



BERLUCCHI '61 NATURE ROSÉ 2014

Franciacorta Millesimato

GRAPES: Pinot Noir (100%), grown in the estate vineyards of Ragnoli, Quindicipiò, and Gaspa, all planted to a high density of 10,00 vines/hectare.

HARVEST PERIOD: Last third of August 2014.

YIELD: 7,500 kg of grapes/hectare, with a yield in must of 35%, equivalent to 3,500 bottles/hectare.

VINIFICATION: The whole clusters are pressed gently and slowly, yielding various fractions of must. Some Pinot Noir is given a white-wine fermentation, other lots undergo the rosé process, with a pre-cryomaceration for approx. 24 hours, followed by a gentle pressing. Fermentation is in steel, then the wine matures sur lie for 6 months. A small amount of Pinot Noir is fermented as a red and then macerates 7 days.

MATURATION: In the spring following the harvest, the cuvée is assembled, with 100% of the wine of that harvest. The final blend re-ferments in the final bottle and matures sur lie a minimum of 5 years, followed by a further 6 months' bottle-ageing after disgorging.

DOSAGE: Zero dosage.

SIZES: 750ml standard bottle.

SENSORY PROFILE:

APPEARANCE: Abundant, creamy mousse; sinuous, slender bead; and subtle, long-lingering crown at the rim.

COLOUR: Peach-blossom pink, shot through with coral.

BOUQUET: Intensely fragrant and rich, offering notes of cranberry melded with delicate citrussy impressions against a complex background of tangy mineral.

PALATE: The mouth exhibits a magisterial balance between a velvety smoothness, fruit of a lengthy sur lie maturation, the vibrant acidity and minerality of the Pinot Noir fermented as a white, and the stylish tannic suite of the macerated Pinot Noir.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS: This vintage-dated Millesimato is perfect throughout a meal, but it partners deliciously with flavour-rich, pork-based aperitifs, hearty meats in general, and aged cheeses.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: 10-12°C.

TECHNICAL DATA AT DISGORGING:

Alcohol: 12.5% Vol. - Sugars: trace.

Total acidity: 6.80 g/l pH: 3.18.

FIRST PRODUCTION: 2011

TECHNICAL BACKGROUND

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VINEYARD

The grapes that produce Berlucchi '61 Nature Rosé 2014 are grown in the finest parcels of estate vineyards in Corte Franca--Ragnoli, Quindicipiò, and Gaspa--, all planted solely to Pinot Noir. All average 20 years old, fully-mature vineyards perfect for producing the high quality required for vintage-dated Millesimo wines.

The vineyards, planted to a very high density of 10,000 vines per hectare and permanently trained to the spurred cordon system, are managed in accord with sustainable agricultural practices respectful of the environment.

The soils too are exceptional. The Ragnoli vineyard, with its fluvioglacial complex soil, is perfect for white-wine fermentation, imparting minerality and fine balance, while Quindicipiò, sited on a well-ventilated hillslope with light morainic soils, shallow but with abundant pebble content, produces optimally ripe grapes in phenological and physical balance that are ideal for rosé fermentation. Finally, the Gaspa vineyard, lying in morainic soils that are shallow and gravelly, yields rich, concentrated, ripe fruit perfect for red-wine fermentations with pre-maceration.

The high vineyard density significantly contributes to bringing out the grapes' varietal characteristics, both in terms of phenolics as well as physical ripeness parameters. In the first case, high levels of phenolics and aromatic precursors translates into wines with complex aromatics and firm structures. In the second, ideally ripe grapes display generous acidities and low pH in the base wines, essential qualities for long-lived, complex Franciacortas.

GROWING YEAR

A mild winter was followed by a very uncharacteristically-warm March, which led to an early start for vine awakening: the first buds actually appeared in the final days of that month. Shoot-growth took place normally, and fairly high temperatures encouraged rapid development. Flowering started around 8-10 May, which presaged a fine crop. Phenolic development, which had been solid during the spring, was brusquely interrupted by frequent rains in June and by equally sudden drops in temperature, weather that continued through the entire summer.

Nonetheless, the ripening process was slow and consistent, which allowed the viticultural team to carefully plan out the harvest in a way that respected the phenological and physical moment of ripeness for each individual vineyard parcel whose grapes were dedicated to this Franciacorta Millesimato.

The initial crop was a generous one, but final levels were brought down to well below those allowed by the Production Code through rigorous quality-sorting in the vineyard, which gave the winemaking team optimally ripe, sound, healthy clusters.

WINEMAKING

This '61 Nature Rosé 2014 represents "all the colours of Pinot Noir" since it is composed of three different stylistic variants of this noble variety. The white-wine vinification utilises specialised, inclined-plane pneumatic presses specifically designed to give the whole clusters a slow, gentle, gradual pressing, with immediate separation of the juice from the berry. The wines selected for the '61 Nature Rosé 2014 were made exclusively from the very first juice fraction to emerge, called the free-run must, which in 2014 was 30 litres per 100 kg of grapes.

Vinification for a rosé, on the other hand, requires pre-separating the berries from the cluster stem, the only instance where this is allowed by the Franciacorta Production Code; the grapes then go to special closed presses where they cryomacerate for about 24 hours, after which they are gently pressed. Under these conditions of cold and absence of oxygen, the colour pigments in the skins pass into the must, giving it an intense pink hue.

The musts from these two different fermentations are immediately chilled to 10°C and put into special tanks, where they gravity-settle overnight; the result is totally clear, clean musts perfectly suited for the fermentation process. That step takes place in temperature-controlled steel fermenters, to preserve the natural aromas released during the alcoholic fermentation. The new wine is then transferred to another tank, along with its "fine lees," and prolonged contact with this sediment gives the wine a firmer structure and improved complexity.

For the red-wine vinification of the Pinot Noir from the special parcel in the Gaspa vineyard, the grapes are quality-selected, then de-stemmed, while the temperature is carefully monitored: it must remain at 12°C over the first 2 days to emphasise fruit aromas, then it rises naturally to 24°C during fermentation. After the fermentation, the wine remains on the skins another 5 days to maximise extraction of the ruby-red hue. The magisterial assemblage of these three Pinot Noir styles achieves the "squaring of the circle," by balancing together acidity + smoothness + aromatic complexity + finesse. After more than five years sur lie and a minimum of six months' rest after disgorging, '61 Nature Rosé 2014 is ready for enjoyment.

SENSORY PROFILE

Tasting '61 Nature Rosé 2014 immediately reveals it as the purest expression of Pinot Noir in the Franciacorta growing area, since it marries together all that variety's myriad qualities. Further, since it receives no sweet-syrup dosage during disgorging, it represents in its purest, most uncompromising form the soul of the denomination. Its multi-layered, fragrant nose, and its heady richness and length on the palate give this Millesimato its unique longevity and impressiveness.



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