

CAVALLOTTO

There is a steep and winding shortcut leading from Azelia's estate to Castiglione Falletto, where I always stay, in a friendly quaint hotel, whenever I'm in Piemonte. And every day, over and over again, I take it, cutting time from one estate to another. For years, magnetically, I'd be drawn to my left, up the steep slope, to the Bricco Boschis cru, one of the finest and most spectacular of the Barolo appellation. Some day...I always told myself. And finally, the day has come.

Coming to me highly recommended by all my vigneron friends, I finally met the Cavallotto family, and found we mutually enjoyed our company, tasting wines, both theirs, from barrel and bottle, and some I'd bring along as a tease or a challenge; discussing winemaking, sharing the virtues of fine wine and the pros and cons of differing stylistic views. And mutual respect, that rare commodity seldom found in the wine world, led to collaboration!

The Cavallotto family have a monopole on the Bricco Boschis cru, and have been producing wines there for five generations. In 1984 they were the first of their township to eliminate all other crops, and to dedicate themselves exclusively to vinifying their grapes and bottling their wines. Today, Alfio and Giuseppe Cavallotto, both trained oenologists, continue to vinify the grapes grown exclusively from their own holdings, transforming them into the most classic expressions of Castiglione Falletto.

Between the Bricco Boschis and the Vignolo crus they own 23 hectares, roughly 13 of which planted with Nebbiolo.

Their vineyard management, as I have witnessed it all these years, is outstanding; rigorously aimed at

producing a yearly average of 32-38 hectolitres per hectare, in the case of Nebbiolo, and not over 40 for their other varietals.

The cellars are remarkably well equipped and spacious allowing for an even greater ease and flexibility during the hectic harvest period.

The estate produces three Baroli. One from the Vignolo cru, sloping 60-80 metres lower in altitude than the adjacent Bricco Boschis holding. This altitude difference probably accounts for its greater "sweetness" with respect to its siblings, the Vignolo showing equal vigour and power, but a more creamy flesh. Unquestionably a wine of singular breeding and longevity, with a gentile quality both on the palate and in its aromatics that is always the hallmark of a blue blooded cru. A princely wine indeed.

Equally grand is the estate's selection of the finest vineyard within the Bricco Boschis cru, the Barolo Vigna San Giuseppe. This is a magnificent classic, the epitome of Castiglione Falletto's character, a powerful, majestic wine of absolute authority. In its youth one revels in its firm and effortless stature; for sweetness one must wait.

The Barolo Bricco Boschis, far from being merely "regular" or "village" Barolo, is a cru in and of itself, best described as a San Giuseppe in a minor key. Superbly structured, it also reflects the austere, husky personality of its township: with a gentleman's reserve, it nevertheless reveals its powerful nature promptly betraying a richness that will unfold with age.

Similarly, Cavallotto's Nebbiolo is a rare wine built to age. Stylistically, it shies away from the wonderfully fragrant Nebbioli that one so easily enjoys, rather aiming to be a "little Barolo", as it were, approaching the

structure and depth of its majors, and easily mistakable with a full fledged Barolo. Significantly, it is oak aged and bottled a year later than most. Last, but not least, Cavallotto produces splendid Dolcetto and Barbera, both reflecting the massive nature of their terroir. The Dolcetto is well structured under its velvety floral identity. The Barbera, released a year later, sinewy and fleshy, possesses the weight, purity and balance of an athlete. ♦



Barolo Bricco Boschis

Zone: *Cast. Falletto*
 Cru: *Bricco Boschis*
 Varietal: *Nebbiolo*
 Vineyard Ext.: *5 hectares*
 Average Prod.: *22,000 bottles*



Barolo Bricco Boschis Riserva Vigna S. Giuseppe

Zone: *Cast. Falletto*
 Cru: *Bricco Boschis*
 Varietal: *Nebbiolo*
 Vineyard Ext.: *3.78 hectares*
 Average Prod.: *13,333 bottles*