
Monte Maletto “La Costa” Carema DOC

Winery: Monte Maletto
Category: Wine – Still – Red
Grape Variety: 100% Nebbiolo
Region: Carema/ Piemonte / Italy
Vineyard: La Costa – single vineyard
Winery established: 2015
Feature: practicing organic



Product Information

Soil: 70% sand, with glacial stones of serpentine and gneiss and a small portion of chalk.

Elevation: 500+ meters (1,640+ feet) on terraces

Age of vines: up to 75 years old

Vinification: Hand-harvest in middle of October. Whole bunches, not destemmed, crushed by foot and fermented spontaneously, with a 40-day maceration. Matured for at least 18 months in 2nd and 3rd passage barrique before being bottled, unfiltered. At least 6 more months bottle aged before its release.

Yield: 5,000 kg/hectares

Tasting Note: The grapes have a thicker skin due to more windy exposure and dry air on the terraces. Concentrated aromas of fruit and minerality (crushed stone). The wine has great complexity with fine-grained tannins on the palate.

Vinous: “A deep, brooding wine, the 2018 Carema La Costa shows the darker, more virile side of Nebbiolo from Carema. Dark red fruit, licorice, spice, menthol, leather and rose petal overtones add striking shades of nuance. Even with all of its natural power and muscle, the 2018 remains beautifully translucent, but it is also a bit brawny.”

Production: 300 bottles!!!

Alc: 13.5%.

Producer Information

The town of Carema, population 800, is located an hour’s drive north of Turin, tucked up underneath the Vallee d’Aosta border. Giano Marco Viano worked as a sommelier in Glasgow and London before coming home to Carema. With a few other young folks, he has devoted his life to restoring an appellation whose abandoned terraces were a nearly forgotten dream.

The Nebbiolo-based wines of this area would already be rare due to the denomination’s tiny size, only 16 hectares (39.5 acres) in total. In truth, the winemaking culture here nearly disappeared, due to the vagaries of post-war economic change combined with the difficulty of farming the steep-terraced vineyards, which surround Carema in a natural amphitheater. Just five or six other producers farm 1 or 2 hectares each. Their heroic restoration work has saved this completely unique terroir--the grapes are trained on pergolas!--from oblivion.

The pergola training--once a way to combine agriculture with viticulture in order to utilize every inch of the terrace’s hillsides--are not the only unique aspect of this terroir. The soils are nearly 70% sand, with glacial stones of serpentine and gneiss and a small portion of chalk. The pH of the soil is very acidic, quite different from the Langhe. They are contrasted from the Alto Piemonte subzones such as Ghemme, whose volcanic soil brings rusty notes and bigger tannins, though perhaps fans of the sandier Lessona could find some comparison. In total, the Carema wines are minerality-defined: you can feel the stones. Another distinction is tannins that are extremely elegant, delicate and refined.