

## **Monforte d'Alba, Province of Cuneo**

*Established: 1982*

*Owners: Guido Fantino & Claudio Conterno*

*Winemakers: Fabio Fantino*

*Production: 140,000 bottles*

*Hectares under vine: 25*

*Viticulture: Organic*

*Vegan Friendly*



Founded in 1982, Conterno Fantino testifies to the talent and vision of viticulturist Claudio Conterno and his partner, oenologist Guido Fantino. These great wines start in exceptional vineyard sites in Monforte d'Alba and are lovingly nurtured in their state of the art winery at Bricco Bastia. This location is scenically set, overlooking the most ancient part of Monforte with a sweeping view of the majestic Alps. Conterno Fantino's historical nucleus is Ginestra, one of Monforte's historical crus documented as far back as the 1800's.

### **Chardonnay DOC 'Bastia'**

A little secret in our portfolio, this is one serious Chardonnay that will take you by surprise. Fabio simply loves white Burgundy and this wine punches well above its weight. Aged in barriques for twelve months, its rich with ripe pear and melon fruit, honey, toffee and yellow flowers, the palate creamy and full bodied.

### **Dolcetto d'Alba DOC 'Bricco Bastia'**

The Bastia vineyard, located right next to the winery, is one of the highest in Monforte. The wine is matured in stainless steel for eight months, retaining all of its immediate varietal appeal of lush fragrance and fresh raspberry and blueberry fruit.

### **Barbera d'Alba DOC 'Vignota'**

From a selection of Monforte's finest vineyards: Ginestra, Mosconi, Pajana, Bussia and Ornati. Some of these are old vineyards, with most replanting taking place in the early 1990's. Barbera is given prime vineyard location, mostly on windswept crests at about 280 metres on sand/silt soils. Aged 10 months in second use barriques, the wine is a deep purple with an intense nose of violets and cherries; a seductively fruity palate with marked acidity, a hint of new wood and a long finish.

### **Nebbiolo Langhe DOC 'Ginestrino'**

Ginestrino is sourced from 20 year old vines from the Ornati vineyard, which lies just outside the Barolo zone near Monforte. In challenging years, fruit from their premium vineyards is declassified and the production of Ginestrino increases. Aged ten months in used barriques, it is bright ruby with garnet highlights, the nose rich with rose and peach stones. The palate is round with well balanced varietal tannins. A 'baby Barolo' that rewards short-medium term cellaring.

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## IN THE CANTINA

Over the last few years Fabio has been reducing the percentage of new oak in the baroli and the four wines are made in a very similar way. Fourteen days on skins followed by malolactic fermentation in barrique, one third new. At the conclusion of malo, the wines are racked and returned to barriques until the following September when about half of each wine is moved into 25hL casks for one year. Calculating the percentage of new wood, something the industry has become a little too obsessed with, is complicated. Castelletto and Sori Ginestra are half aged in 25hL casks but Mosconi is about 40hL in total so one cask is more than half of the production. Vigna del Gris on the other hand is 75hL in total and just one 25hL is filled.

## BAROLO VINEYARDS

**Ginestra** starts up high at the tree line and wraps around the east ridge. Sori Ginestra comes from the middle section (in teal) and Vigna del Gris from the three easternmost parcels (in blue).



One of the changes here is that both Sori Ginestra and Vigna del Gris are now both labelled Ginestra, as required by law. The main difference, apart from aspect and exposure, is that the soil of Vigna del Gris is more sandy and the wines are open and aromatic without the raw power of Sori Ginestra. Antonio Galloni describes Vigna del Gris as a "Piedmontese version of a Volnay." We say buy both and drink the Vigna del Gris first!

