



Olek Bondonio

Q: What kind of man would not appreciate Grignolino?

Olek Bondonio: "A man who doesn't understand the highest meaning of Anarchy."

Olek Bondonio began bottling his estate grown Grignolino, Barbera and Barbaresco in 2005. His first attempts were seemingly cut whole cloth from their place of origin and showed no signs of being made by an immature "wine grower." But just as the vintages change, so have the wines: each year his efforts render an ever more beautiful bottle of wine.

Olek's property is called La Berchialla and it is little more than a small farm perched on the hill top Cru Roncaglette. The property is hedged round by the Barbaresco Cru Tre Stelle to the north and Gaja's Sori Tildin to the south-west. And from the peak of west slope, one can see the fertile band of the Rabajà Cru across the valley.

The Bondonios' and La Berchialla's history reaches back 6 generations to the early 19th century. In Barbaresco's municipal cadastre, or land register, La Berchialla is cited as one of the most ancient parcels in Barbaresco. The General Guglielmo Como, Olek's ancestor, was one of the founders of the distinguished cooperative Produttori Barbaresco, which was established in 1894. For five generations the land was worked by the "messadria" or sharecropping arrangement made by local families. Most of the vineyard's fruit was sold to the cooperative. Minuscule portions of wine were bottled for private consumption. Olek's Aunt and Uncle Lorenza and Piervincenzo still grow grapes for Produttori Barbaresco.

After WWII, a portion of south-west slope was sold to Gaja and declassified as "Sori Tildin".

After a successful career as a professional snow boarder, Olek earned a degree in wine-growing and oenology at the University of Turin. While writing his thesis on "the extraction of phenolic components in relation to different kinds of vinification," Olek deepened his knowledge in the field by working at Château Gruaud Larose in St-Julien. After finishing at University, Olek traveled the world for several vintages, working in wineries in Oregon, Australia, New Zealand, and the Langhe. Traversing the two hemispheres allowed Olek to work multiple harvests in a given calendar year.

The experience also exposed him to different stances and mentalities concerning the aesthetics of wine.

Olek describes his agricultural practices as a form of "bio-synergy". He lets the wine make itself after careful and laborious work in the vineyard. And the "sense of place" on the pallet is unmistakable.

The wines are decidedly understated and elegant; yet, they are totally present and complete with stunning aromatics. One searches in vain for a missing thread in the warp and woof of its fine and unified texture. The fabric of the wine is like gossamer. The weight is perfectly essential, almost athletic. There is nothing frivolous or showy here. Taught and drawn like a powerful bow, the Barbaresco churns like a dynamo of energy. They are stunningly unstylized offerings from a young man whose star is rising fast.

Barbaresco DOCG

Mr. Bondonio achieves that rare dematerialization of form without sacrificing flavor, persistence and authenticity. Roses and sweet red cherries, tar and pitch transport the drinker to a realm far removed from the garish wines of the "international style". The wines seem to have an intelligence and consumable dignity.

