Winemaker: Gino, Luca, and Marta Magnabosco
Generation: 2nd

MONTE TONDO

Casette Foscarino Soave Classico DOC

Right now, and we don't say this flippantly, the Magnabosco's are making some of the finest Soave in Italy, and this cru is a stunning example of what the Garganega grape can do in the hands of masters. A true family estate that cuts no corners, Monte Tondo is determined to elevate Soave to a whole different level. With fermentation as low as 14 degrees, and yields as low as 600g per plant, this is an Italian white wine that delivers pinging clarity, extreme minerality, and rich, full-bodied weight in spades! 92 points James Suckling

WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

With larger-than-life personalities, the Magnabosco clan – led by father-daughter team Gino and Marta – likes to draw you in, spoil you properly, and leave you laughing. For all their mirth, however, the elegant wines of Monte Tondo remain worthy of serious discussion. Few estates can rival their multiple tiers of Soave, each backed by its own unique cru and soil type.

ENOLOGIST

Nico Danese

TASTING NOTES

Color	Straw yellow with deep gold highlights
Nose	Dried fruit laced with honey and vanilla, backed by a pronounced minerality
Palate	Rich, full-bodied, and smooth
Finish	Surprisingly fresh, following wine's opulent mid-palate

VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

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Vineyard Location	Soave DOC, Veneto
Vineyard Size	2 ha
Varietals List	90% Garganega 10% Trebbiano di Soave
Farming Practices	Organically farmed (non certified), including dry-farmed; grapes picked by hand; certified vegan
Elevation	250-330 m
Soils	Calcareous, volcanic
Maturation Summary	In Steel for 5 months and Bottled for 10 months
In Steel	5 months
Alcohol	13.5 %
Acidity	6.2 g/liter
Residual Sugar	3.5 g/liter
Annual Production	8,000 bottles

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MONTE TONDO

In almost every way, the small, family operated estate of Monte Tondo sets itself apart. Contrasting the large coops which dominate the Soave Classico region, Monte Tondo represents the true artisinal minority: not only are their wines low yield, single estate and picked by hand, but in lieu of grapes grown in the vast alluvial flatlands, Monte Tondo's whites hail from various crus on the hillside above the town, each complete with its own unique soil profile. These sites in turn allow Gino Magnabosco and his daughter, Marta, to create tiers of Garganega-driven whites with a remarkable array of personalities. Their Soave Classico, for example, comes from vines growing halfway up the slope in a pocket of clay and limestone, lending the wine its bright-eyed structure and telltale minerality. From even higher up the hill, the single cru Slavinus and Casette Foscarin both derive from volcanic soils, possess a big-boned structure usually reserved for oaked whites, and promise to age beautifully for 5-10 years.

More recently, the Magnabosco family invested in red wines, as well. Located some 90 minutes inland from Venice, Monte Tondo serves as a physical bridge between the subalpine hills of the Valpolicella region and the sprawling, sea-level fields that produce so much of Italy's affordable white wine (i.e. Soave and Pinot Grigio). Established in 1979 by Aldo Magnabosco, the estate was expanded 20 years later by his son, Gino, and currently has 32 hectares spanning two different DOC's: they now have 22 hectares in Soave Classico and 10 in the Valpolicella (lying on the opposite side of the same hill). Fortuitously once again, both locations enjoy a bit of extra altitude. The estate's Garganega sites start at 110-150 meters (high for the region) and roam all the way up to 280-350 meters for the cru whites. Likewise, the Valpolicella vineyard is also lofty at 450 meters, to the extent the grapes are actually harvested in mid-October.

For anyone visiting Monte Tondo, it would be awfully hard not to notice the charm and constant hospitality of Marta Magnabosco, who assists her father both in making the wines and then promoting them. Along with Gino's work ethic, Marta also inherited the twinkle in her father's eye and possesses a winking, warmhearted, bilingual wit. If you're going to be near Venice, we recommend making the quick drive inland to meet Marta and her familia!

MONTE TONDO

REGION

VENETO

Home to the iconic cities of Venice and Verona, Veneto is also Italy's second most prolific region in terms of wine production. Whites like Pinot Grigio and Prosecco, in particular, are made en masse in the lowlands proximate to the Adriatic. Beyond this, however, Veneto is also home to world-class estates and wines that couldn't be made anywhere else (not least of all the renowned Amarone della Valpolicella). From coastal flatlands to subalpine hills, a vast diversity of microclimates gives this wine region a unique edge. There are an impressive 28 DOCs and 14 DOCGs, with Prosecco, Pinot Grigio, Soave, and the red wines of Valpolicella all calling the Veneto home.

Beginning on the edge of Lake Garda, this NE region has 7 provinces: Belluno, Treviso, Venezia, Verona, Vicenze, Padova and Rovigo. Its northern boundary is protected from harsh weather conditions by the Dolomites, and cooler conditions in the north are well-suited to white varietals like Garganega (the main grape in Soave). In contrast, the warmer Adriatic coastal plains and river valleys near Lake Garda are where the renowned Valpolicella, Amarone, and Bardolino reds are produced.

It is believed that Veneto is one of the oldest wine-producing regions in the world, dating back to the bronze age. Its main port, Venice, has long served as a point of entry for new varietals, and departure for its products. Italy's very first school for oenology was founded in Conegliano in 1885, and today Europe's most important wine fair, VinItaly - with a draw of some 200,000 people - takes place each spring in Verona.

SOAVE DOC

Founded in 1968, the Soave DOC is one of Veneto's best-known and most esteemed designations for white wine, with the hilly Classico area rightfully occupying center stage. Located some 20 km east of Verona, the towns of Soave and Monteforte d'Alpone form a border of sorts, separating the expansive plains of the Po Valley (where many vineyards produce near sea level) and the alpine foothills of Valpolicella. Directly to the north, a large, volcanic outcrop provides the Classico subzone with a distinct terroir and up to 400 meters of altitude.

While top producers tend to make monovarietal Soave, made from 100% Garganega, the DOC allows for blending up to 30% Trebbiano di Soave (the genetic kin of Verdicchio) or, more controversially, Chardonnay. Up to 5% of Pinot Blanc, Pinot Grigio, Riesling, Sauvignon, or Tai may also be included. Almost universally, Soave DOC wines are still, unoaked, white wines. Oddly, although Garganega has a high natural acidity and the designation allows for a Spumante, only about a half dozen estates (including Monte Tondo!) elect to make DOC bubbly.

A reasonably large growing zone, the Soave DOC includes over 4000 planted hectares, resulting in over 4 million annual cases of wine. Roughly half of these come from a single coop, but smaller, family-run estates have done much since the 1990s to resurrect the reputation of the DOC and usher in a true renaissance of quality. Toward that same end, Soave is planning to introduce a list of 64 menzioni geografiche aggiuntive (MeGAs for short, or crus) that can be included on a wine label in the near future; this is the same measure recently adopted by prestigious DOCGs like Barolo and Barbaresco.