

The world's best wine magazine

Decanter

ITALY 2012

**From Tuscany to Sicily:
celebrating Europe's most
diverse wine country**

Voyage of discovery

**The regions, varieties & names
to know - PLUS where to stay**



Claudia & Silvia Cigliuti

Fratelli Cigliuti

AT FRATELLI CIGLIUTI in Barbaresco, a high-quality estate with 7.5 hectares in Neive, sisters Claudia and Silvia, likeable thirty-somethings, have basically relieved their father Renato of many of his duties, though he remains present. Claudia, the eldest, holds a diploma as a tourism professional, while Silvia graduated from the Enology School in Alba (she also did a brief stint in Bordeaux). 'But the best training ever was dad's 40 years' experience in vineyards and cellar.'

The two girls began spending their summers helping in the vineyards aged 12. 'Child labour,' laughs Claudia, 'though I officially began in 1993, and Silvia in 2000'. They share all decisions and the wines are tasted blind by everyone in the family prior to bottling, with a ringer always thrown in. 'It may be one of our wines from another vintage, or a sample from another producer,' smiles Claudia. 'It keeps us on our toes.' Asked if they have changed anything since their advent, Claudia responds: 'Not really; our father was among the first to reduce yields. Perhaps Silvia and I have improved the green

More women taking charge

There are many other estates in the Langhe where women are playing key roles. Gaia Gaja, of the world-famous Gaja estate, already does more PR work than her workaholic father Angelo, and tastes with the Gaja team prior to bottling. And her sister Rossana is also becoming involved in winemaking decisions. Over at Cà del Baio in Treiso, Paola Grasso, one of the most talented winemakers of her generation, is

relieving her father Giulio of an increasing number of winemaking duties. 'Honestly, she could run the estate by herself,' he admits. Also in Barbaresco, Luisa Rocca at Bruno Rocca travels around so much on behalf of the estate that father Bruno says: 'She doesn't let me go anywhere anymore.' Although his happy grin speaks volumes about the new Langhe – one where women are beginning to rule.

harvests and rackings in the cellar, and we change the barrels more often for even better hygiene.' What does the future hold? 'Further experimentation with oak, perhaps. Ultimately, we see the winery as a family operation and we hope to pass on our love for direct involvement to our children.'

One to try: Fratelli Cigliuti, Serraboella, Nelve, Barbaresco 2007 ★★★★★

E38–E46.25 **Berry Bros & Rudd**

Prominent oak, vanilla, red cherry and floral aromas. Sweet, creamy texture, with great depth of flavour, and a long and silky finish. **Drink:** 2012–2024. **Alc:** 14% **B**

For full details of UK stockists, see p89.

Ian d'Agata is a Regional co-Chair for Italy at the Decanter World Wine Awards

Ladies of the Langhe

Times must be changing in Italian wine – there are more and more women managing family estates. Traditionally limited to administrative roles, women are increasingly taking responsibility in both vineyard and winery. Nowhere is this more evident than the Langhe, home to Barolo and Barbaresco.

Ian d'Agata meets the women behind six leading estates

Chiara Boschis

E Pira e Figli

'WAIT A MINUTE,' objects Chiara Boschis of the E Pira estate. 'Nobody here views administrative roles as demeaning. In the Langhe, women have always taken charge of finances, because our men used to lose whole estates in one night of card playing!'

Boschis is perhaps the best example of new-wave female winemakers in the Langhe. She graduated in business from the University of Turin, but dreamed of studying agriculture. When her father bought the famous E Pira estate in Barolo, her brothers Cesare and Giorgio were busy with the existing family estate Borgogno, so this was her chance. 'Having grown up watching my father, I had all the training I needed,' she says – though she didn't always agree with him. 'I never argued with him about the vineyards,' she recalls. 'Otherwise, we were like cat and dog.'

Boschis took over E Pira in 1990, soon modifying things. In 1993, she met Giorgio Rivetti and joined the 'Barolo Boys' – a group of young producers looking to modernise Barolo (avoiding long maceration times, using roto-fermenters and small French oak barriques rather than large Slavonian oak barrels). 'The [biggest] modernist innovation was reduction of yields, not the use of small oak barrels,' says Boschis. 'In 1994 I green-harvested so much that our next door neighbour called my father to ask if I was mad! I also remember

overhearing male vineyard workers saying how sorry they felt for my father – his crazy daughter was making him spend so much money in the vineyards unnecessarily!' The paucity of women winemakers in those years was such that during a Barolo Boys stint in the US, one good-humoured wine merchant created a special T-shirt underscoring her presence on tour: 'The Barolo Boys and one Girl!'

For all her success, Boschis is not resting on her laurels. In 2008, she acquired a parcel of vines in the Mosconi cru, and later decided to rent vines in Serralunga's Gabutti cru. The two Barolos her estate is known for will change as a result. The Barolo Cannubi cru will remain unaltered, but the Barolo Via Nuova will change completely (made from the Gabutti, Terlo and Ravera vineyards). Mosconi will be used in a new, third, Barolo.



One to try: E Pira di Chiara Boschis, Cannubi, Barolo 2007 ★★★★★ 17.5pts/20
£45–£55 **Berry Bros & Rudd, Exel, Fine & Rare, Slurp, Swig**

Refined, aromatic, balanced: the best ever young Barolo by Chiara Boschis? Modern nose of vanilla oak and aromatic herbs is complicated by red cherry and berries.

Drink: 2015–2025. **Alcohol:** 14%