VALFACCENDA Piedmont

Fraz. Madonna di Loreto, Canale, Province of Cuneo

Established: 2010

Owners: Carolina Roggero & Luca Faccenda

Winemaker: Luca Faccenda

Production: 25,000 bottles

Hectares under vine: 5

Viticulture: Certified Organic

Vegan Friendly

Luca and Carolina are two of the best people we've met in the world of wine. We've known one another for many years and long admired the wines so we decided it was time to navigate our friendship and import the wines. Luca Faccenda grew up in the hills of Roero, northwest of Alba, where his family made wines in Valle Faccenda, a small valley between Canale and Cisterna.

The vineyards in Roero are primarily on sandy soils, the hills very steep and difficult to work, and the wines more perfumed and pretty compared to those of the Langhe with a distinct saltiness on the palate. At Valfacenda its all done by hand, and all done by Luca and Carolina. Farming is organic with some biodynamic principals and in the cantina Luca works without temperature control and only indigenous yeasts. The wines are unfined and unfiltered with minimal sulphur additions and the stunning labels are all designed by Carolina. There are three MGA (Menzioni Geografiche Aggiuntive) vineyards:

Loreto in Canale: sand and loam, east facing. Nebbiolo planted in 1998.
Mompellini in Canale: sand, loam and clay, west facing. Nebbiolo planted in 2008.
San Grato in Santo Stefano Roero, sand and limestone, south west. Nebbiolo planted in 1967.

Roero Arneis DOCG

This comes from Loreto and Mompellini with an average vine age of 15 years and the vineyard parcels are divided into 'rich' and 'poor' soils, harvested separately. The rich soils bring acidity and and sharpness to the wine, whilst the poor soils more structure and warmth. The poorer soils produce smaller berries with ripe tannins and these parcels are fermented and aged in old wood, with about 10-15 days on skins. The wine goes through malo and is blended and bottled in the waning moon of late Spring following the harvest and then aged in bottle for a minimum of three months.

Luca makes the point that his Arneis is grown only on the steep hillsides (where mostly Nebbiolo is grown) and it's the first variety to flower and the last to ripen. He is looking complexity rather than a simple aperitivo wine. The nose is rich with peach and pear fruit and touch of white pepper. The mid palate fills out with depth and some tannin, finishing crisp and salty.

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Vino Rosso Vindabeive

Luca says Vindabeive is the sort of wine that four people can enjoy in the afternoon, no one gets hurt, and everyone can go back to work! Made from the youngest Nebbiolo vines with about 40% whole bunch, it gets a short four day maceration on skins, a few pump overs and is bottled in November with some bubbles still present from the ferment. Bottled in one litre bottles with a crown seal, its fresh and lively with crunchy red fruits and a little spritz.

Roero Nebbiolo DOCG

This comes from three MGA; Loreto (fruit, body and acidity), Mompellini (colour and structure) and San Grato (perfumed fruit and elegance). The three vineyards are harvested and fermented separately and fermentation is in stainless and concrete with 5% whole bunch and about 20 days on skins. The wines are basket pressed and then blended and aged in old tonneaux for twelve months.

Nebbiolo from Roero is typically lighter in body and structure but beautifully detailed with finesse and elegance. Fruity and vibrant with crisp red fruits and floral notes, the palate balancing juicy fruit and a little saltiness (typical of Roero) with fine tannins.