

Fratelli Alessandria, Verduno

2016

Fratelli Alessandria is an estate who you will be hearing much more of as they are destined for stardom – and at the moment, their pricing is very reasonable, though this will certainly change going forward!

The village of Verduno, at the northern tip of the Barolo appellation, delivers some of the region's prettiest, most perfumed expressions of the Nebbiolo grape. Alessandria is one of the town's standard-bearers. Cousins of the famous G.B. Burlotto, their wines are just as succulent and hard to find.

An historic Verduno estate that dates back as far as the 8th century. A true family affair Vittore Alessandria, his mother Flavia, father Gian Battista & uncle Ale have been working hard in recent years to give more precision to their charming wines: more leaves, fewer treatments in the vineyards, along with the investment into a battery of Swiss coopered Slavonian oak botti have all helped to give increased focus to the wines. Made in a traditional and non-interventionist way, the wines are fermented gently and slowly before elevage in large oak cask for three years. These are some of the aromatic, elegant and charming Barolos you'll find. Vineyards are farmed according to organic practices, but the estate is not certified.

"This is by far the finest set of wines I have tasted from Fratelli Alessandria, and I cannot recommend this estate enough for value-wine seekers and collectors alike. There is something for every Nebbiolo-loving palate in this portfolio, and all these wines hit the ball straight out of the park. Congratulations."

Monica Larner

"Fratelli Alessandria is one of Piedmont's under-the-radar jewels. The Alessandria's make compelling, classically-built wines from estate vineyards in Verduno and Monforte d'Alba. Best of all, the wines remain very reasonably priced by today's standards. Readers who enjoy structured, age-worthy Barolos won't want to be without these wines." **Antonio Galloni**

2016 Barolo

SOLD OUT (6 bts per case)



Eye-catching raspberry red with white-stone hue that reflects the 90% fruit from the village of Verduno. They co-ferment the fruit of five Verduno vineyards in the blend: Rocche dell'Olmo, Riva Rocca, Campasso, Neirane & Pisapola – the first two being most important, with Riva Rocca's steep SE aspect below the Belvedere, & adjacent to Massara, giving spine. Although Vitto toasts the 'choro'/choir of vineyards that make up their classic Barolo, he's keen on this lesser known vineyard, Riva Rocca, of which they have 1.5ha, & sees in it a bright future. There's lots of raspberry essence, cool crunch, & quiet confidence about this wine in 2016. The pretty, freshly-scented, & sapid quality is pure Verduno, while the not-so-young 18 year old vines of Gramolere that comprise the 10% of the blend – for the final time! – gives a dark fruited dimension.

NB that vintage 2017 of this wine will become 'Barolo del comune di Verduno' with 100% fruit from Verduno...the first of its type in the village!

This is the classic Barolo from Fratelli Alessandria, made with a blend of fruit from various sites in Verduno. The 2016 Barolo opens to tight elegance and a nervous quality that pits red fruit energy over lean fruit weight. The results are graceful, lithe, fragile and lasting. The wine's aromas unfolded slowly and seductively, revealing wild berry, cassis, bitter cherry, toasted almond and blue flower. This is a dreamy wine that promises more beauty as it continues its bottle evolution. An ample 20,000 bottles were produced. This is one of the very best values found anywhere in Barolo.
96 Points, Monica Lerner, Wine Advocate

The 2016 Barolo is a fabulous wine in its peer group - in any peer group, actually. Bright, floral and light on its feet, the 2016 impresses with its total sense of finesse and grace. Crushed flowers, sweet red berries, mint, white pepper and anise are all very nicely lifted in a precise, gracious Barolo that hits all the right notes. The 2016 is just flat-out delicious - that's all there is to it.
90-93 Points, Antonio Galloni

2016 Barolo San Lorenzo di Verduno **£280 c/s In Bond (6 bts per case)**



San Lorenzo is located in Verduno, facing south at a slightly lower altitude, between 720 and 880 feet above sea level. Here the mineral influence of the “marne di Sant’Agata” (a mix of sand and clay with a high proportion of limestone, unique to Verduno) comes through, with more precise floral aromas and a more linear, yet deeply elegant, profile.

