
COLOMBERA & GARELLA
(Alto Piemonte, Italy)

January 2025



With Giacomo Colombera (left) and Cristiano Garella in the Bramaterra Vineyard in Alto Piemonte (photo by C. Reyes)

On a bending country lane in the hilltop village of *Masserano* in Alto Piemonte, I make an abrupt left turn onto a dirt road, where the overgrown tree branches nearly touch the rooftop of my rental car. Through the tree-lined country lane, I emerge onto a hamlet with just a few humble houses. Colombera & Garella is the house on the right, where the vines suddenly appear. Like so many of our Italian producers, the location of Colombera & Garella is isolated and serene.

There have been many changes since my last visit to Colombera & Garella. The cellar extension has been completed. The extension of cellar has had a profound impact on the Colombera & Garella wines. Their wines now have elegance and power, without the weight, that I associate with great wines. Giacomo and Cristiano told me during my recent visit that there is no longer constant moving of vats and barrels in their new spacious cellar, which was necessary in their previous tiny cellar. With the new spacious cellar, there is no disturbance of their wines during *élevage*, resulting in 'no-bruised' wines. This may partially explain the velvety and elegant texture in their wines. The extractions are now more thoughtful and much less. Giacomo and Cristiano's hands-off approach in the cellar is self-evident. Their wines sing with liveliness and purity that are rare in Alto Piemonte.

Alto Piemonte is a small and sprawling wine region that is roughly about an hour drive northeast of Turin. Alto Piemonte is close to Swiss border with continental weather. Nebbiolo-based wines from Alto Piemonte express drastically different than the more southerly Piemonte of Barolo and Barbaresco. Due to the colder climate and acidic soils, the great Nebbiolo-based from Alto Piemonte have elegant and floral characteristics.

Cristiano Garella and Giacomo Colombera met at a local oenology school. Through their friendship, Giacomo and Cristiano together began their new winery in 2010 - hence, the name of their adventure. The vineyards are with the Colombera family, while the cellar magic is with both Colombera and Garella.

MELASCONE 2022

SKU: 312015 Speculative 750 ml 12 bottles/ case
\$27.82 Wholesale / \$36.00 Retail per bottle



What was *Costa della Sesia* is reborn as *Melascone*. *Melascone* is a blend of 65% Nebbiolo, 20% Croatina and 15% Vespolina. A hint of strawberries brings out beauty in this wine. Lifted nose from the presence of Nebbiolo. Elegant with a saline mineral edge. Hard to find a great Nebbiolo-based wine at reasonable prices nowadays. What a pretty wine. Giacomo Colombera and Cristiano Garella wanted to add beautiful Nebbiolo, Croatina and Vespolina grapes from the young vines of their crus of *Bramaterra* and *Lessona* into their *Costa della Sesia*. However, the two crus, despite the better sites, are not in the appellation of *Costa della Sesia*. Hence, the name change. *Melascone* is a local dialect for Nebbiolo. So elegant and complex - it is hard to believe this is Colombera & Garella's base wine.

LESSONA 'PIZZAGUERRA' 2020

SKU: 175495 Speculative 750 ml 12 bottles/ case
\$48.30 Wholesale / \$63.00 Retail per bottle



Unmistakable Nebbiolo perfume. Elegant. Fresh. A pleasing grip from Nebbiolo shining through with a lingering aftertaste. *Lessona* is one of the finest sites in Alto Piemonte. *Lessona* has marine sand from a risen seabed of limestone-based soils. A regal expression of Nebbiolo grown near the mountains. Floral and minerally. This wine spends two years in neutral barrels, followed by an additional year in bottles prior to release. Organically farmed vines are hand-harvested and fermentation is with ambient yeasts – like all of their wines. In this vintage, *Lessona* is 100% Nebbiolo. This is one of the prettiest and elegant vintages of *Lessona*.

(Note: The labels are not current vintages and are shown for illustration purposes only)

LESSONA 'PIZZAGUERRA' (MAGNUMS) 2020

SKU: 46973 Speculative 1.5 Litre 6 bottles/ case
\$98.68 Wholesale / \$129 Retail per bottle

This also comes in MAGNUMS. Both *Lessona* and *Bramaterra* take on immense complexity as they age – like any great Nebbiolo-based wines. Please try to hide a few magnums in your cellar for special occasions.

