



SCARPA

Piedmont | Italy

Carson Wines

CARSON WINES

IMPORTED BY CARSON WINES

OVERVIEW



Nizza Monferrato is the second largest town in the province of Asti and is considered the reference point for many small villages scattered along the hills nearby. With a 700-year history, its importance was established in the Belbo Valley thanks to its strategic position in the middle of Asti, Alessandria, and the way over the Appennino to the seaside. Also known as “Nizza della Paglia”, which literally translates to “Nizza of the hay”, taking its name from the thick cluster of thatched houses in the area.

Antonio Scarpa, the winery's founder and namesake, was a Venetian migrant. His first activity in this area is officially recorded in 1931, although his arrival to Nizza Monferrato can reasonably be dated to the early 1900s. That year is also the time when this winery was built and the huge wisteria growing on top of the terrace was planted alongside it. Antonio Scarpa left Piedmont in 1949 when a local person belonging to a wine-merchant family purchased the company; this man was Mario Pesce. After studying a few years in Burgundy and Alsace, Mario came back to Nizza and implemented what he had learned abroad. His steely focus on quality versus quantity and commitment to long ageing in large oak barrels know as botti. Those two unwavering rules gave the company a concentration of high-quality winemaking, thus improving and exporting the brand worldwide throughout the '60s, '70s and '80s.

HISTORY



In 1935, Mario Pesce's father along with his brother-in-law started the "Castino Pesce" company whose main focus was the production of spirits, aperitifs, digestives. Although this company was disbanded in the mid-70s, the Vermouth recipe lives on, handed down from father to son and now in the capable hands of an external producer, La Canellese in Calamandrana.

Despite a lack of heirs, Mario Pesce's nephew joined the company in 1962 after studying at the Alba oenological school. Carlo Castino joined his uncle's winery at the age of 20, officially working there until 2007, when Silvio Trincherio took over; today, he remains Scarpa's winemaker. Carlo has been a key figure in the company as his choices have strengthened the concept of high-quality wines, raising the production benchmark even higher. Carlo's focus strictly on wine – the reason Castino Pesce was dismissed – prompted the purchase of a large piece of land in 1969, the "Poderi Bricchi Estate". Until then Scarpa purchased high-quality grapes from the surrounding areas to produce its wines. Carlo realised owning and tending the land and the plants first-hand was the only way to reach the highest level of quality, which is why this 50ha estate was acquired. With 25ha (62 acres) left to woodland or fields and 25ha (62 acres) dedicated to viticulture, this area is home to all the varieties grown by Scarpa: Nebbiolo, Barbera, Freisa, Rouchet, Dolcetto, Brachetto and the newly planted Timorasso.

HISTORY



Carlo and his family live in the building in an apartment at the first floor. Despite his well-earned retirement in 2007, he has continued to actively work and participate in the winery's operation, primarily tutoring Silvio in his first years to ensure his knowledge was passed on to the younger apprentice. Today, the house style has been transferred from one generation to another.

Mario Pesce did not have any children. In 2002, he sold the winery to a family who kept it until 2014. During this period, Carlo remained Scarpa's winemaker with Silvio joining in 2007, ensuring continuity of Scarpa's wine styles. In 2014, Scarpa changed ownership, acquired by a family who created a new team to run the company: in 2017, Scarpa welcomed Riikka Sukula as general manager, who has spearheaded the renovation work at the winery and the development of beautiful holiday villas in Barolo.

