

Piedmont (Piemonte)

Most of Piedmont's grape growing occurs south of the Po Valley, in the provinces of Asti, Alessandria, and Cuneo. Within these provinces, the Monferrato and Langhe hills are planted with vineyards.

Soils are predominantly calcareous marl and sandstone with varying percentages of clay and sand,

Piedmont has a continental climate and the Alps to the north produce a "rain shadow" effect,

In the Langhe and Monferrato hills, many of the best south facing vineyards planted with Nebbiolo are known as **sori** in the Piedmontese dialect,.

Varietals

Nebbiolo, is thin-skinned & produces wines of high acidity and tannin.

The late-ripening Nebbiolo, together with Dolcetto and Barbera are the principal Piedmontese red grapes.

Dolcetto, is the earliest to ripen and produces tannic, fruity wines, lower in acid and are suited to producing wines suitable for youthful consumption.

Barbera is Piedmont's most widely planted red grape. It has high acidity but low tannin. Other lesser indigenous red grapes of Piedmont include Brachetto, Grignolino, Ruchè, Croatina, Vespolina, and Freisa.

Moscato Bianco (Muscat à Petits Grains) is Piedmont's most planted varietal and is used in the production of the sparkling wines of Asti.

Cortese, Arneis, Erbaluce and Favorita (Vermentino) are the other white grapes of the region,(in diminishing order of importance.)

International grapes—Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Merlot, Syrah, Sauvignon Blanc, have been planted since the 1980s, although usage of such non-traditional grapes is limited to the less-specific DOCs and IGP wines.

Piedmont has more DOC zones than any other wine region in Italy—at the close of 2010, there were 16 DOCGs and over 40 DOC's. The most prestigious DOCGs in Piedmont are Barolo & Barbaresco, which are located along the Tanaro River, an area surrounded by the larger Langhe DOC.

Both zones produce red wines from the Nebbiolo grape; Barolo wines are typically more powerful and long-lived, whereas Barbaresco is slightly softer and regarded as Barolo's more feminine counterpart, although many individual examples contradict this..

The characteristics of tar, truffle, rose petals, and dried fruits are attributed to both wines, and their colour is moderate in concentration and orange-tinged even in youth.

Barolo

Barolo wines may be produced in 11 communes, but the five communes of: **La Morra, Barolo, Serralunga d'Alba, Monforte d'Alba, and Castiglione Falletto** represent almost 90% of the DOCG's demarcated land.

Only sites with appropriate aspects can produce fully ripe Nebbiolo, and a division between soil types marks subtle differences in each commune's wines. Soils, which contain a higher proportion of calcareous marl, characterize the vineyards of La Morra and Barolo and provide a softer style of wine.

Sandstone soils are more common in Monforte d'Alba and Serralunga d'Alba, and give more structure to the wine.

Barolo must be aged at least 38 months (from November 1 of the harvest year,) but only 18 months need be in oak.

Barolo Riserva requires a total 62 months prior to release. (36 months in oak) Traditionally, long periods of aging occurred in large neutral casks after extended macerations, but modern winemaking techniques use smaller barriques, & shorter maceration times to produce a rounder style of wine.

Barolo Cru's

Vineyard	Village
Cannubi	Barolo
Sarmazza	Barolo
Brunate	Barolo / La Morra
Le Rocche	La Morra
Cerequi	La Morra
Monprivato	Castiglione Falletto
Villero	Castiglione Falletto
Bricco Roche	Castiglione Falletto
Bricco Fiasco	Castiglione Falletto
Vigna Rionda	Serralunga d'Alba
Lazzarito	Serralunga d'Alba
Santo Stefano di Perno	Monforte d'Alba
Bussia	Monforte d'Alba
Ginestra	Monforte d'Alba

Winemaker Renato Ratti produced map of best sites for quality potential. - Widely used today

Barolo Chinato

- A digestif wine based on Barolo
- The Bark of the Chinchona (Quinine) tree together with other flavouring ingredients Cinnamon, Coriander, Iris flowers, mint, vanilla, cloves, Gentian root, macerated with the wine for up to 6 weeks
- Fortified to 16% & matured in small casks for 1 year
- Not a DOCG but uses DOCG wines as a base

Barbaresco

The wines of Barbaresco are slightly lighter in body than Barolo but are tannic, in youth and ageworthy.

