



*Winery Profile*  
**ANGELO NEGRO**

Since 1670, the Negro family has been cultivating vineyards in the hills of the Roero and realizing the viticultural potential of this relatively undiscovered subregion of Piedmont. In that same year, two of the estate's most cherished vineyards—Perdaudin and Prachiosso—were first planted. Boasting some of the most desirable vineyard sites in the Roero, Negro is an indisputable legend of the area. In fact, Giovanni Negro, the estate's proud patriarch, vinified the first dry Roero Arneis on record in 1971. The current winemaker, Angelo Negro, produces wines exclusively from the native grapes of the region, offering a remarkable range of Arneis and Nebbiolo, among other varietals. The family's sandy, fossil-laden vineyards in the village of Monteu Roero coupled with their meticulous work in the vineyard and the cellar give rise to precise, soulful wines. Today, the estate observes organic practices while managing a staggering 70 hectares under vine.

A land survey discovered in the archives of Monteu Roero offers evidence of more than three centuries of history binding the Negro family to these lands. This survey attests that, in 1670, "Giovanni Dominico Negro, son of Audino" was the owner of a farmhouse with a cellar, courtyard, and rows of vines in the same area where the prestigious Perdaudin ("for Audino") vineyard is located today. Here in the ancient "Podere di Audino," Angelo Negro, known by the diminutive "Angelin," was born in the early twentieth century.

The family's original vineyard holdings were limited to two hectares, which yielded roughly 15 demijohns of wine annually. In 1949, Angelo Negro and his wife, Gertrude Ferrero, had Giovanni, who chose to follow in his father's footsteps at a young age. Giovanni's passion, tenacity, and self-sacrifice resulted in the construction of his dream cellar, where he was ideally positioned to produce wine from the hills in which he was born. His choice to focus on autochthonous grapes vinified according to traditional methods along with a fierce dedication to quality rather than quantity earned impressive results. In 1971, Giovanni Negro made history by vinifying the first dry Roero Arneis, considered by many contemporaries to be the gold standard in all of the Langhe. In the 1980s, the wines of Negro began to gain recognition, first throughout Italy and then at the international level. Through it all, Giovanni Negro has remained zealous in his role as the head of the estate with his wife, Maria Elisa, and their four children, Gabriele, Angelo, Emanuela, and Giuseppe, all of whom are enthusiastic members of the family business.

The estate encompasses 70 hectares of vineyards surrounding three properties: the ancestral Cascina Perdaudin in Monteu Roero, the San Vittore farmhouse in Canale, and the farmhouse in the Basarin cru of Neive. The family recently added a prestigious plot in Cascina Baudana, located in Serralunga d'Alba, to their holdings. Despite these vast holdings, the winery averages less than 30,000 cases produced per year. The estate also functions as a nursery, selecting the best vines to propagate by means of massal selection. Giovanni Negro's maternal grandfather, Giuseppe Gatti, was, in fact, regarded as a trusted source for nursery stock. Nowadays, the family collaborates with the University of Turin on both the analysis and selection of new Arneis clones. This critical work helps to map the genetic heritage of Arneis while fostering both biodiversity in the vineyards and singularity in the resultant estate wines.

The Roero's landscape and underlying soils were formed primarily by two geological events. The first event occurred about 500,000 years ago, as the lands now known as the Roero rose from the sea to reveal a landscape of sand, limestone, clay, and marl. Roughly 100,000 years ago, an earthquake triggered a marked shift in the directional flow of the Tanaro River, pushing east to leave the fossil-laden soils of the Roero dry while painting these same soils with alluvial clay and marl. Over time, the stress of these geological events gave birth to steep, undulating hills that were and continue to be distinct from the ridges



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of the Langhe to the south and the east. Today, the Roero is characterized by hills that form hundreds of natural amphitheaters with optimal exposure and drainage. Negro's vineyards are all planted in prime positions in the heart of the appellation, where predominantly sandy soils are rich in mineral salts and laden with marine fossils.

The Roero is recognized as the birthplace of Arneis. One of the earliest documents attesting to its existence was written in Canale, the largest town in the Roero, in 1478. The grape was referred to as Reneysium during these times and gradually came to be called Arneis in the nineteenth century. Many believe the word Arneis to be related to the local dialect meaning "brat" or "rascal," a nod to multiple difficulties associated with farming the grape. It was traditionally co-planted with Nebbiolo and often called Nebbiolo Bianco. Much of the twentieth century witnessed its decline, and fewer than 20 hectares remained by the 1970s. Fortunately, many historic producers in the Langhe, including Giovanni Negro, recognized its value and were able to rescue it from extinction. Today, the Roero is home to over 600 hectares of Arneis.

