



Winery Profile  
**BRUNO GIACOMETTO**

**Bruno Giacometto is the force behind a dazzling array of bottlings vinified naturally from Erbaluce, a thick-skinned, high-acid white grape variety native to northern Piedmont. Bruno's ebullience belies his age, and he claims to have never married because Erbaluce is the one true love of his life. Erbaluce di Caluso was Piedmont's first official white-wine appellation, formalized as a DOC in 1967 and subsequently elevated to DOCG status in 2010. The DOCG encompasses only Erbaluce grown in the zone of Caluso, "where the best Erbaluce wines in Italy are made," according to Wine Scholar Ian D'Agata. With centuries of family ties to the historic town of Caluso and a winemaking lineage dating back to the early 1960s, Bruno feels most at home in the pergola-trained Erbaluce vineyards of his zone, though he also maintains small parcels of native red grapes like Nebbiolo, Barbera, Neretto, and Freisa. The estate of Bruno Giacometto has been certified organic by ICEA since 2019.**

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For those yet to discover the ancient grape, Erbaluce is derived from two words: dawn ("alba," which became "erba" over time) and light ("luce"). Its name alludes to the milky-white color of the grape but has also been attributed to a local legend surrounding Albaluce, a fairy who blessed the townspeople of Caluso with this precious fruit. Erbaluce is characterized by robust acidity and delicate tannins, two traits that have made it well suited to the historical production of high-quality sparkling, still, and late-harvest wines. As far back as 1838, Lorenzo Gatta observed that Erbaluce grapes were prized to the extent that they fetched ten times the price of red grapes in the area. Ian D'Agata also recounts that "Winemaker Piero Genta won a gold medal for his Caluso wine at the Paris Exhibition of 1855 and reportedly had the honor of seeing his wine served at the court of Napoleon III."

The soils of Caluso emanated from the Balteo Glacier, which dragged mineral-rich soils down from the Valle d'Aosta in the Alps, thereby creating the morainic amphitheater of Ivrea. The town's rocky, glacial soils are reflected in the grapes grown here, conferring the minerality, acidity, and sapidity that define Erbaluce di Caluso. Erbaluce is traditionally grown on trellises to better control yields by using a training system called *pergola canavesana* that both protects the grapes from the scorching summer sun and keeps them beyond the reach of ravenous *cinghiale*. The town of Caluso rests on a hillside sitting at an average elevation of 340 meters, where conditions are ideal for Erbaluce.

The Giacometto family has been an integral part of this remote territory for generations. Following World War I, Bruno's grandfather Gioachino increased his vineyard holdings and expanded the wine cellar. Azienda Vitivinicola Giacometto was officially founded in 1962 by Bruno's parents, Giuseppe and Nella, when they bottled their first vintage. Bruno was born in 1961 and was actively involved in the family winery as a teenager. In 1977, he convinced his father to experiment with a new technique that was generating remarkable wines in the region. Rather than leaving Erbaluce in contact with the skins for a few days as tradition had previously dictated, Bruno lobbied Giuseppe to vinify a white wine without any skin contact. The resultant wine was crisp, floral, and immediately satisfying.

In 2001, Bruno took the reins and has since ushered the winery into a new era. Now happily retired from the IT industry, Bruno has thrown himself into his vineyards and his cellar full time. His wines stand out from most in the zone in that they sourced from certified-organic estate vineyards and vinified using only wild yeast. Bruno's vineyards are divided into various plots containing 40 to 50-year-old vines, younger



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vines in the range of 15 to 20 years, and some recent plantings. Bruno has six hectares of Erbaluce under vine, and this accounts for roughly 70 percent of his production. The remainder of his land is planted to Nebbiolo along with smaller parcels of Barbera, Neretto di Bairo, Freisa, and Merlot. Since 2020, he has begun to experiment with Sauvignon Blanc and Cabernet Franc.

His bottling simply named Erbaluce di Caluso DOCG exhibits the grape's classic aromatic notes of green apple and nectarine, boasts brilliant acidity, and finishes silken and sapid. This wine is vinified in stainless steel, and it remains in contact with the fine lees while undergoing occasional battonage for several months. As with all of Bruno's bottlings, this wine is neither unfiltered nor unfined.

The crown jewel of Giacometto's production may very well be “Αὐτόχθον” Erbaluce di Caluso DOCG. This bottling is made from a special selection of grape bunches in the vineyard and is notable for its extended time on the fine lees following fermentation in stainless steel. Bruno's original name for this wine, “Autoctono,” was intended to highlight the autochthonous—meaning indigenous—nature of Erbaluce, but the regulations of the DOCG would not permit such a name. So, he penned it in Greek, substituting the penultimate letter with an infinity sign. A mathematical mind with the soul of an artist, Bruno was not about to have his creativity compromised. This is a rich, salty, textural wine whose sweet lemon curd, green apple, and savory herbs are all balanced on the razor's edge of Erbaluce's high acidity.

Being the dedicated traditionalist that he is, Giacometto would be remiss to not produce an Erbaluce di Caluso Metodo Classico Brut DOCG. With its remarkable acidity and high yields, Erbaluce is particularly suited to the vinification of sparkling wines. This unparalleled sparkling of Erbaluce is the result of more than 6 years of aging on the lees prior to disgorgement. Precise while remaining fleshy with wild aromatics of white blossoms and brioche, this low-dosage bottling is transfixing.

According to the winemaker himself, Canavese Rosato DOC was inspired by the rich yet eminently elegant style of rosé from the Tavel appellation of southern Rhone. A beautiful field blend of Nebbiolo, Barbera, Freisa, Neretto, and Merlot, this wine is a shapeshifter with succulent mountain raspberry on the palate and a finish laced with salt and mint.

Bruno's Canavese Nebbiolo DOC is a mélange of the classic Langhe clones Michet and Lampia as well as the Picotendro clone of the Valle d'Aosta, all grown in a single 2.5-hectare vineyard. The wine macerates for 2-3 weeks before being racked off to naturally complete fermentation in stainless steel, after which it is transferred to a single, 2500-liter barrel. It ages in this vessel for one year before being transferred to stainless steel for an additional four or more years of aging prior to bottling. Sweet aromatics of rose and raspberry are balanced by savory notes of bay leaf and eucalyptus, hints of porcini mushrooms, and coffee.

Bruno's overarching philosophy is to produce quality wine by working carefully in the vineyard, respecting the soil, and eschewing the use of herbicides and chemical fertilizers. Integrating grasses, flowers, and legumes into the ground enhances soil health, while natural substances like citrus oils or teas are employed to control diseases and pests. Bruno Giacometto has been certified organic by ICEA since 2019.