Production is concentrated in the three towns of Barbaresco, Neive and Treiso.

The wines must be aged for a minimum of two years (including at least 9 months in cask), or for a minimum of four years if labelled riserva

Barolo and Barbaresco are frequently compared to Burgundy.

In the past, large merchant (**négociant**) houses dominated the business, but recently there has been an emphasis on domaines and estate-bottling. Single vineyard bottlings from the best crus, command high prices.

In 2007, the Barolo/Barbaresco/Langhe Consorzio voted to list the crus of Barbaresco as legal menzioni geografiche aggiuntive (geographic areas) of the DOCG. (In 2010 Barolo did the same)

Barbaresco "Crus"

➤ Unofficial classification. Wines based on prices of grapes

Vineyard	Commune
Montefico	Barbaresco
Montestefano	Barbaresco
Rabajà	Barbaresco
Albesani	Neive
Santo Stefano	Neive
Bricco di Neive	Neive
Gallina	Neive
Pajorè	Treiso
Bricco di Trieso	Treiso

Roero DOCG, lies on the northwestern bank of the Tanaro River, opposite Barolo and Barbaresco. The red wines are based on a minimum 95% Nebbiolo, Roero also produces fresh and floral white wines from the Arneis grape. The sandy soils of Roero, north of the commune of Alba, provide a lighter style of Nebbiolo than Barolo or Barbaresco,

Gattinara DOCG & Ghemme DOCG These appellations straddle the Sesia River and offer Nebbiolo-based reds exclusively. Vespolina and Bonarda grapes are blended with Nebbiolo (Spanna) to produce the wines, which are lighter and more acidic than Barolo & Barbaresco

Uva Rara, or Bonarda Novarese, is used for blending in Ghemme, Bonarda di Gattinara, is used in Gattinara.

Barbera d' Asti & Barbera del Monferrato Superiore

Located in the Monferrato hills east of the Langhe

Both appellations require a minimum 85% Barbera.

Barbera d'Asti may be released as **normale** after a four-month aging period, whereas Barbera del Monferrato must be **superiore**, and spends 14 months aging prior to release, including six months in cask.

Ruchè di Castagnole Monferrato DOCG a red wine produced from the local Ruchè grape,

Dolcetto di Dogliani, DOCG

Dolcetto di Ovada Superiore (Ovada), DOCG

Dolcetto di Diano (Diano d'Alba).DOCG

All three wines produced from 100% Dolcetto. Ovada wines must be superiore to qualify for DOCG status, whereas Dolcetto di Diano d'Alba and Dogliani may be released in both normale and superiore versions, with the superiore designation stipulating an increased level of alcohol.

The minimum aging for all three superiore styles is one year. Like Barolo and Barbaresco, Diano d'Alba DOCG wines may include menzioni geografiche aggiuntive on the label. 77 sorì are classified as superior sites.

Gavi - Cortese di Gavi,DOCG The appellation is located in the extreme southern portion of Alessandria province and shares its western border with Ovada.

Gavi's dry whites are produced from the Cortese grape. Although the wines are generally still (tranquillo), **spumante** or **frizzante** versions are also produced.

Erbaluce di Caluso DOCG an appellation just south of Carema, The white wines, produced from the high-acid, Erbaluce grape, may be still, spumante, or passito in style.

Asti / Moscato d' Asti DOCG Asti is the largest producer of DOC wine in Italy

Approximately 650,000 hl produced annually,

The wines are 100% Moscato Bianco and blended from vineyards across the southern provinces of Piedmont. Made sparkling by the **Charmat Method**.

Moscato d'Asti is a product from riper Moscato Bianco grapes.

Produced in 3 sub districts: Canelli, Strevi, Santa Vittoria d' Alba

Moscato d'Asti is slightly sparkling (frizzante) (Max 2 atmospheres) rather than spumante. The maximum alcohol is 6.5%. Both wines are sweet. And Vendemmia Tardiva wines are also authorised

The fragrance of the Moscato grape is preserved more effectively in Moscato d'Asti.

Alta Langa DOCG Method Traditional sparkling wines from Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grapes, Alta Langa spumante wines may not be released for thirty months after the harvest, and riserva versions may not be released for three years.

Brachetto d'Acqui DOCG Sparkling red wines. The wines are usually sweet, and suitable as a dessert accompaniment. Both dry and still versions of Brachetto exist, although they are increasingly rare.