

SILVIO GRASSO

The estate, now in the hands of Federico Grasso, was founded in 1927 and boasts two hectares of southwest facing Nebbiolo vineyards in the fine La Morra crus of Luciani and Manzoni. Since Federico is a close friend and neighbour of Renato Corino, I have had the opportunity and pleasure to know his wines and to follow in detail the estate's progress over the years. Inclusion is a way of life for the best winemakers in Piedmont and so Federico and his wines were often shown at our tastings. He virtually evolved into this portfolio of which he has been part since 1993.

As is common with many fine crus of La Morra, those of Federico yield soft, deep and lush Barolo, the Manzoni having a slightly more tannic attack. In youth his Baroli display in varying depths an undercurrent of sweet oak. As they age, they move towards a fine, cedary and plump middle-age. I would say they acquire the quiet, refined, leisurely fabric and presence of a gentleman farmer.

Over the last decade, in addition to Barolo Bricco Luciani, Barolo Ciabot Manzoni and a Barolo "base", the volcanic Federico, in order to enhance the character of the different plots that make up his property, has released three more Baroli (all made from vineyards standing in La Morra): a traditionally made wine (forty days of maceration with the skins and ageing in large Slavonian oak casks) and two single vineyard versions from the Giachini and Plicotti crus. These efforts have been rewarded by the Italian and the international press.

The estate also produces a seductive barrel-fermented Barbera from the Fontanile vineyard, as well as a traditional juicy Barbera, a pretty and youthful Dolcetto, two different Nebbioli and "L'Insieme" (a blend of Barbera, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot

and Nebbiolo). Federico's son Silvio, a trained agricultural technician, is now working full-time at the estate. ◇



Barolo Bricco Luciani

Zone: *La Morra*
 Cru: *Bricco Luciani*
 Varietal: *Nebbiolo*
 Vineyard Ext.: *1.5 hectares*
 Average Prod.: *6,000 bottles*



Barolo Pi Vigne

Zone: *La Morra*
 Varietal: *Nebbiolo*
 Vineyard Ext.: *1.5 hectares*
 Average Prod.: *10,000 bottles*