

Elio Perrone

“Stefano Perrone remains a reference-point producer for Moscato.”

Antonio Galloni, The Wine Advocate

As more Americans have discovered its extraordinary lushness, vivid fruit, soft mousse and captivating perfume, it is no surprise that the following for Moscato d’Asti has grown dramatically in recent years.

As a summer sipper, Moscato is without peer. Ambrosial with melon and prosciutto (a classic combination), it is also a superb light dessert wine, perfect with pears or strawberries (especially if the fruit has been steeped in Moscato beforehand!).

Not as Easy as It Looks

Yet, because of its delicacy and its dependence on perfect balance, great Moscato is hard to make, and only a few producers have mastered the craft. Among these few leaders, Stefano Perrone is quickly establishing himself as the reference-point producer.

Working at a comparatively artisanal scale, Stefano has championed ideas foreign to most of the region’s large producers. He works with many north-facing sites (for freshness), limits his yields, and makes a strict grape selection. Just as important is the aesthetic he brings to bear—seeking to make wines of deftness and levity; never big or “thick” Moscatos.

A retired champion motocross racer, Stefano’s formidable reputation rests squarely on his two Moscatos: Sourgal, released in late November, and his best wine, Clarté, which is released in April. Less than 450 cases of Clarté are made.

Barbera, Brachetto & Bigaro

By the late ‘90s, Stefano was looking for new challenges. He recognized that the Asti zone possessed many old Barbera vineyards on steep slopes that would be planted to Nebbiolo if they were just a few miles west. He purchased the great



Giuliana and Stefano Perrone

Mongovone vineyard in 1999. With vines planted in 1932, Mongovone gave him the material to produce something special. Yet, just like with his Moscatos, Stefano produces Barbera that captures the ethereal freshness for which the Asti zone is noted.

At the same time that he was branching out into Barbera, Stefano produced his first vintages of Bigaro—a softly sweet, gently effervescent salmon-colored sparkler made from Brachetto and Moscato. Robert Parker called the debut 2001 Bigaro “beguiling,” and the wine rapidly developed a cult following.

Our faith in Stefano has been rewarded by an unbroken string of sensational wines since we began working with him in 1995. While the Moscatos go from strength to strength, we can only wait to see what other marvels emerge from his cellars.

The Wines

MOSCATO D’ASTI “SOURGAL” - Vinified for immediate consumption and bottled in November.

MOSCATO D’ASTI “CLARTÉ” - From Stefano’s oldest vines (most 50 to 70 years old). Clarté is usually bottled in April, and consistently ranks among the appellations top wines.

BIGARO is an innovative blend of Brachetto and Moscato. Similar to Moscato, it substitutes red fruits for Moscato’s typical tropicals fruits.

BARBERA D’ASTI “TASMORCAN” - Stefano replanted half of Mongovone starting in 2001, and he uses the young vines for this beguiling wine.

BARBERA D’ASTI “MONGOVONE” - From vines planted in 1932, this Barbera demonstrates the purity and freshness of the region, with the massive impact of old-vine fruit.

ELIO PERRONE

Piedmont, Italy

OVERVIEW

Winemaker/Proprietor: Stefano Perrone

Stefano Perrone is a former motorcycle racer who took over his father's domaine in 1989.

VINEYARD INFORMATION

Appellation: Asti

Harvest: by hand

Vine Age: 25-60 years old

Note: Perrone's vineyards are northwest-facing. He believes that ripeness is easy to achieve, if yields are kept reasonable. His vineyards cool down faster in the evening, and retain more acidity and "freshness."

RECENT VINTAGES

2008 – A true classic vintage for Moscato, with brilliant aromatics and delineation.

2007 – This is a great vintage for Moscato, with tremendous balance of sugar and acidity. Barberas are also very fresh.

2006 – A very strong vintage, with ripe Moscatos and rich, aromatic reds.

2005 – Rains hurt some late-harvesting varieties, but Moscato and Barbera enjoyed nearly perfect conditions.

ADDITIONAL WINEMAKING NOTES

Sourgal is released in late October. Clarté is held back as refrigerated juice for March fermentation and April bottling and release.

THE WINES

Moscato d'Asti "Sourgal"

Fruit Source: Estate and purchased grapes

Grapes: 100% Moscato

Avg. Yield: 40 hL/hA

Avg. Production: 7,500 cases

"Clarté"

Fruit Source: Estate grapes (oldest vines)

Grapes: 100% Moscato

Avg. Yield: 30 hL/hA

Avg. Production: 400 cases

Note: Clarte is the Perrones' attempt to push Moscato d'Asti to its ultimate limit.

"Bigaro"

Fruit Source: Estate and purchased grapes

Grapes: 50% Moscato, 50% Brachetto

Avg. Yield: 40 hL/hA

Avg. Production: 4,000 cases

Barbera d'Asti "Tasmorcan"

Fruit Source: Section of the Mongovone vineyard planted starting in 1999.

Grapes: 100% Barbera

Avg. Yield: ~40 hL/hA

Elévage: 6-10 months in large barrel

Avg. Production: 2,200 cases

Barbera d'Asti "Mongovone"

Fruit Source: Steep hillside vineyard planted in 1932.

Grapes: 100% Barbera

Avg. Yield: ~20 hL/hA

Elévage: 15 months in French barrique (80% new)

Avg. Production: 500 cases