Technical Information

Name of producer: Olek Bondonio

Appellation: Barbaresco DOCG

Subregion: Roncaglette

Size of plot: 5,800 square meter

Bottles produced: 3,000

Varietals and name of clones: 100% Nebbiolo, Michet and Lampia clones

Age of vines: 52 years

Slope, exposure and altitude of plot: South, South-west at 279m

Soil type: Clay

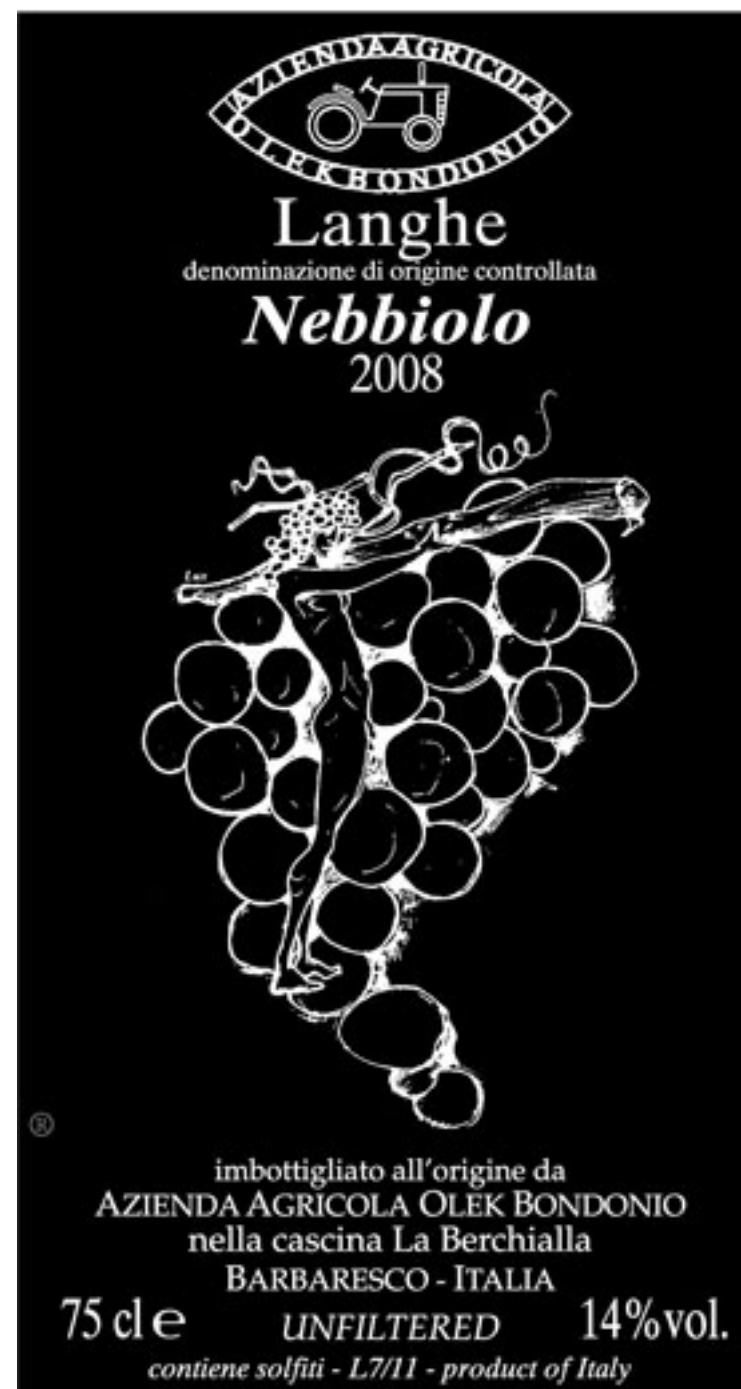
SATYR PICKS

Yield per hectare: 6,000kg per hectare
Vine training system: Guyot
Description of pruning: 8 to 10 buds preserved every winter
Average number of bunches per vine: 3

Green harvest: Yes
Growth between rows: Natural and various grasses. No herbicides
Certified organic, biodynamic: No
Use of chemical treatment: Never
Use of copper or sulfur: Copper and sulphur
Hand harvesting: Yes
Size of baskets used at harvesting: 18 kg

Selection of grapes done at collection or at winery: Sorting in both vineyard and winery
De-stemming: Yes
What kind of pressing: Basket
Maceration, how long and what temperature: 30 days between 25-30°C
Submerging of cap and or pumping over: Ten days of pumpovers and then submergence of cap
Length of fermentation and temperature: On skins for 30 days between 24-26°C
Yeast type, indigenous or selected: Indigenous, ambient yeast
Malolactic fermentation, total or partial: Total, normally finished by the summer after the harvest

Barrel size: 1,500 liter
Type of wood: French Allier
Percentage of old or new wood: 6 year old casks. No new oak.
Time in barrel: 18 months on average
No fining or filtration
Name of agronomist and oenologist: Olek Bondonio



Langhe Nebbiolo

A blend of nebbiolo sourced from 2 vineyards: 50% Staderi CRU in Neive (a small plot farmed organically by his friend Ivo) and 50% from Roncaglette CRU both his own and from a parcel adjacent to Olek's property.

In Olek's words: "the Langhe follows the same élevage as the Barbaresco just in a "lighter" way. Normally, 14 days of pump overs then submerged cap till 20/24 days. Then the wine is pressed and racked into barrels where the following spring the residual sugars and malolactic fermentation runs by itself. The barrels are from 500 liters to 1,600. The wine rests for almost 16 months plus few additional months in INOX tanks and 12 months in bottle before release".