Next to the classic Barolo, the Fratelli Alessandria 2016 Barolo San Lorenzo di Verduno shows a slightly darker hue and more mild concentration. The bouquet reveals less outright floral and fruit definition, and it offers more secondary and tertiary aromatic complexity instead, with spice, crushed stone, balsam herb and faint white truffle. The wine is powerful and shows a richer fiber, not by much but just enough to consider a more robust food pairing and more cellar age. A mere 5,000 bottles were released, and this is another home run from this impressive set of new releases from Fratelli Alessandria.

96+ Points, Monica Lerner, Wine Advocate

The 2016 Barolo San Lorenzo di Verduno is powerful, wild and beguiling from the very first taste. Rose petal, mint, sage, anise, crushed flowers and graphite give the 2016 an element of exoticism that is impossible to miss. Michet clone, prevalent in this site, yields a Barolo with uncommon complexity and volume, as well as pedigree to burn. The tannins are going to need time to soften, but there is so much to like here. A wine of stunning beauty, the 2016 San Lorenzo is shaping up to be one of the highlights of the year. I loved it.

93-96 Points, Antonio Galloni

2016 Barolo Gramolere **£300 c/s In Bond (6 bts per case)** **SOLD OUT** (1 Magnum per case, OWC) **SOLD OUT** (1 Double Magnum per case, OWC)



From the eponymous cru in Monforte, where 56-year-old vines are situated at 410 meters above sea level, and the soil is a mix of limestone with veins of sand.

Despite being harvested 5 days after Monvigliero, their prime c. 1.5ha plot of Gramolere has produced a wine that boasts more acidity & less alcohol. This could be down to a combination of WSW facing, at 410m above sea level (versus 280m Monvigliero) & older, 56-year-old vines. More transparent, & crystalline in hue, their 2016 Gramolere has more of the racy pace one would associate perhaps with such an elevated, old soil site, giving lower pH & higher acidity (in 2016). Crystalline, there's a notable lift of mentholated, wild mint & orange peel notes in 2016. It's racier than those of Verduno, very alive, great poise, ethereal even, tannic yes but not out of kilter. More of the signature glacier cherry character of the vintage, along with a smouldering black pepper spice, briary fruit & a certain square tannic & savoury/balsamic presence that one associates with wines close to Gramolere, be it Santo Stefano di Perno or Bussia next-door & below. Promising indeed.

If you consider the Barolo playbook at Fratelli Alessandria, the 2016 Barolo Gramolere takes the intensity and power up one more notch. You get black fruit and blackberry, but there is enough vibrant red fruit to keep this wine aligned with the more elegant and traditional side of Barolo. The wine shows compelling infinities with both the powerful and the elegant side of Nebbiolo. There are noticeable mineral notes and even a spot of savory salinity. However, Gramolere definitely has the power and inner grit to withstand long cellar aging. Only 7,000 bottles were made.

97 Points, Monica Lerner, Wine Advocate

The 2016 Barolo Gramolere is another super-classic Barolo from Fratelli Alessandria. Searing in its intensity, the 2016 is endowed with tremendous energy and pure cut. Black cherry, lavender, mint, anise and crushed rocks infuse the 2016 with striking layers of complexity and nuance. It, too, is likely to require a number of years to be at its best.

93-96 Points, Antonio Galloni

2016 Barolo Monvigliero

£420 c/s In Bond (6 bts per case)

SOLD OUT (1 Magnum per case, OWC)

SOLD OUT (1 Double Magnum per case, OWC)



Verduno's 'grand cru' Barolo and a vineyard that finally is getting its due. This south/southwest facing plot forms a perfect amphitheatre, at between 750 and 930 feet above sea level. The wine's aromas are out of this world, powerfully expressive; tannins are suave, and layers of flavour slowly unwind as the wine sits in the glass. 'Monvigliero' deserves to be spoken in the same breath as Barolo's very top vineyards — and with Fratelli Alessandria behind the bottle, it certainly will.

