IPO WINES

2018 Alessandro & Gian Natale Fantino Barolo Bussia "Cascina Dardi"

IMPORTED BY Kermit Lynch

COUNTRY
Italy

REGION
Piedmont

APPELLATION
Barolo

SOIL TYPE
Sandy clay

VARIETAL(S)
100% Nebbiolo

FARMING
Sustainable

WINEMAKER
Alessandro & Gian Natale Fantino



ABOUT THE PRODUCER

Two brothers, Alessandro and Gian Natale Fantino, run this family estate in Monforte d'Alba. As a fifty percent owner of Cantina Bartolo Mascarello for a large part of his career, Alessandro made the wines there and managed the vineyards for 20 years, from 1978 to 1998. In 1998 he sold his half to Bartolo's daughter Maria-Teresa, and dedicated himself to helping his brother run their family estate full-time.
The brothers own eight hectares in the heart of the historic Bussia cru north of Monforte, one of Barolo's most famous areas for producing wines of great longevity and finesse. The Fantino holdings are concentrated exclusively in the "Dardi" section of Bussia, a hillside with perfect southeastern exposure in the geographic center of Bussia. This gives them their "Cascina Dardi" brand name on the label of their Barbera and Baroli (for those already familiar with these wines, they were formerly labeled as Vigna dei Dardi, before the brotheres registered the Cascina Dardi trademark).
Barolos from Bussia tend to have deep color and rich fruit and while they don't lack the classic tannic structure of Nebbiolo from this part of the world, they are not nearly as hard as the Barolos from the southside of Monforte or from Serralunga. This fact does not preclude the Fantino Baroli from aging but makes them delightfully approachable relatively young. The Fantinos are also blessed with some of the oldest vines in the entire Barolo zone, thanks to the fastidious care given to them by Alessandro and Gian Natale. Planted in 1946 and 1947 and pruned in an old style that is very labor intensive, they produce grapes that would be the envy of any Barolista.
The Fantino brothers produce an amazing Barbera d'Alba from these ancient vines in Dardi, and a "Rosso dei Dardi" from younger vine Nebbiolo planted on an east facing slope. The Barbera is loaded with lush fruit and smooth, silky texture, and a ravishing perfume. The Rosso is playful, fruit-driven, fresh, and aromatic. They are also specialists with several traditional Piemontese wines that are mostly disappearing: Nebbiolo Passito and Barolo Chinato.

WINE NOTES

Hand-harvested and sorted at the winery after harvest. Fermentation with native yeasts, Fermentation lasts 18 - 25 days for all wines. Aged in stainless steel tank for 18 months. Aged in bottle for 3 months before release. Age of vines: 60 years.
"Location is crucial in the Langhe, as vineyard site is the first and foremost determinant to a grower’s ability to produce fine Barolo. Brothers Alessandro and Gian Natale Fantino are blessed in this respect: proud proprietors of several hectares in a south-facing section of Monforte d’Alba’s fabled Bussia cru known as Dardi, named for the family’s old farmhouse, they have the terroir essentials to craft a grandiose Nebbiolo for the ages. And yet, this is only part of the equation. Traditional treatment in the cellar—fermentation with native yeast and long aging in Slavonian oak casks, or botti grandi—ensures the beautiful fruit from Dardi is not altered or masked. Minimizing filtration and added sulfur at bottling preserves a velvetiness that makes the wines texturally seductive from release and through the years. As a result, the Fantinos’ Baroli come loaded with rich, generous Nebbiolo fruit, flaunting a plushness that beckons. The wine is ripe, deep, and almost extravagant in its breadth of aroma and flavor, while a dense, tightly knit core of firm acidity and fine-grained tannins make up a rigid spine. Power, finesse, classic Barolo aromatics—it’s all there. Piemonte lovers will not want to miss it." - Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant