

## ***San Rocco Seno d'Elvio (Alba), Province of Cuneo***

*Established: 1993*

*Owners: Colla families*

*Winemakers: Pietro Colla*

*Production: 150,000*

*Hectares of vines: 27*

*Viticulture: Conventional*

*Vegan Friendly*



*The Collas are one of the oldest and most established families in Piedmont, and yet their wines somehow remain under the radar. Over the last few vintages, quality has been especially strong. Readers who enjoy transparent, classically made Barolo and Barbaresco will want to check these wines out. Antonio Galloni*

Galloni is right, Pietro Colla has been on a roll of late and with growing appreciation of more traditional style Barolo and Barbaresco, they aren't going to remain "under the radar" for long. The Colla's loyalty to the roots of classic Piedmontese viticulture comes from a family heritage going back many generations and the only change here recently was the acquisition of a new winery. They had well and truly outgrown their original winery, spread across several buildings at Bricco del Drago in San Rocco Seno d'Elvio. Just as plans were being drawn up to dig into the hillside and build a new cellar, a neighbouring winery, Cascina Bompè, became available.

The Colla's quickly snapped up the winery, which came with a few hectares of Barbera and is conveniently located next door to Locanda del Pilone, a one star Michelin. It's a massive two level concrete structure that could double as the Langhe Indoor Cricket Club, dug into the hilltop with an underground barrel room that is full of *botti* – you won't find any barrique here.

### **Dolcetto d'Alba DOC 'Pian Balbo'**

Single vineyard Dolcetto from Roncaglia in Barbaresco, displaying the classic vivacious blueberry fruit of the variety with a fresh, lively palate.

### **Barbera d'Alba DOC 'Costa Bruna'**

From the Roncaglia cru in Barbaresco, where the oldest vines are 60+ years old. Deep, intense ruby red with a vinous bouquet, the palate round and full with well integrated wood. Appealing and forward in youth and equally cellar worthy, this is named after the matriarch of the family, Bruna, who happens to be one of the best cooks in the Langhe.

### **Nebbiolo d'Alba DOC**

From San Rocco Seno d'Elvio, near Alba and just outside the Barbaresco DOCG boundary, this has become a benchmark for the variety that offers superb value for the traits it shares with its more famous siblings Barolo and Barbaresco. Full-bodied with strawberry fruit, firm and structured with pleasing tannins. Made to drink in the short-medium term, in the best vintages it fleshes out nicely with an extra few years in the bottle.

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## Barbaresco DOCG Roncaglie

Documented as far back as the 1800's, Roncaglia is one of Barbaresco's finest cru's and the vineyards span the hillside in an amphitheatre like shape, capturing generous light and sunshine.

*2019 Truffle, woodland berry, leather and violet aromas shape the nose along with spice notes. It's still young and full of nervous tension but already offers juicy raspberry, star anise and white pepper. Tightly knit, fine-grained tannins and bright acidity keep it balanced. 95 points, Kerin O'Keefe*

## BUSSIA BREAKDOWN

When the boundaries were proposed for the MGA's (Menzioni Geografiche Aggiuntive) and, this being Italy, politics got in the way and Bussia became a monster cru of 340 hectares. In his publications, Alessandro Masnaghetti breaks down Bussia into no less than eleven different zones. The Colla's have a little over six hectares in the Bussia hamlet of Dardi which historically was part of Bussia Soprana. Pietro's uncle, the late and legendary Beppe Colla, made the famous 1961 Prunotto Bussia from these vines, the first single vineyard wine in Barolo, and in doing so pioneered the concept of cru Barolo (and Barbaresco). When the Colla's sold Prunotto in the early 1990's and began setting up their own family operation, it was always going to be a piece of Bussia that was at the top of the list. Masnaghetti describes the wines of Dardi as "classic Barolo, mineral, at times with somewhat rugged tannins".

Below you can see the Colla's vineyards in red, with the houses that make up the hamlet of Dardi on either side. The vineyards are divided into seven parcels, vinified and aged separately. In the cantina the grapes are on skins for 20 days and aged for two years in Slavonian *botti*. The best *botti* are selected for Dardi Le Rose and blended into a single bottling.



## Barolo DOCG Bussia 'Dardi Le Rose'

**2018** Aromas recalling smoky mineral, rose petal and wild red berry carry through to the palate along with star anise, tobacco and blood orange. It's linear and almost ethereally elegant thanks to polished, glossy tannins while bright acidity lends energy. 94 points, Kerin O'Keefe

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