

# DOMENICO CLERICO

Monforte d'Alba

After many years of tasting experience I have found six areas in the Monforte township worthy of a "grand cru" appellation. Significantly, these coincide with those traditionally hailed as the best by wine-makers of the area.

The Clerico estate has vineyards in four of these crus: Bussia, Ginestra, Pajana and starting with 1995 vintage, Mosconi. As the case with most Barolo estates, the Clerico holdings are tiny: 0.4 hectares in Bussia and 3.9 Hectares in Ginestra, 1.8 hectare in Pajana and 1.8 hectare in Mosconi, one hectare. As in not the case with most Barolo producers, however, Domenico Clerico - owner of the Clerico estate - is a tremendously gifted wine-maker, and has a very finely equipped cellar.

Having vineyards in crus of such stature enables him to produce exceptional wines even in "off" vintages. In order to insure always top quality when the harvest is not so good, Mr. Clerico exercises especially good care in the grape selection and reserves only the very best must for aging into Barolo.

Of the Barolo wines that I have chosen, Clerico's is perhaps the least archetypal - or rather, the one in which the style of the producer is most noticeable. It has a concentration of colour most outstanding and unusual in Barolo: even after three years of aging, most of which is spent in wood, it still remains a deep, vivid ruby with a mulberry ripeness that is reminiscent of a Grands Echezaux. Similarly, the concentration and vinosity of this wine do not resemble those typically found in the Nebbiolo. The bouquet is intense, ample and spicy, with herbaceous hints, and in the mouth it is meaty and rich - almost grapey when young, and gifted with long lingering finish, it will grow in austerity with age. It is a wine of extraordinary equilibrium, its richness in alcohol and extracts undercutting the tannic edge all-too-common in Barolo wines, making it round even when young. Yet, it remains

a wine of great longevity that will reward the patience of one willing to age it with an ever-increasing elegance and complexity.

Mr. Clerico and I have experimented together at length with small french oak and starting in 1985 his estate produced a



wine bottled under the proprietary name of "Arte", which represents the culminating point in our joint efforts in winemaking. A revolutionary blend of the finest Nebbiolo and Barbera aged in small french oak, Arte has spawned countless imitations. The Arte label may be seen in Lausanne's Museum of Modern Art.

Mr. Clerico also produces very fine Dolcetto d'Alba and a superb Barbera d'Alba (see notes at right).

This Estate every year garners the highest recognition the world over in virtually every serious wine journal, and is today a recognized star among Barolo producers. His wines are sought after by the finest establishments and connoisseurs.

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"For almost two decades, Domenico Clerico has been turning out some of Piedmont's most compelling wines."

**Robert Parker,**  
**The Wine Advocate** [6/01]

"Silently, without any fuss or media attention, at the end of the seventies, Domenico was working for the future of the Langhe's wines. Unforgettable wines emerged from the 30 acres of vineyards ... fantastic wines ... profoundly innovative ..."

"The best performers of the last decade, #11"  
**GAMBERO ROSSO** issue 21, 2000

Piedmont

Total acreage: 33 acres

Soils: tufa with clay-marl

Varieties: Nebbiolo 57%, Dolcetto 24%, Barbera 19%,

Average production: 6,300 cases, nearly 1/3 of that Dolcetto

Viticultural highlights: tilling between rows, Guyot trellising, aggressive green harvesting

Vinificatory highlights: 5-14 days roto-fermentation depending on variety & cru. Aging almost entirely in new barrique, except for the Dolcetto which is received into barrels of one or two previous wines.

## Arté

Zone: Monforte d'Alba

Cru: Mosconi, Pajana and Ginestra (younger vines)

Varietal: Nebbiolo (90%); Barbera (10%)

Average Production: 12,000 bottles

## Barbera d'Alba "Trevigne" Barolo

### "Ciabot Mentin Ginestra"

Zone: Monforte d'Alba

Cru: Ciabot Mentin

Ginestra

Varietal: Nebbiolo

Vineyard Ext.: 3.9 hectares

Average Prod: 15,000 bottles

## Barolo "Pajana"

## Barolo "Per Cristina"

## Dolcetto Langhe "Visadi"

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