PHILOSOPHY



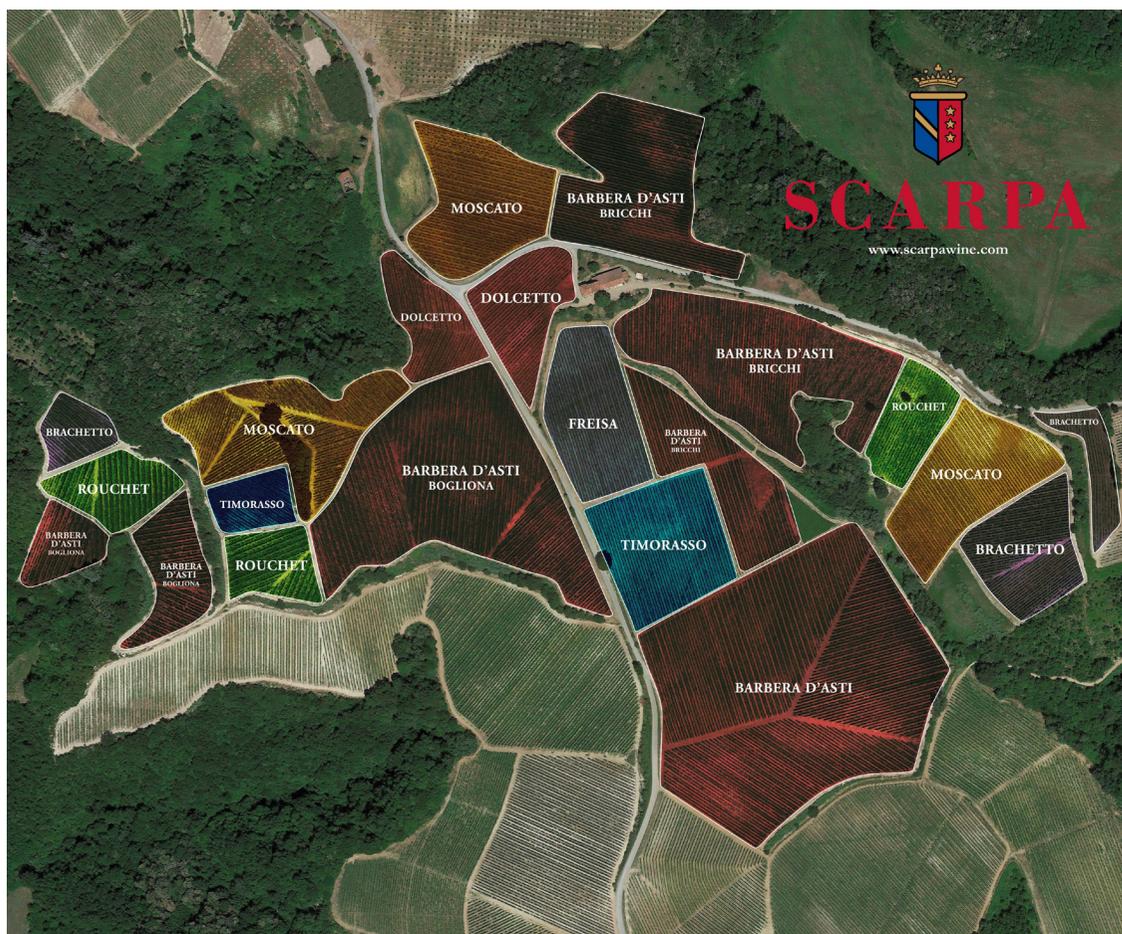
Scarpa runs according to two main principles originally implemented by Mario Pesce in 1949: an unwavering commitment to quality over quantity and long ageing. Bottle ageing is one of the two most remarkable hallmarks of Scarpa's style, along with large wooden barrels. Mario Pesce's heritage is once again seen here, as it was his clear intention to invest in long-lasting wines at a time when a preference for wines with the capacity for an immediate sale was rapidly taking over. Thanks to his approach they now have the rare privilege of offering bottles of Barbera from the '90s or Barolo and Barbaresco from the '80s, along with all the other wines, which can easily age for up to 10 years.

A quote from Mario Pesce explains it:

"The way of working with a big barrel is exactly the opposite than working with a barrique. The longer you keep your wine in a barrique, the stronger the wooden taste will be. Contrarily, the longer you keep your wine in a large barrel the more elegant the wine will ever be".

The commitment to quality is shown in the use of their land. Of the 50ha estate, half is given over to woodland and fields, while the other half is planted with vineyards. This allows the land to stay healthy, and thus yield smaller quantities of higher quality grapes from the best areas of the estate. Great attention is paid to the management of the vineyards to ensure the grapes reach their full potential and quality, which is reflected in the finished product.

ESTATE



Scarpa has been producing its Barbera, Dolcetto, Rouchet, Freisa, Moscato and Brachetto in Castel Rocchero since 1969. The estate spans 50ha (123 acres) out of which 25 are cultivated with the remaining part left to fallow. The peculiar aspects of this estate are its soil composition and altitude: while most of the estate sits on loam, one large vineyard on the SW side of the hill is mostly sand. This is the amazing vineyard of “La Bogliona” – by far the best plot, since the combination of sand and exposure ensure gorgeous ripening with delicacy and finesse. As for altitude, the average is about 400m above sea level, peaking at 450m. This figure has played a major role in keeping night temperatures lower than average which guarantees a higher level of acidity. Especially during harvest, this temperature difference allows the grapes cool down quite remarkably before being crushed and processed, which avoids the start of any undesired fermentation.

All grapes are cultivated with Guyot method and are carried out with sustainable parameters: cover crops on alternate rows, pheromone mating disruption to protect from insects and disease carriers, and the sprinkling of copper and sulphur. La Bogliona vineyard is the only vineyard cultivated completely organically, though it is not certificated. Canopy management is regularly carried out, with leaf stripping changing according to grape varietal as some need more shade (Rouchet) while others love basking in the sun (Barbera). Harvest is done exclusively by hand and grapes are collected in 15kg baskets.

WINEMAKING



All production takes place at the original winery building. During the harvest, the grapes are taken in by tractor and unloaded under this porch where they are first processed. Here, bunches are first destemmed, then thoroughly checked by hand along the sorting table and finally crushed and transferred into stainless steel vats. The wines go through fermentation and skin maceration in these vats and are eventually transferred to wooden barrels or other steel tanks to complete ageing. The only exception is the Barbera d'Asti Superiore La Bogliona, which macerates and ferments in these three 35hl wooden barrels.