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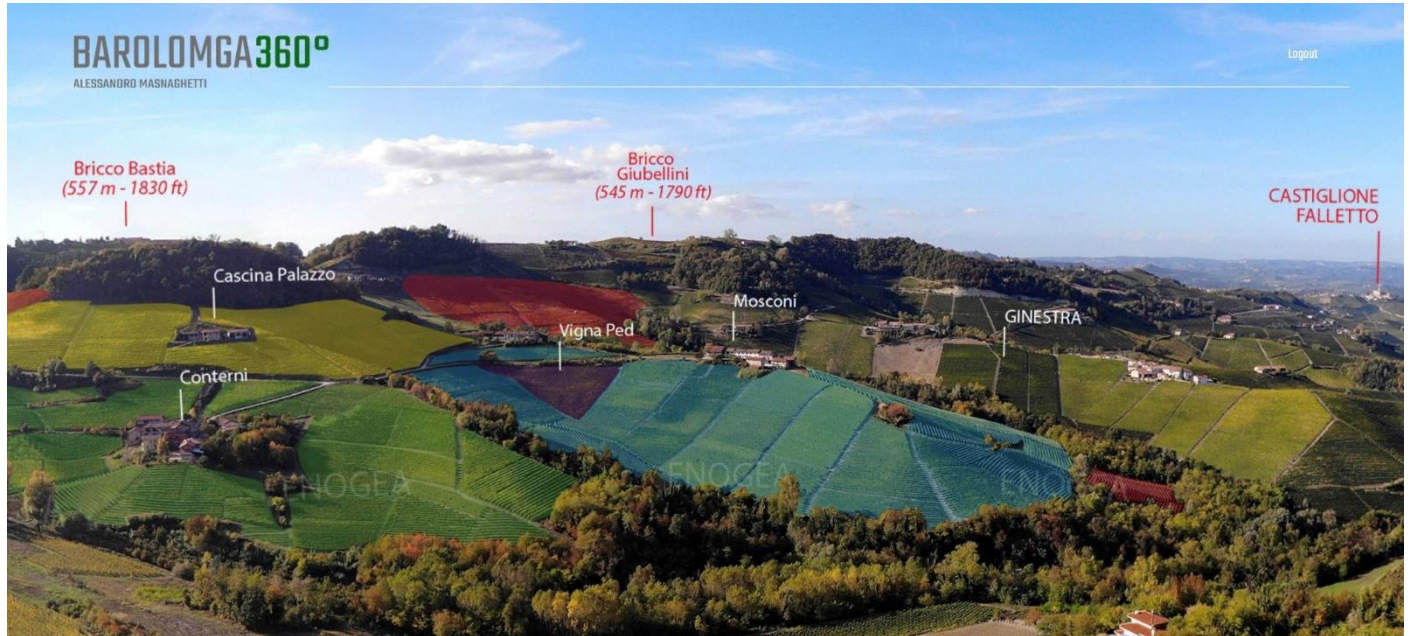


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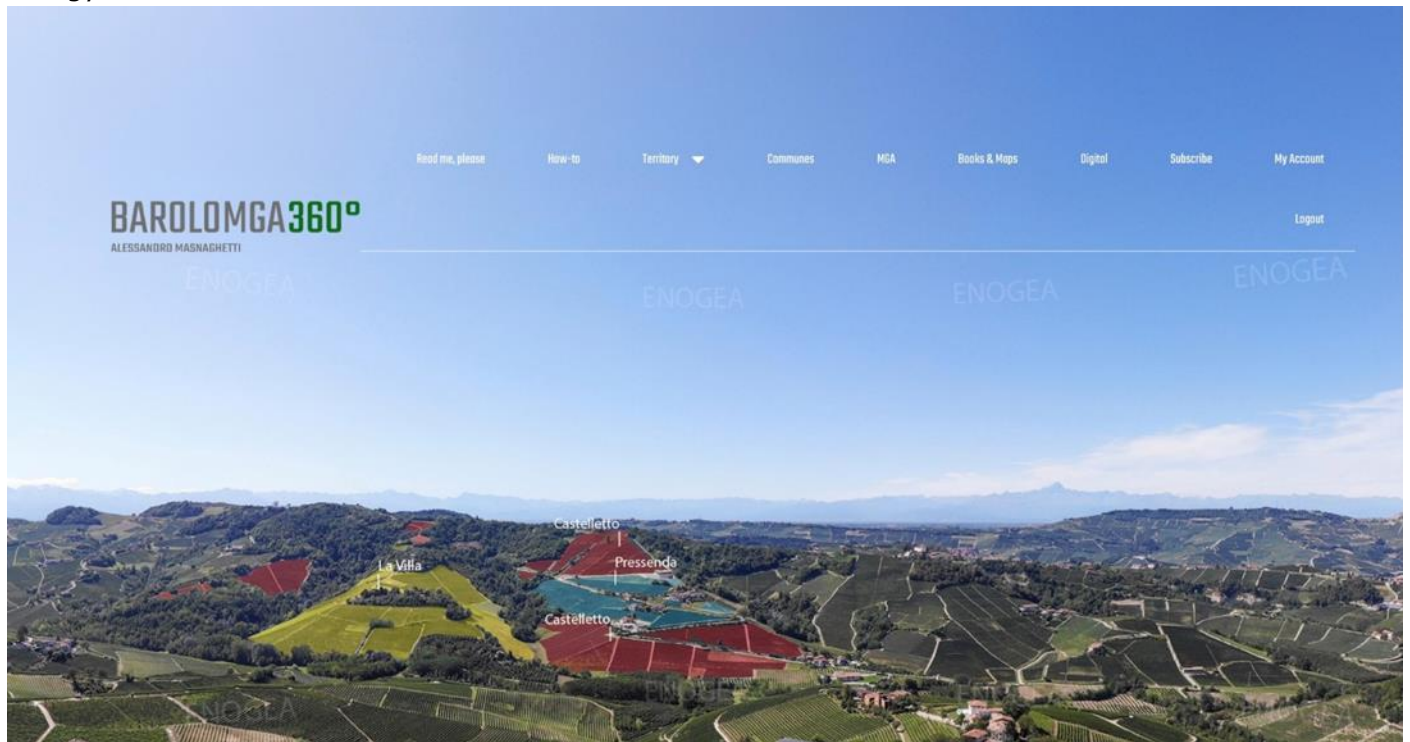
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**Mosconi** is the next ridge south of Ginestra and includes Conterni (where Chiara Boschis' has her vines) although historically Mosconi has always centred around the houses on the main ridge, Borgata Mosconi. Vigna Ped, an old name whose origins are somewhat unknown is the triangle shaped parcel in purple that is just under one hectare. The wines from Mosconi can be big and powerful with more dense fruit than Ginestra but there's no denying that the old timers knew something was special about Vigna Ped.



