



SANDRONE

(Above) The historic Cannubi Cru Vineyards of Barolo, perhaps the most famous hill in Italy, where Sandrone works with several sites.



Valmaggiore 2019 Nebbiolo d'Alba DOC, Italy

ESTATE

Sandrone's wines are sometimes described as straddling the modern and traditional styles in the region: elegant, attractive and easy to appreciate right from their first years in bottle, but with no less power and structure than traditional Barolos.

WINE

Valmaggiore is the product of Luciano's incredible passion for the Nebbiolo grape variety and its different expressions. Just 15 miles away from Barolo, in the Roero region, Nebbiolo produces a lighter structure and ripe, smooth tannins that are not unlike those of Pinot Noir. This is not a "baby Barolo" or a second wine at all – it is a distinct interpretation of Nebbiolo from a completely distinct geographic zone.

VINEYARD

The grapes used to make this wine are cultivated in one of the historical cru vineyards in the Roero district – Valmaggiore – situated in the municipality of Vezza d'Alba. The Valmaggiore hill itself is incredibly steep: a 100% grade (45 degrees) in places. The soil is comprised almost entirely of sand from shallow sea and beach deposits – fossils are common.

WINEMAKING

Grape Varieties: 100% Nebbiolo

Fermentation: Each block is vinified separately. After destemming and light crushing, the must is covered with CO2 for a gentle warm maceration of approximately a day. Alcoholic fermentation begins about 24-36 hours later from native yeasts. A gentle maceration takes place in upright open-top steel tanks for the first 7-9 days of alcoholic fermentation. Immediately after alcoholic fermentation, which takes around 25 days, malolactic fermentation takes place in 500 liter French oak casks.

Aging: French oak casks (25% new) for 24 months, followed by 9 months of bottle aging.

Alcohol: 13.5%

VINTAGE

A wet late winter and early spring replenished the water tables. Budbreak was late March in the normal timeframe. Heat arrived after the flowering in late June for 10 days, which helped with the berry set. The rest of the vegetative cycle was cooler than normal except for another 10 days of moderate heat just before the veraison. From the 6 September on conditions were perfect through the rest of the harvest period, with warm, dry days and cool, refreshing nights. The vineyards that provide fruit for Valmaggiore and the Barbera shook off the excess rain, dried out in a few days, and continued their march toward optimum ripeness.



94+

"The Luciano Sandrone 2019 Nebbiolo d'Alba Valmaggiore is a beautiful expression of this mighty red grape from the north of Italy. The Valmaggiore vineyard in Roero offers a spicy and accessible interpretation with plenty of wild cherry and blue flower. This vintage also offers pretty layer of crushed white peppercorn. You get terrific complexity and a very food-friendly ensemble at a competitive price." - M.L., 6/2021

93 Vinous

91 Wine Spectator