our European travel schedule for last year, I realised it had been 20 years since I'd visited one of the world's great wine estates, Poderi Aldo Conterno in the Barolo district of north-western Italy. The years had flown, and it was time to return.

Adrienne and I were warmly welcomed by Giacomo Conterno, one of three brothers who nurture a proud heritage. Their father Aldo, who passed away in 2012, was revered as a giant of Barolo.

* Poderi translates to farm or estate.



Poderi Aldo Conterno

Poderi Aldo Conterno is inextricably linked to Bussia, a vineyard, that, in Piemonte terms, is a sacred site. Bussia was one of the first two cru, along with Rocche di Castiglione, to be declared (in 1961) on a Barolo label. Covering 298.89 ha, 98.5% of which is within the boundaries of Monforte d'Alba, it contains 15 officially designated vineyards, the names of which can be appended to Bussia on labels. Within three of these, Colonello, Cicala and Romirasco, beats the heart of Poderi Aldo Conterno. They lie within a stone's throw of each other on prime, south-west-facing slopes of limestone and clay. Organic viticulture is practised because, in Giacomo's words, "I wanted my children to be able to touch the leaves of the vines without being afraid."

The red wines are made in a very straightforward way, fermented in stainless steel tanks (about one month skin contact for nebbiolo, with a maximum temperature of 32°C, and 8-10 days on skins for barbera, with a maximum temperature of 28°C. The nebbiolos are aged for about 2½ years in barrels of varying ages and sizes, while the barbera has a short exposure to new oak before being transferred to stainless steel. The winemaking may be without frills, but the resulting wines are always though-provoking.

"Barolo must be complex but never complicated."

Giacomo Conterno

January 25, 2018

2015 Conca Tre Pile Barbera d'Alba Quite complex and brambly, not simple and fruit-driven. There's a definite whiff of oak along with the red berry aromas and a hint of undergrowth ("sottobosco"). It's an uncompromising barbera in which the acidity almost gains control.

★★★★

"I don't de-acidify. We achieve balance in the vineyard."

Giacomo Conterno

2014 Barolo Bussia Colonello Beautifully fragrant and floral, benefiting from a caress of oak. The palate is quite finely structured and of decent length, with a herbal-vegetal touch. ★★★★★



Giacomo (L) & Lester (R)

2013 Barolo Bussia Romirasco The seductive red berry and rose petal aromas are complemented by subdued oak. I could not help but be captivated by the long, concentrated, but supremely elegant, palate. This wine is a delight, and to my palate is a "Vosne-Romanée" of Barolo.

★★★★★

January 25, 2018

2006 Barolo Bussia Cicala Still so youthful, but the classic fragrance of nebbiolo is unmissable, and there's a hint of sottobosco. The palate is fine, firm and silky, with classic lingering, but not over-assertive tannins. A wine with a long life ahead of it. (\$249.00) ★★★★★
<https://www.winesquare.com.au/2006-poderi-aldo-conterno-barolo-cocala-piedmont.html>

The crowning glory of Poderi Aldo Conterno is **Granbussia**. The Barolo Riserva Granbussia is produced by fermenting grapes from the oldest vines of Romirasco, Cicala, and Colonnello together. The percentages are Romirasco (70%), Cicala (15%), Colonnello (15%). The Granbussia remains in the cellar for at least nine years before release. It is produced only in the best years and in limited quantities.

2006 Granbussia Riserva This wine is strikingly different from, but even better than, the 2006 Cicala. The perfumed bouquet shows hints of leather and dried herbs, while the palate is comparatively austere, but quite dramatic. It's beautifully poised, with just-right tension between fruit, tannins and acidity. A classic. ★★★★★

Giacomo Conterno and his brothers are custodians of something more than land and vines. In a handful of sites around the world, vinous magic happens, and Poderi Aldo Conterno's little corner of Bussia is one of them.

Lester Jesberg

Wiki on Nebbiolo

Ampelographers believe that nebbiolo is indigenous to the Piedmont region, though some DNA evidence suggests that it may have originated in Lombardy, just to the east. In the 1st century AD, Pliny the Elder noted the exceptional quality of the wine produced in the Pollenzo region located northwest of what is now the Barolo DOCG zone. While Pliny does not explicitly name the grape responsible for these Pollenzo wines, his description of the wine bears similarities to later descriptions of nebbiolo-based wines, making this potentially the first notation of wine made from nebbiolo in the Piedmont region. The first explicit mention of nebbiolo dates to 1268, in which a wine known as "nibioli" was described as growing in Rivoli near Turin. This was followed by a 1303 account of a producer in the Roero district described as having a barrel of "nebiolo" (sic). In the 1304 treatise *Liber Ruralium Commodorum*, the Italian jurist Pietro Crescenzi described wine made from "nubiola" as being of excellent quality. In the 15th century, statutes in the region of La Morra (in what is now the Barolo zone) demonstrated the high esteem that the nebbiolo vine had in the area. According to these laws, the penalties for cutting down a nebbiolo vine ranged from a heavy fine to having the right hand cut off or hanging for repeat offenders.

Wikipedia

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