**Castelletto** is their newest Barolo that made its debut with the 2013 vintage. The upper portion of Castelletto gives a more fresh style of wine and the lower portion more tannic and powerful. At the heart of this cru is Vigna Pressenda, long considered the best parcel that shows the freshness and energy of Castelletto balanced with fruit and structure.



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*I was blown away by the wines I tasted at Conterno-Fantino. The 2019s are nuanced, transparent and wonderfully expressive of place. In other words, everything Barolo should be. Everything starts in the vineyard, which has always been evident here. In recent years, Fabio Fantino has refined that approach, giving the wines a level of precision that is impossible to miss. The 2019s spent 15-18 days on the skins, far longer than a decade ago, and were aged in a combination of barrique and 25hL casks. Antonio Galloni, November 2022*

**Barolo DOCG Ginestra 'Vigna Sori Ginestra'**

Southerly exposed Nebbiolo with an average age of 30 years. The vineyard is perfectly located facing due south, receiving plenty of light and the ground heats up rapidly. The soil properties (sand and clayey marl with a high silt content), combined with the depth and good water retention give the wine structure, elegance and finesse. This displays all the hallmarks of Ginestra with rich red-black berry fruit, balsam and mentholated notes, the palate full bodied, powerful and structured for a long cellar life.

*2019 The 2019 Barolo Ginestra Vigna Sori Ginestra is one of the most elegant wines I have ever tasted from Conterno-Fantino and the Ginestra cru. Ample and broad, with huge intensity, the Sori Ginestra is stunning. All the Ginestra signatures come through in the glass. The 2019 is deep and vibrant, yet also wonderfully fresh. There is a creaminess in the 2019 that is impossible to miss. This is so impressive. 96 points, Antonio Galloni*

**Barolo DOCG Ginestra 'Vigna del Gris'**

South easterly exposed Nebbiolo from a sandier portion of Ginestra. The vines here are younger (average 15 years) following extensive replanting in 2000, using a combination of massale selection and the new clonal material acquired in Piedmont during the 1990's. Typically the most 'open' of the four Barolos, with striking floral and red fruit aromatics, the palate elegant and restrained with refined tannins.

**2019** *The 2019 Barolo Ginestra Vigna del Gris is another terrific wine from Conterno-Fantino. Crushed flowers, cedar, pipe tobacco, mint, dried flowers and worn-in leather give the 2019 striking aromatic presence. Here, too, Fabio Conterno has done a terrific job in taming the Monforte tannins. The Gris never has the completeness of the other crus, but in 2019 it is positively striking. I would drink this ahead of the other 2019s. 94 points, Antonio Galloni*

**Barolo DOCG Mosconi 'Vigna Ped'**

From a 1.3ha parcel of the famed Mosconi cru, which is opposite Ginestra at a higher altitude (400m), facing south south-east. There was extensive replanting 12 years ago but the oldest section was planted in 1950. The marly, calcareous soil is packed with manganese, resulting in very high levels of polyphenols and anthocyanins. The resulting wine is structured with rich fruit, a muscular frame and hefty tannins that demand cellaring.

**2019** *2019 Barolo Mosconi Vigna Ped shows all the depth that is typical of this site. A rush of dark red fruit, smoke, tar, gravel, incense and crushed rose petals builds as the 2019 shows off its remarkable depth and textural intensity. There's real character and pedigree here. Time in the glass releases layers of fruit that build into the huge, substantial finish. What a wine! 97 points, Antonio Galloni*

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**Barolo DOCG Castelletto 'Vigna Pressenda'**

Also in the commune of Monforte, Castelletto faces the town of Serralunga. The vineyard, planted in 1969 and 1986, is 1.2 hectares and the best and central part of the cru is known as Pressenda.

**2019** *The 2019 Barolo Castelletto Vigna Pressenda is gorgeous. Delicate and perfumed in the glass, the 2019 offers up a beguiling mélange of dark red cherry, rose petal, mint, cedar, blood orange, spice and crushed autumn leaves. In 2019, the Monforte tannins are especially refined, something that is very rarely the case here at this stage. What a wonderfully precise, sophisticated, nuanced wine this is. Impressive. 96 points, Antonio Galloni*

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