Winemaker: Damiano Sicca
Generation: 3rd

PRODUTTORI
IN CLAVESANA

Roero Arneis DOCG

Arneis is one of those Piemontese staples that is almost always sure to unite white wine fans under a single banner. Known for its pleasant, unoaked viscosity, white-fleshed orchard fruits and clear-headed minerality, it tends to please fans on both sides of the Atlantic. Here, Cantina Clavesana provides us a nose full of ripe pear and apple with hints of wild herbs, giving rise to a lush palate with crowd-pleasing acidity, and a pleasant lingering finish. A great value from this unique, subalpine DOCG!

WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

Against a backdrop of snow-covered Alps, this collective of 150 small, sustainable farms focuses their efforts squarely on the Dolcetto grape, and most especially the Dogliani DOCG. Clean and correct - yet highly accessible - wine remains their mantra!

ENOLOGIST

Damiano Sicca

TASTING NOTES

Color	Straw yellow with green highlights
Nose	Ripe pear, apple, hints of wild herbs
Palate	Good structure, with a smooth mouthfeel and balanced acidity
Finish	Pleasant and lingering

VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

	12
Vineyard Location	Roero DOCG, Piedmont
Vineyard Size	4 ha
Varietals List	100% Arneis
Farming Practices	Sustainably farmed, including dry-farmed; grapes picked by hand
Elevation	250-300 m
Soils	Mix of sandy clay and calcareous clay
Maturation Summary	In Steel for 3 months and Bottled for 3 months
In Steel	3 months
Alcohol	13.0 %
Acidity	4.5 g/liter
Residual Sugar	1.9 g/liter
Annual Production	150,000 bottles

AUGUSTIMPORTS
WINES · SPIRITS · INNOVATIONS

PRODUTTORI
IN CLAVESANA

CANTINA CLAVESANA

With 150 members and roughly 320 combined hectares under vine, this hard-working, multi-generational co-operative is based in the town of Clavesana – in turn located just south of Monforte d'Alba in the province of Cuneo. Here, plants typically enjoy more altitude than the next-door Barolo district (the co-op's vines span 280 to 600 meters), and while Nebbiolo exists, Clavesana's focus lies firmly on their beloved Dolcetto grape. While the average member's farm is tiny (less than 2 hectares), as a collective, Cantine Clavesana has positioned themselves as the largest producer of Dolcetto in the Langhe. Beyond this, small amounts of Nebbiolo, Arneis, and Pinot Noir are also grown – and in true Piemontese form, they also count honey and hazelnuts amongst their agricultural products.

Despite the geographic proximity to Alba, Clavesana's hilly sub-zone has a cooler, fresher mesoclimate and is known for its streak of white clay which contributes to the acidic and tannic structure of Dolcetto. (Overall, the Dogliani DOCG is considered to be ground zero for more substantive, complex expressions of the small, tannic grape.) In a landscape of increasingly expensive Piemontese wines, we found theirs to have a fantastic cost-to-quality ratio, and we applaud their tendency to create wines of a clean, traditional style.

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.

ROERO DOCG

Located just 3 miles NW of the Barolo and Barbaresco zones and on the left bank of the Tanaro river, this increasingly prestigious subregion gained DOC status in 1985 and was elevated to DOCG in 2004. Only two main grapes, Arneis and Nebbiolo, are permitted on labels, and wines must contain at least 95% of their given varietal. The remaining 5%--typically Barbera or Dolcetto for reds and Favorita, Chardonnay, or Sauvignon for whites—must also come from the same vineyard.

Over 75% of the DOCG's vines are dedicated to Arneis—a testament to its renaissance over the past 50 years. While the grape has been cultivated in the Roero district since the 1400s, it all but went extinct in the wake of WWII. Stylistically, and thanks in part to the sandy clay soils, Arneis from this region tends to be highly elegant—often more nuanced than whites from the Langhe—and exhibit medium to medium-full body. Aromas and flavors of pear, apricot, and white blossoms are typical. Nebbiolo from this zone also tends to be more elegant and less tannic than those found across the river in Barolo and Barbaresco, and therefore to be less expensive.

The Roero DOCG canvasses 19 municipalities, spread out over rolling, green, subalpine hills. Within in borders, there are also over 150 menzioni geografiche aggiuntive. These are specifically delineated place-names within the DOCG that started being codified in 2010. An MGA (also MeGA) is typically a small town, hill, or a group of vineyards, complete with its own style and mesoclimate, which has developed a reputation for quality over time.