

FRANCIACORTA
Guido Berlucchi
BERLUCCHI



BERLUCCHI '61 NATURE 2013

Franciacorta Millesimato

GRAPES: 70% Chardonnay and 30% Pinot Noir, grown in the estate vineyards of Arzelle, Rovere, San Carlo, and Ragnoli, all planted to a high density of 10,000 vines per hectare.

HARVEST PERIOD: Final third of August 2013.

VINEYARD YIELD: 9,200 kg of grapes per hectare, with a yield in must of 30%, equivalent to 3,680 bottles per hectare.

VINIFICATION: Gentle, gradual whole-cluster pressing, yielding must fractions, followed by fermentation in steel, then maturation of the finest lots, which rest six months sur lie in oak barrels.

MATURATION: Assemblage in the following spring of the cuvée, exclusively from the same vintage year, followed by a secondary fermentation in the bottle and maturation sur lie for a minimum of five years, then an additional 6 months in the bottle after disgorgement.

DOSAGE: Zero dosage.

SIZES: 750ml bottle and 1.5 l. magnum

SENSORY PROFILE:

APPEARANCE: Creamy, rich mousse, with a slender, sinuous bead of pin-point bubbles ending in a pale, long-lasting crown in the flute.

COLOUR: Intense, copper-shot straw-yellow.

BOUQUET: Complex and refined, marked by ripe, yellow-fleshed fruit and candied citrus that meld into fragrant pan brioche.

PALATE: A full body and firm structure are hallmarks of this wine, supported by a vibrant acidity, and the richly-flavoured finish caps its energy-laden, taut progression.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS: This vintage-dated Franciacorta is delicious throughout a meal: with impressive antipasto presentations, and with main courses of fish, veal and poultry, and medium-aged cheeses

SERVING TEMPERATURE: 10-12°C.

TECHNICAL DATA AT DISGORGING:

Alcohol 12.5%; Residual sugar: trace;

Total acidity: 7.10 g/l; pH 3.12.

FIRST VINTAGE PRODUCED: 2009

TECHNICAL DETAILS

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VINEYARD

The grapes that go to produce Berlucci '61 Nature 2013 are grown in four estate vineyards, in the townships of Corte Franca and Provaglio d'Iseo: Arzelle, Rovere, San Carlo (planted to Chardonnay), and Ragnoli (Pinot Noir), all averaging 20 years old, and thus ideally mature for producing grapes for a vintage-dated Franciacorta.

The vineyards are laid out at a very high density of 10,000 vines per hectare, trained to the spurred cordon system, and managed in strict accord with principles of low-environmental impact. Soil profiles are another crucial element. The Arzelle vineyard is planted in deep, morainic soils, which yield grapes perfect for firmly-structured wines, while the soils of the San Carlo and Rovere vineyards, displaying fine-grained sediments, ensure base wines with outstanding, crisp acidities, and the Ragnoli vineyard's fluvio-glacial soils contribute to the wine's overall balance of components. The high vine density makes its influence felt by heightening the varietal characteristics of the grapes, which becomes evident in both their phenolic and physical ripeness. In the first case, ripe polyphenols and aromatic precursors translate into impressive structure and aromatic complexity, while in the latter case, high acidities and low pH levels ensure outstanding flavor profiles and longevity in Franciacortas.

HARVEST

Budbreak occurred slightly late in 2013, around mid-April. Up to the very first instances of budbreak, the year revealed itself the rainiest and coldest season over the last ten years; those conditions prolonged dormancy, even in areas normally early-developing, all of which led to a more or less simultaneous budbreak over all of Franciacorta, once the weather warmed somewhat. 24 and 25 May experienced an unusual and sudden plunge in temperatures, as low as 5°C at night and no higher than 13°C during the day.

Alternating temperatures, as well rainfall during flowering, caused a slow, difficult fruit-set in some areas, which in turn reduced the crop load, though with an eventual rise in grape quality.

Harvest activities began hesitantly around 25 August and continued through mid-September. The ripening process was notably slow, extending into a period when warm days were just a fond memory and day-night temperature differentials became more accentuated, conditions, however, that held promise of wines of outstanding quality, both in terms of analytical data as well as aromatic components.

WINEMAKING

The grapes were harvested by hand upon reaching optimal ripeness, in the final third of August 2013. The filled 18-kg boxes were quickly brought to the winecellar, and the clusters were placed into specialised inclined-plane presses designed for a gradual, gentle pressing of the fruit, which immediately releases the juice. Franciacorta '61 Nature 2013 is produced from the very first pressing fractions, known as the free-run juice, which in 2013 was 30 litres per 100 kg of grapes. The musts were then chilled to 10°C and put into small tanks overnight to provide a thorough gravity-settling of the sediment; the results were limpid, clean musts ready for fermentation.

These took place in temperature-controlled stainless-steel tanks designed to preserve the aromas released during the fermentation. As soon as the fermentation was complete, the freshly-made wine was transferred, along with its fine sediment, to another tank, where the wine matured in contact with the spent yeast (*sur lie*), which imparts increased structure and complexity to the wine. To likewise improve complexity, some of the finest base wines matured for some time in once- and twice-used oak barrels, which heightens the wine's sensory profile. After five years' maturation *sur lie*, and a minimum of six months' further bottle-ageing after disgorgement, '61 Nature 2013 was ready for release.

SENSORY PROFILE

In the glass, '61 Nature 2013 conveys the very quintessence of its terroir, by marrying the elegance and tactile fleshiness of Chardonnay to the tangy minerality of Pinot Noir. Further, since it was not given the "cosmetic touch" of a syrup dosage, it expresses in its purest form the soul of its growing area. Its complex, eloquently-expressive nose and its near-endless linearity on the palate give this Franciacorta Millesimato its unbelievable "dynamic equilibrium."



GUIDO BERLUCCHI & C. S.P.A.