More composed, intense & profondo than San Lorenzo, one senses the layers of marne sant'agata fossili that are continually exposed by the exfoliating soil, rendering it gleaming white & of a talcum powder consistency. The Alessandria family has arguably the best (four) plots in the vineyard, mi-coteau, planted 35 years ago, 1.4ha in total. Having tasted these wines on several occasions over the past year, in Oct'19 there was a distinct 'griotte' dark fondant character to their Monvigliero 2016, truffy even, with a strong impression of mulberry-esque richness & a glacier cherry intensity, cologne-fresh, a weave of pulpy, black pepper spice, dark cherry & graphite poise. Given the SSW aspect of their two central plots, no wonder that there's almost a prune/Christmas pudding, rum & raisin decadence to the 2016 expression. There's a racy, energetic pulse to this wine, with total acidities balancing out the natural richness. At this stage it's very composed - decidedly more vertical & reserved than the charming San Lorenzo, but with such presence. It will require some patience.

The Fratelli Alessandria 2016 Barolo Monvigliero is a true beauty. This wine offers an all-encompassing, wide-angle view of this unique vineyard in Verduno. Wines from Monvigliero tend to show a slightly wild or unpredictable side that makes them very exciting. That untamed nature comes through with wild flowers and peppery spice, and the mouthfeel always has a unique silkiness that feels glossy or polished in texture. This is a very special growing site, and Fratelli Alessandria has long been a protagonist of the Verduno subzone. There are only 7,000 of these beauties up for grabs.

97+ Points, Monica Lerner, Wine Advocate

The 2016 Barolo Monvigliero is a real powerhouse. Rich and structured on the palate, the 2016 is likely to require a number of years to be at its best. Beams of tannin and bright acids give the 2016 a feeling of energy and vibrancy that is palpable. Bright red cherry, blood orange, mint and white pepper give the 2016 a brilliant top register. I can't wait to taste it from bottle.

94-97 Points, Antonio Galloni

Also available:

2018 Langhe Nebbiolo DOC 'Prinsiòt'

£95 c/s In Bond (6 bts per case)

Barolo is released four years after the harvest, but Langhe Nebbiolo is a much more flexible category that can hit the market as soon as the producer feels the wine is ready. There are fewer strings attached. The 2018 Langhe Nebbiolo Prinsiòt is endowed with generous primary fruit, but those berry and cherry aromas are released with elegant intensity. Ten months in large oak casks has contributed to the structure and the depth you get here.

This is a handy and versatile wine to drink on an open patio or porch under the stars. The Fratelli Alessandria 2018 Langhe Nebbiolo Prinsiòt is silky, smooth and very delicate. It's almost fragile I'd say. Wild berry and sour cherry aromas intermingle with lilac, violet and rose hip. The entire choreography here is graceful and detail-oriented. With only 9,000 bottles released, at this reasonable price, I'd recommend buying this beautiful wine by the case, not by the bottle.

92+ Points, Monica Larner, Wine Advocate

2019 Verduno Pelaverga Speciale

£90 c/s In Bond (6 bts per case)

Native to Verduno in Piedmont, the grape typically shows a strong layer of freshly milled white pepper. That's exactly what you get here! Orange peel, spice, dried cherry and mint are nicely lifted with pretty, savoury Pelaverga notes that linger in the background.

It's such a treat to taste this wine, and I always look forward to these samples. You'll also get a kick out of the Fratelli Alessandria 2019 Verduno Pelaverga Speciale. The wine pours from the bottle with a ruby-pink color that almost matches the electric-pink color seen on the bottle capsule. The bouquet is focused predominately on those very indigenous smells of white pepper that are so distinctive to the Pelaverga grape. The mouthfeel is lean, clean and streamlined, but no matter: the enormous personality you get on the nose makes up for that thinness. You could drink this red wine as you would a white or rosé, pairing it with a summery dish such as an insalata caprese. Some 22,000 bottles were produced.

91 Points, Monica Larner, Wine Advocate

2019 Langhe Favorita

£90 c/s In Bond (6 bts per case)

Soft and yielding, the Langhe Favorita is a mellow and easy-drinking wine with mild citrus tones followed by peach and honeydew melon. The Favorita grape offers lean structure with balanced acidity to refresh the palate.

Offered subject to remaining unsold and final written confirmation.

Delivery will be charged at cost.

Wines to be shipped late 2020.