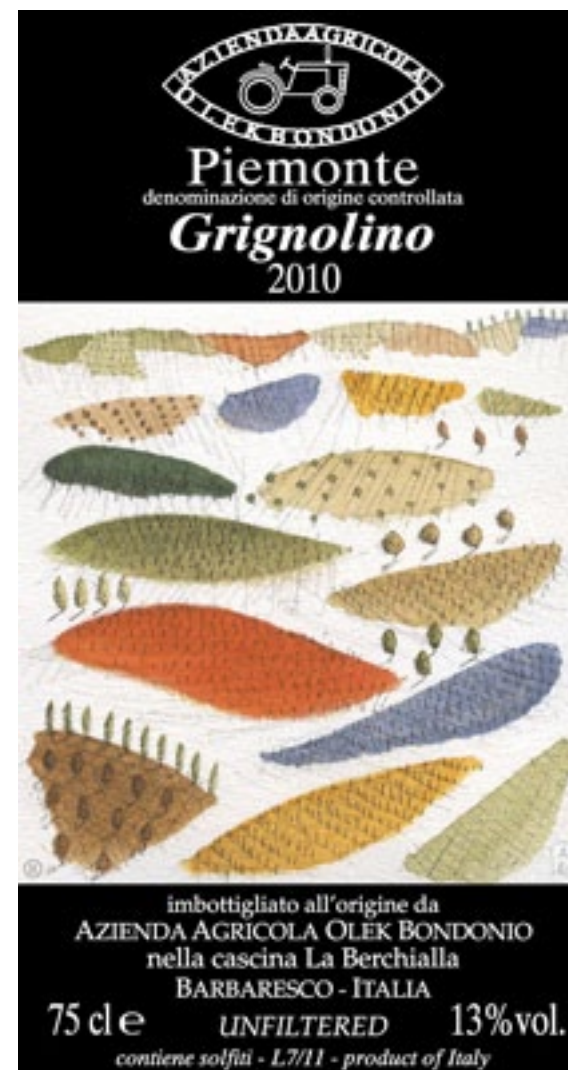
Langhe Nebbiolo
Subregion: Roncaglette and Staderi Crus
Yield per hectare: 6,000kg per hectare
Vine training system: Guyot
Description of pruning: 8 to 10 buds preserved every winter
Average number of bunches per vine: 3
Selection of grapes done at collection or at winery: Sorting in both vineyard and winery
De-stemming: Yes
What kind of pressing: Basket
Yeast type, indigenous or selected: Indigenous, ambient yeast
Malolactic fermentation, total or partial: Total, normally finished by the summer after the harvest
Barrel size: 1500 liter
Type of wood: French Allier
Percentage of old or new wood: 6 year old casks. No new oak.
Time in barrel: 16 months on average
No fining or filtration



Barbera d'Alba

The Barbera is the most “forward” wine in the portfolio. The majority of the fruit is from Olek’s Roncaglette vineyards. A very small percentage comes from the Starder Cru in Neive.

The fruit is hand harvested, destemmed, and lightly crushed before being transferred into stainless steel tanks for fermentation. Fermentation lasts for several weeks at 24-26°C. Olek uses 1,500 liter, third-pass French oak barrels. There is no fining or filtration.



Grignolino

Appellation: Piemonte DOC Grignolino

Village: Barbaresco

Size of plot: less than a hectare

How long is the plot owned by the producer: Over century

Bottles produced: 1100

Age of vines: 29 years

Name of other producers surrounding the parcel: Gaja

Slope, exposure and altitude of plot: South, South-west at 260m

Soil types: Clay

Number of vines per hectare/ yield per hectare: 8000kg per hectare

Average number of bunches per vine: 6

Do you do green harvest: yes

In between the rows of vines what do you grow:

Naturals and various grasses as we do not use HERBICIDES

Copper, sulfur or any other type: Copper and Sulfur

Pesticides used: No

Hand harvesting: yes

Size of baskets used at harvesting: 18 Kg.

Selection of grapes done at collection or at winery: both

De-stemming: yes

What kind of pressing: Basket pressing

Maceration how long what temperature: 28°C

Yeast type, indigenous or selected: indigenous