Maceration periods vary from wine to wine and vintage to vintage, ranging from shorter periods for Barbera d'Asti Casa Scarpa to longer periods for Barbera d'Asti Superiore La Bogliona and all the Nebbiolo-based wines. Fermentation temperatures never exceed 29°C as high-temperature yeasts (*Saccharomyces Bayanus*) are avoided, exclusively using *Saccharomyces Cerevisiae*, which stops working at 30°C. During fermentation and skin maceration, wines go through two pump-overs a day.

Once in the ageing containers, be it steel tanks for Dolcetto, Rouchet, Brachetto, Freisa and Casa Scarpa, and wooden barrels for all others, they are transferred from time to time (*travaso*) to let the wine breathe and to get rid of the final lees, *fecce fini*.

WINEMAKING: AGEING



Scarpa is probably best known for its extended ageing policy, both in barrel and in bottle. Five wines undergo wood ageing: Nebbiolo d'Alba, Barolo, Barbaresco, Barbera d'Asti Superiore La Bogliona and Barbera d'Asti I Bricchi.

Mario Pesce introduced this method upon return from a trip to France where he'd experienced winemaking through the implementation of 50hl barrels. These barrels, locally called "botti grandi", were already present in southern Piedmont, thus consolidating the habit that would eventually become a tradition. The reason behind this choice lies in the will of producing wines with delicate, elegant and refined tastes which have no fear in facing the test of time.

WINEMAKING: AGEING



The barrels have for years been supplied by the same producers, Gamba from Asti and Garbellotto from Conegliano, Veneto. The taste and style require French oak for Barbera as it is a rough grape that benefits from delicacy and elegance, which is found in the touch of French wood. Nebbiolo-based wines, however, need more structure, achieved through the use of Slavonian oak. Gamba barrels are particularly favourable for the production of La Bogliona and I Bricchi thanks to a particular technique whereby wooden boards are physically bent after soaking in hot water rather than through exposure to flames. This system prevents even a slight toasting occurring, thus avoiding the risk of stronger wooden hints in the final product. Additionally, the thickness of wooden boards remains balanced throughout the entire length, which is a very important feature when these big barrels are completely stretched after the first 15 years of use. Barrels need thorough cleaning every single year to prevent mould and undesirable bacteria thriving as well as one deep stretching in the middle of their life, which is 15-16 years. After the second and last cycle, they are released from the wine industry and can be used to age whisky or port.

WINEMAKING: AGEING



After the first phase of wood ageing, wines are bottled and taken to the “library”. Bottle ageing is a key moment in a wine’s life as this is its last container before consumption. It is here that balance and harmony are acquired. The bottling procedure is an intense shock for the wine: it is stirred and splashed from barrels into bottles with the inevitable consequences of rough, acid or pungent elements increasing. A period of storage in a dark, silent, slightly humid and cool environment enables the wine’s true nature to reappear and lessen the effects of the edgy elements caused by the bottling procedure. This is the reason the bottles are kept horizontal for at least 6 months (as is the case for Casa Scarpa, Scarpa’s freshest and easiest wine) or years, like La Boggiona, which rests for at least 2 years before being released for sale.

WINEMAKING: BOTTLING



Scarpa uses Burgundy-shaped bottles with a signature difference: the neck is longer and narrower than regular Burgundy bottles. These bottles resemble magnum bottles, which are best for wine preservation due to the ratio of air and wine. The specific shape of the bottles was conceived to replicate the magnum effect on a 0.75L bottle. By narrowing the size of the neck, less air gets in, thus keeping that ratio favourable to wine, which is a key element in long term wine ageability, as it delays and prevents oxidation.

Given the relatively small size of the production (120,000 bottles/year) and Scarpa's commitment to maintaining high levels of quality, many operations are still carried out by hand. While front and back labels are usually machine-stuck, vintage stickers are placed by hand as well as old-fashioned labels still dating back to that time when such technology was not in place. Those labels are not available on reels, but only as single sheets, and need to be glued with a brush. If packed in wooden cases, bottles are hand-wrapped and covered with a buffer. Finally, when dealing with large formats such as magnums and jeroboams, wax is hand-placed on top of the neck with the logo of Scarpa stamped on top.

RANGE



BARBERA D'ASTI

Scarpa Casa Scarpa Barbera d'Asti DOCG



Scarpa La Bogliona Barbera d'Asti DOCG



NEBBIOLO D'ALBA

Scarpa Bric du Nota Nebbiolo d'Alba DOC



ROUCHET

Scarpa Rouchet Monferrato DOC

Carson Wines

C A R S O N W I N E S

📍 109 Blundell Street, London, N7 9BN

📞 +44 (0) 20 3261 0927

@enquiries@carsonwines.com

🌐 www.carsonwines.com