



Winery Profile
LUIGI GIORDANO

A stone's throw from the village center of Barbaresco, the winery was established by Giovanni Giordano in the 1930s during a time of profound crisis in the Italian wine world. After a period of growing and selling grapes, Giovanni's son, Luigi, made the bold decision to vinify his own fruit, bottling the first wine under his label in 1958. For an independent grower like Luigi to bottle his own wine at a time when plans to establish an official appellation in Barbaresco were only in their infancy was nearly unthinkable. Today's winery remains a spirited family effort, driven by the shared vision of Luigi himself, his daughter Laura, and his grandson Matteo. Together, they produce timeless wines from vineyards planted in some of Barbaresco's most prestigious crus, including Asili and Montestefano. Another Barbaresco bottling from the cru of Cavanna showcases the winery's elegant, hands-off style of winemaking and represents the only single-vineyard bottling of its kind.

While business grew and Luigi established himself as a grower-producer during the second half of the twentieth century, the winery continued to reinvest in the land. The vineyards of the estate now stretch across seven hectares in Barbaresco on the slopes of prestigious crus like Montestefano, Asili, Ovello, Ronchi, Cars, and Cavanna. Giordano grows exclusively indigenous varieties, including Nebbiolo, Barbera, and Arneis, on these legendary hills. Today, Luigi remains an inspiring presence as his daughter Laura and grandson Matteo, a graduate of the enology school in Alba, have gradually assumed daily activities in the vineyard and the cellar.

Luigi Giordano's small family winery is situated in Barbaresco, among the hills that frame the Tanaro River's sinuous course, at the very heart of Piedmont's wine country. Of the four villages comprising the Barbaresco appellation, Barbaresco proper not only lends its name to the zone but also dominates in terms of production. Containing 24 MGAs (*Menzioni Geografiche Aggiuntive* as classified, historical vineyard sites are termed), the village of Barbaresco accounts for 47 percent of all wine produced in the appellation.

Among these vineyards, few command as much respect as Asili, championed by many legendary producers including Produttori del Barbaresco, Ceretto, and Bruno Giacosa, who was the first to bottle Asili under a single-vineyard label in 1967. The cru of Asili features sand veins snaking their way through otherwise chalky clay soils, giving rise to wines with profound tension and elegance as well as bright aromatics and understated power. The Giordano family's parcel is at the southwestern corner of the vineyard, where it bends toward the cru of Faset. Once considered less desirable than due-south-facing plots, this cooler aspect now offers fruit of great balance and complexity in the current era of rising temperatures.

The family also produces wine from the similarly grand Montestefano cru. This vineyard was the first in all of Barbaresco to be bottled as a single cru. Beppe Colla did so in 1961 when he owned the historic Prunotto estate. Both Luigi Giordano and Produttori del Barbaresco followed suit in 1971. Montestefano is prized for its heavy, blue-toned clay soils famous for producing structured, powerful, deeply colored wines, which have been described as "the most Barolo among Barbarescos" by *A Wine Atlas of the Langhe*. This indispensable tome covering the wines of the Langhe alludes to Montestefano's unmistakable notes of leather, tobacco, and truffle, all of which are reflected in Giordano's exceptional version. Compared to the winery's other Barbaresco bottlings, Montestefano typically undergoes a few extra days of maceration in cement tanks and two additional months in barrel, after which the wine is returned to cement before bottling. In excellent vintages, Giordano will reserve the best fruit from this vineyard for a Riserva to ultimately be bottled in magnum.



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The calling card of the winery is the family's single-vineyard Barbaresco bottling from Cavanna. This vineyard is tucked just below the historic castle of Barbaresco, affording a sweeping view of the Tanaro River valley and the Roero just to the northwest. Prominent neighbors inside the cru include Angelo Gaja, Moccagatta, and De Forville, though Giordano owns the heart of the vineyard and, consequently, is the only producer to bottle Cavanna as a single vineyard. This amphitheater's combination of sand and clay yields the sort of red-cherry fruit and fine tannin that make for a wildly popular glass-pour option given its serious value.

Luigi Giordano's Cavanna and Asili bottlings are fermented with native yeast in stainless steel and spend approximately 25 days on the skins. The wines then age for two years in 25-hectoliter Slavonian oak prior to bottling. The fruit from Montestefano, also fermented with native yeast, often rests up to 30 days on the skins in cement tanks and spends an additional few months in cask. Meanwhile, Montestefano Riserva ages for a minimum of 30 months in wood before bottling..

The family's style is perhaps best described as charming, traditional, and authentic. Their entry-level wines undergo medium-length macerations followed by aging in stainless steel and/or neutral oak. These are fun, easy-drinking wines begging to be stockpiled for weekday dinners and served by the glass. The Langhe Rosso is a one-of-a-kind co-ferment of 80-percent Nebbiolo and 20-percent Arneis best served with a chill. Remarkably, all of the fruit for this quaffable red is sourced from estate vineyards nestled in the village of Barbaresco. The winery's generous, balanced Barbera d'Alba hails from a historical parcel in the Cars MGA called Buschet and is a single-vineyard bottling in its own right. Buschet is the dialect for "little woods," which refers to a copse of trees bordering this parcel of the vineyard.

Each fall, a limited harvest of Nebbiolo from the crus of Ovello, Ronchi, and Cars is vinified as *Vino Rosato*, a rarity in Piedmont let alone Barbaresco. Boasting sour cherry, fresh strawberry, and a bright coral-pink hue, only 200 cases are produced each vintage. Additionally, inspired by the rich history of Nebbiolo's use as a base for sparkling wines—a history documented at least 100 years before the advent of Barolo or Barbaresco—Matteo now produces hand-riddled, hand-disgorged *méthode champenoise* sparkling rosato. As Matteo recounts, he realized this new project had been embraced by his traditionalist grandfather when he discovered Luigi at the dinner table, enjoying a generous glass of the bubbly elixir.

Luigi Giordano is a member of *Passione e Ragione*, an entity that oversees and certifies sustainable agricultural practices in Piedmont. For more information, please visit:

<https://www.passioneragione.com/home-en>