IPO WINES

2021 Alessandro & Gian Natale Fantino Rosso dei 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

Vines planted in 2015. Hand-harvested and sorted at the winery after harvest. Fermentation with native yeasts. Fermented for 15 days in stainless steel tank. Aged in stainless steel tank for 6 months.
"The Fantino brothers are among Barolo’s revered traditionalists. Working with pristine grapes grown in the prized Dardi section of Montforte d’Alba’s Bussia cru, they fashion some of the most classic, honest, and gorgeous wines in Barolo. But for all the praise we lavish on their Barolo bottlings, they demonstrate just as much mastery of Nebbiolo in the young-vine bottling they call Rosso dei Dardi. A famously fickle variety, whose perfect balance of acidity and ripeness is hard to achieve, Nebbiolo is also known to be one of the world’s most tannic grapes, making it especially hard to coax into a charming and exuberant young wine. Alessandro and Gian Natale have miraculously done just this, preserving Nebbiolo’s bright acidity and beautiful aromas of rose petals and crushed cherries, but delivering them with a tender tannin that makes this rosso remarkably versatile alongside all kinds of dishes from dumplings to ribollita. It even works slightly chilled with some cold cuts or a burger." - Kermit Lynch Wine Merchants