Winemaker: Romina Tacchino
Generation: 3rd

Tacchino
Piemonte

Albarola Barbera del Monferrato DOC

Even after years in the bottle, Tacchino's top-tier Barbera exhibits tremendous poise, grace, and acidic backbone. Hailing from Piemonte's Alto Monferrato, the vines sit at 320 meters and enjoy predominantly SW exposure (similar treatment as many producers' Nebbiolo). Dark cherry, forest berry, and slate on the nose give rise to a palate with medium-light body and juicy food-friendliness. Aging in 500HL tonneaux (and at least a year in the bottle) further help to elevate this stunning expression of the Barbera grape.

WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

Meticulous, thoughtful, and full of joy, Dolcetto masters Romina Tacchino and her brother Alessio work side by side in the high, green hills of Alto Monferrato. Subtle, subalpine aromatics tend to belie complex, powerhouse palates bursting with flavor. And with multiple Tre Bicchiere awards now under their belts, they're clearly just hitting their stride!

ENOLOGIST

Mario Ronco

TASTING NOTES

Color	Dark ruby with violet highlights
Nose	Dark cherry, forest berry, slate and wet earth
Palate	Medium-light body with juicy fruit and good acidity
Finish	Balanced and food-friendly

VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

	12
Vineyard Location	Barbera del Monferrato DOC, Piedmont
Vineyard Size	1.5 ha
Varietals List	100% Barbera del Monferrato
Farming Practices	Organic (non-certified); grapes dry-farmed and picked by hand
Elevation	300-320 m
Soils	White tufo; calcareous clay
Maturation Summary	In 500 HL French barrels for 18-27 months and bottled for 12 months
Alcohol	14.5 %
Acidity	6.4 g/liter
Annual Production	10,000 bottles

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TACCHINO

When Romina's father, Luigi, was only 11 years old, his own papa passed away and his mother had to sell the family's vineyards to survive on her own with three children. Years later, however, now married and with a family of his own, Luigi managed to buy back the exact same piece of land his mother had once sold! So, you can imagine just how heartfelt the family is today when it comes to their vines. Their first official bottling came in 1960 (starting with the "Trivoli" sparkling wine, which they sold in nearby Liguria along the coast), and as they grew, Luigi taught Romina and Alessio all that he knew. Romina laughs, "I must have been ten years old when I started helping in the cellar... I remember I kept dancing, dancing to the rhythm of the pump to help pass the time!" She also recalls those first few years she helped with the harvest, and the feeling of celebration that came along with it. “The whole family would eat lunch in the shade of a big cherry tree, and Grandma Clelia always made pasta fagioli for everyone...because it tastes so good cold. We would pour a little olive oil over the top and listen as the older women sang." Such a life! No wonder Romina still has such a sparkle in her eye and spring in her step today.

In addition to the family's original 6 hectares of vines located in Castelleto d'Orba, they purchased an additional 6 in nearby Lerma in 1999. Although the two sites are only separated by 200 meters, they lie on opposite sides of a natural amphitheater, and have different exposures, altitudes, and soil types. On the Lerma side, vines sit at 300-450 meters with E-SE exposure and sit directly on a long line of white tufo that stretches all the way from Alto Monferrato to La Morra in the Barolo district. Just a stone's throw away, the Castelletto d'Orba vines enjoy S-SW exposure and grow in a small line of red clay. According to Romina, grapes planted here fare better during times of dry weather, whereas the white tufo is better in humid years. So in any given vintage, they're able to counterbalance the two sites to help maintain their wine's acidic backbone, freshness, and consistency.

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.

BARBERA DEL MONFERRATO DOC

Credited with being the historic birthplace of Barbera, the hills of Monferrato canvas a reasonably large area, spread across the provinces of Alessandria and (eastern) Asti. This DOC was established in 1970 and should not be confused with the related Monferrato DOC (which was created in 1994 and also permits Cortese, along with a host of other red varieties). Also related is the Barbera del Monferrato Superiore DOCG, which spans the same territory but was made distinct in 2008 for wines that undergo a longer aging process (a minimum of 14 months, of which 6 must be in wood). Often grown at higher altitude, Barbera del Monferrato is known for retaining high acidity, even in warmer vintages. As a result, it tends to be a bit lighter, brighter, and earthier on the palate than Barbera from the nearby sub-zones of Alba and Asti. Wines typically exhibit aromas of cherry and plum, sometimes with hints of roses, violets, earth spice, and black pepper. While a frizzante rendition is still permitted, this style has decreased in popularity over the decades, especially as more controlled winemaking has become the norm. All wines in the Barbera del Monferrato DOC must consist of at least 85% Barbera, with small amounts of Dolcetto, Freisa, and Grignolino permitted.