A prickly variety, Arneis must be harvested within a narrow window of ripeness lest the grape loses acidity precipitously. When rooted in calcareous soils, Arneis can present in a flabby, even insipid manner. In the sandy soils of the Roero, however, the grape yields aromatics like pear, tangerine, and white blossom; a silky texture; and pleasant acidity. The family vineyard of Serra Lupini, a recognized *Menzione Geografica Aggiuntiva* (MGA) or single vineyard, is the epitome of this soil type and a top site for Arneis. The vineyard name recalls an inhabitant of the surrounding forest, foxes, here called lupini, or "little wolves." Negro also makes two small-scale bottlings of Arneis. Sourced from the very first vineyard planted by the family in 1670, the eponymous Perdaudin bottling is vinified in stainless steel for seven months with frequent batonnage, resulting in enhanced richness alongside remarkable acidity. Meanwhile, Sette Anni, meaning "seven years," is a happy result of the family's decades-long experimentation with Arneis. After vinifying small lots from each of their Arneis vineyards in order to study the grape's evolution in bottle, Negro chose one of their oldest sites as the source for a wine vinified to showcase the ageworthiness of Arneis. Sette Anni undergoes batonnage for seven months in stainless steel after which it is aged for seven years prior to release.

Angelo Negro's Unfiltered Bianco is a playful expression of Arneis. Several years back, The Piedmont Guy was tasting from a tank that had not yet been filtered and was impressed by the flavor profile of the raw wine. Racked directly from tank to bottle, this cloudy, natural wine sees no filtration, making it without peer in Piedmont. A rare opportunity in 2020 gave rise to Unfiltered Rosso as well. In collaboration with the winery, The Piedmont Guy released a dry Brachetto aged on the lees of Arneis and then bottled without filtration. It is a beautifully floral and charmingly light-bodied red wine best served with a chill. More traditionally, this aromatic red variety called Brachetto is used to make a sweet, sparkling wine, often referred to as Birbèt in the Roero. Negro's version of Birbèt is a perfect accompaniment to brunch as well as dessert pairings involving fresh berries, pastry cream, and even chocolate. Not to be forgotten, the Onorata bottling is vinified from an indigenous white variety called Favorita, which is genetically identical to, albeit morphologically different from Vermentino. Onorata manages to be linear without sacrificing weight, and its notes of bright stone fruit appeal to Pinot Grigio and Sauvignon Blanc lovers alike.

While Arneis accounts for 90 percent of the grapevines planted in the Roero, Nebbiolo also thrives in these sandy, calcareous soils. Compared to the Langhe, Roero Nebbiolo offers generous red fruit and exceptional approachability. As a result, the Angelin bottling of Nebbiolo is perfect for casual, everyday



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drinking. The winery's conscious decision never to blend other red grapes into this Langhe Nebbiolo (despite the DOC permitting this practice) makes for a gateway Nebbiolo to the more serious DOCG wines of Roero, Barbaresco, Barolo, Gattinara, and so forth. The Prachiosso bottling is sourced from a vineyard that predates the winery. The name Prachiosso comes from Pratum Chiusum, meaning "enclosed meadow," and can be traced back to the 12th century. Giovanni Negro replanted this vineyard in 1971 and still personally tends to it. Fermented in stainless steel for up to 20 days on the skins and then aged for 20 months in French and Austrian *botti*, this wine is on par with many of the finest Barbaresco bottlings. Prachiosso DOCG is a prime example of how effortlessly Nebbiolo from the sandy, fossil-laden soils of the Roero balances elegance and approachability. Finally, Sudisfà, whose name means "satisfied," is vinified from 100-percent Nebbiolo as Roero Riserva DOCG and built to rival serious bottlings from Barolo.

Since 2016, Angelo Negro has been a leading member of the The Green Experience. This certifying body was founded by Coldiretti Cuneo, whose primary objectives are the conservation of healthy soil and biodiversity, the enhancement of unique regional production methods, and the preservation of the UNESCO-protected hills of the Langhe, the Roero, and Monferrato. For more information, please visit: <http://www.thegreenexperience.it/>