BRAMATERRA 'CASCINA COTTIGNANO' 2019

SKU: 175500 Speculative 750 ml 12 bottles/ case
\$45.88 Wholesale / \$60.00 per bottle



Shimmering burgundy colour. Rippling. Fresh. Perfume of roses with a mineral aftertaste that lingers. Slightly fuller than the *Lessona* above. Thoroughbred of mountain-grown Nebbiolo shining through. A hint of orange peel, rosemary and sage with an appealing, slightly bitter taste that is so compellingly Italian. From the single parcel of *Cascina Cottignano*, where the soil transitions drastically from volcanic clay to volcanic sand. It is a blend of 80% Nebbiolo, 10% Vespolina, and 10% Croatina. The wine is aged for two years in *botti* (large 6,000 litre wooden vats), followed by an additional year in bottles prior to release.

BRAMATERRA 'CASCINA COTTIGNANO' (MAGNUMS) 2020

SKU: 251015 Speculative 1.5 Litre 6 bottles/ case
\$95.95 Wholesale / \$125.00 per bottle

While the 750 ml bottles are 2019, the magnums are 2020. The 2020 vintage has pretty perfume and elegance, while 2019 has beautiful spices.

CAVAZUCCHI 2019

SKU: 311875 Speculative 750 ml 12 bottles/ case
\$37.45 Wholesale / \$49.00 per bottle



Beautiful fragrance of white peaches and elderflowers. The nose of *Cavazucchi* reminds me of a white wine but the palate is red. Compelling. Singular. Giacomo and Cristiano tell me the stunning fragrance is the hallmark of the *Cavazucchi* parcel in *Bramaterra*. This is a new red from Colombera and Garella. Made with 85% Nebbiolo and the remainder being Croatina and Vespolina. When Giacomo and Cristiano poured this wine for me at their winery, I was surprised to find out this is a separate bottling from the cru of *Bramaterra*. *Cavazucchi* is from the single 0.8-hectare parcel in *Bramaterra* that was planted in 1912.

The *Cavazucchi* parcel had been owned by a local farmer, who has no children to carry on. Colombera & Garella started collaborating with the owner of *Cavazucchi* parcel in 2019 and had started working in the vineyard. The sale of the *Cavazucchi* parcel was supposed to happen in 2020 but then the owner changed his mind. Then, when the owner finally decided to sell, he did not extend his appellation registration. So, when Colombera & Garella did purchase the vineyard, they did not have the authorization to label it as *Bramaterra 'Cavazucchi'*. Colombera & Garella had to register the *Bramaterra 'Cavazucchi'* with the appellation authority under their own Colombera & Garella winery and will be bottled as such starting with the 2023 vintage. Get this wine at this incredible price before the wine is authorized to label as the cru of *Bramaterra 'Cavazucchi'*.

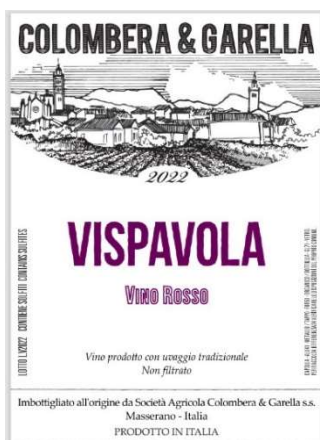
CAVAZUCCHI (MAGNUMS) 2019

SKU: 292985 Speculative 1.5 Litre 6 bottles/ case
\$77.17 Wholesale / \$101.00 per bottle

This also comes in MAGNUMS.

VISPAVOLA 2022

SKU: 303870 Speculative 750 ml 12 bottles/ case
\$27.82 Wholesale / \$36.00 Retail per bottle



Vispavola is made from 100% *Vespolina*, which is a red spicy varietal native to Alto Piemonte. Aromatic nose with deep colour. After years of adding a bit of *Vespolina* into their Lessona and *Bramaterra*, Giacomo and Cristiano decided to bottle the *Vespolina* varietal separately a few years ago. They were pleased with the results and *Vispavola* has been made since. Unlike Nebbiolo of Alto Piemonte, *Vespolina* is easier going in a sense that the varietal does not need years of aging to drink. The grapes are hand-harvested and fermented with ambient yeasts as with all of their wines. *Vispavola* is aged in stainless steel for about a year. The bottles are cellared for a few months to settle down prior to release. *Vispavola* is a trattoria wine. Drink this wine with all Italian pasta and meat dishes. I was finally able to secure some of this wine and this is our

first shipment. Lovely.



A farmer's shed in the middle of *Cavazucchi* parcel in *Bramaterra*.

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