

Brovia



While Barolo's style pendulum continues to swing away from the excesses of a few decades back, it is a true reward to work with an estate who never succumbed to modern technology's seductive promises. The Brovia family established themselves as winegrowers in the hamlet of Castiglione Falletto in 1863, amassing over time an enviable collection of vineyards in some of the zone's greatest crus (Rocche di Castiglione, Villero, and Garbèt Sue), as well as a sizable holding in the cru Brea in Serralunga d'Alba. We at Rosenthal Wine Merchant have imported the family's gorgeously traditional Barolo since the 1978 vintage—first with Giacinto Brovia, who revived viticulture here in 1953, and today with his daughter Elena and her formidably talented husband Alex Sanchez.

Brovia's work in the vines and in the cellar embody an ardently traditional sensibility, albeit one executed with sensitivity and precision, and their wines have always displayed an uncanny balance between ruggedness and grace. No chemical treatments are ever employed in the vineyards. The hand-harvested, carefully sorted fruit ferments spontaneously in large cement tanks, with an appropriately lengthy three-to-four-week period of maceration. Aging takes place in gargantuan, ladder-requiring old casks, mainly Slavonian with some French, and bottling is done without fining or filtration. It's the sort of time-tested, simple cellar approach that allows the unparalleled majesty of Nebbiolo in these vaulted soils to shine; tasting Barolo as wondrous as Brovia's, one marvels that such methods were ever questioned in the first place.

Viticulture:

- **Farming:** Practicing organic
- **Treatments:** Copper-sulfate only
- **Ploughing:** Annual ploughing to promote vineyard health
- **Soils:** Limestone-clay, sand, and Tortonian marls
- **Vines:** Trained in Guyot, vines average 45 years old.
- **Yields:** Controlled via severe pruning, debudding, and an occasional green harvest, yields average 40-45 hl/ha.
- **Harvest:** Entirely manual, usually from mid-September to mid-October
- **Purchasing:** Roero Arneis and Nebbiolo from purchased fruit, all other wines entirely estate fruit



Vinification:

- **Fermentation:** After total destemming, red wines ferment spontaneously in concrete vats and stainless steel tanks. Cuvaison lasts up to 3-4 weeks for Baroli. White wines ferment spontaneously in stainless-steel tanks after a brief skin maceration.
- **Extraction:** Red wines see punchdowns and pumpovers during fermentation, depending on the nature of the vintage.
- **Chaptalization and Acidification:** None
- **Pressing:** Pneumatic pressing
- **Malolactic Fermentation:** Spontaneous, in concrete vats until March. White wine sees malolactic blocked by temperature.

Aging:

- **Élevage:** Baroli spend 24 months in 30-hl Slavonian and French oak botti. Arneis, Dolcetto, Freisa, and Nebbiolo d'Alba spend 6-12 months in stainless-steel tanks. Barbera Ciabot del Fi spends c. 12 months in stainless-steel tanks and neutral French oak barriques
- **Lees:** Red wines remain on their lees until racking following malolactic. White wine remains on its fine lees until assemblage prior to bottling.
- **Fining and Filtration:** All wines are unfinned and unfiltered.
- **Sulfur:** Applied when necessary