



BERLUCCHI '61 NATURE ROSÉ 2016

Franciacorta Millesimato

GRAPES: 100% Pinot Noir, grown in the Ragnoli, Quindici-piò, and Gaspa estate vineyards, all planted to a high density of 10,000 vines/hectare.

HARVEST PERIOD: Last third of August 2016.

VINEYARD YIELD: 8,000 kg of grapes/hectare, with 33% yield in must, equivalent to 3,200 bottles/hectare.

VINIFICATION: For the Pinot Noir given a white-wine fermentation, the clusters receive a gradual, gentle pressing, yielding multi-quality fractions of must. The Pinot Noir fermented as a rosé receives a cold pre-maceration for about 24 hours and then a gentle pressing. The musts ferment in stainless steel, then mature 6 months sur lie.

A small amount of Pinot Noir is vinified as a red wine, macerating some 7 days after fermentation.

MATURATION: The cuvée is assembled, in the spring following the harvest, with base wines 100% of the same growing year. The wine re-ferments and matures sur lie in the bottle for a minimum of 5 years, followed by a further 6 months after disgorging.

DOSAGE: Zero dosage.

SIZES: 750ml. bottle.

SENSORY PROFILE:

APPEARANCE: Generous, creamy mousse with a delicate, supple bead and a long-lingering, delicate crown.

COLOUR: Shimmering, camelia-pink, with coral highlights.

BOUQUET: Very complex, rich nose, showing fragrant wild berryfruit, lifted by hints of pomegranate and tart redcurrant, all enlivened by spicy notes of pink pepper and black tea leaves.

PALATE: The elegantly-structured palate is animated by a vibrant acidity, while the graceful suite of tannins of the macerated Pinot Noir masterfully support an impressively full body.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS: This vintage-dated Millesimato is perfect for all the dishes of a meal: with full-flavoured charcuterie, succulent meat-based first courses, and even aged cheeses.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: 10-12 °C.

DATA AT DISGORGING:

Alcohol 12.5% - Sugars: Trace

Acidity 6.00 g/l - pH 3.15

INITIAL VINTAGE: 2011

TECHNICAL BACKGROUND

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VINEYARD

The grapes that produce Berlucchi '61 Nature Rosé are grown in the estate Ragnoli, Quindicipiù, and Gaspa vineyards, planted exclusively to Pinot Noir and located in Corte Franca. With an average age of 20 years and now optimally mature, they yield grapes perfectly suited for Millesimato, or vintage-dated, wines. The vineyards are planted to a very high density of 10,000 vines per hectare, trained to permanent spurred cordon, and managed in accord with low environmental-impact, sustainable viticultural practices. Weather and soils play a crucial role as well. The Ragnoli vineyard lies in soils of fluvial-glacial origin particularly suited to white-wine fermentation and contributes minerality and judicious balance to its wines, while Quindicipiù lies on mid-hill-slopes in well-ventilated, moraine-derived soils that are shallow and light-textured, but with high pebble content, which produce optimally-ripe fruit displaying an impressive balance of technological and phenolic ripeness, unmatched for the production of rosés. Finally, the Gaspa vineyard, planted in thin, shallow morainic soils with abundant gravel, yields rich, ripe, concentrated grapes appropriate for red-wine fermentation with pre-fermentation macerations. The high-density plantings help to bring to the fore the grapes' varietal characteristics, in terms of both technological and phenolic ripeness. In the latter case, the grapes are ripe in terms of their polyphenols and aromatic precursors, which translates into notable aromatic richness and structural solidity. Technological ripeness heightens the organoleptic characteristics desirable in a Franciacorta base wine, as well as a solid acidity, low pH, and a promise of significant cellarability.

GROWING YEAR

The 2016 growing season began normally, with budbreak occurring in early April. Favourable weather encouraged vine growth, which proceeded rapidly until flowering, about 20-30 May. May and June were fairly rainy, and from veraison onwards, significant differences developed between early-ripening parcels and those cooler and later-ripening areas, compared to the norm; the result was a stretching out of the various stages of the harvest. August was fortunately quite cool, and wide day-night temperature differentials occurred, particularly after mid-August, with a consequent further slowing of the ripening process. Such overall positive weather conditions gifted base wines of outstanding quality, with surprisingly complex, intense aromatics and firm structures well integrated with vibrant acidities.

VINIFICATION

'61 Nature Rosé represents "all the colours of Pinot Noir" since it expresses three different "variants" of this noble variety. They are given a white-wine fermentation through use of an inclined-plane press designed for gradual, gentle pressure of the whole cluster and immediate separation of the juice. The base wines for '61 Nature Rosé are made exclusively from the very first pressing fractions, the so-called free-run must, which for this vintage is 30 litres per 100 kilos of grapes. For a rosé fermentation, the berries are removed from the stem (the only time this practice is allowed by the Production Code) and the grapes are placed in specialised, closed presses, where the juice cryo-macerates on the skins for 24 hours and then is gently pressed off. The cold temperature and lack of oxygen facilitate the migration of colour pigment from the skin into the must, giving it a brilliant, intense pink hue. The musts created by these two processes are rapidly chilled to 10oC and transferred to small tanks. An overnight gravity settling results in pure, clear musts, perfect for fermentation. That takes place in stainless steel fermenters, temperature-controlled to preserve the aromas that emerge during the process. After the fermentation, the wine goes into other tanks, together with its fine lees, since a maturation "sur lie" improves the final wine's structure and complexity. The red-wine vinification of the lot of grapes from the Gaspa vineyard initiated with a meticulous quality inspection, elimination of the stems, and careful of the temperature, which was held to ca. 10oC over the first two days in order to emphasise fruit aromas. It then rose naturally to 24oC during fermentation, and the wine remained in contact with the skins for another five days to optimise pigment extraction, resulting in a lively ruby red at pressing off. A painstaking assemblage of these three styles of Pinot Noir "squared the circle" of acidity, smoothness, aromatic richness, and finesse. Following more than five years of resting sur lie and six months of ageing after disgorgement, '61 Nature Rosé is ready for enjoyment.

SENSORY PROFILE

Tasting '61 Nature Rosé 2016 reveals it as the purest expression of Pinot Noir cultivated in Franciacorta and the seamless union of the myriad nuances that compose it. Further, since it is made without the "touch-up" of a liqueur d'expédition, it represents the purest, uncompromised soul of this growing area. Its fragrant complexity; generous, heady character; and near-endless progression and finish make this Millesimato a remarkable wine with many impressive years ahead.