
CASCINA TAVIJN
(Asti, Italy)

January 2023



With Nadia Verrua at her Cascina Tavijn in the village of Scurzolengo near Asti.

Nadia Verrua runs her family farm, Cascina Tavijn, on the outskirts of *Asti* in the impossibly beautiful hill-top village of *Scurzolengo*. You can see a glimpse of the village of *Scurzolengo* in the distance behind Nadia in the photo above. I am soaked to my skin with the beauty of *Scurzolengo*: the stunning architecture, the one-and-only restaurant, the friendly locals, and the meandering country roads that lead to nowhere.

Cascina Tavijn is a tiny family farm with about 6 hectares of vines. About the same amount of surface is dedicated for growing hazelnuts. All the vines are planted on slopes with various expositions. The soil is mostly soft sand, which gives her wines perfume and elegance. Nadia's parents, though semi-retired now, still help with the farming. Their farm has never seen agricultural chemicals. Nadia and her husband Pietro have two young daughters. When I visit a farm like Nadia's, it confirms my faith in humanity and wine. Nadia's family life at her Cascina Tavijn is reflected on the labels of various wines. I am always pleased to receive a small allocation of various wines from Nadia Verrua each year.



BANDITA 2019

SKU: 118003 Speculative 750 ml 12 bottles/ case
\$29.66 Wholesale / \$39.00 Retail per bottle

100% Barbera. The signature grape in Asti and, perhaps, the most food versatile varietal of the region. This wine, unlike the majority of Barberas in the region, spends as much time in *élevage* as Nadia believes the wine deserves. So, this 2019 vintage spent two years in neutral vats, followed by additional bottle aging prior to release. There not many producers who spend this much time and love on their Barbera. The vines are planted on a very steep slope with average age of about 40 years, which gives this Barbera intensity. The brambly fruits with fresh acidity make this wine so gulp-able at a dinner table. This wine has that indescribable Italian - attractive and slightly bitter orange lingering taste that is the hallmark of Barbara. Best served slightly cool.



OTTAVIO 2021

SKU: 117997 Speculative 750 ml 12 bottles/ case
\$29.65 Wholesale / \$38.00 Retail per bottle

100% *Grignolino*. *Grignolino* is an indigenous varietal that used to be widely planted but now disappearing. But the local wine lovers, who pay zero attention to international wine fashion, keep growing this lovely varietal. Elegant. Classy. It is a varietal that gives light, perfumed body with good acidity with a slight bite of tannins in youth. This is a blend of *Grignolino* from two sites. One vineyard is sandy soil that gives perfume and white pepper. The other vineyard has more red clay soil, which gives more spice and body. Aged in neutral vats for about a year. The label adorns a sketch of Nadia's dad Ottavio, who used to farm (now semi-retired) the very *Grignolino* vines. Nadia says the characteristics *Grignolino* remind of her dad Ottavio – a little light on the outside and full of honest character inside. Best served cool.



TERESA 2021

SKU: 117992 Speculative 750 ml 12 bottles/ case
\$29.66 Wholesale / \$39.00 Retail per bottle

100% *Ruché*. *Ruché* is an indigenous varietal that is hard to find nowadays in the Piemonte region. Tasting Nadia's *Ruché*, I wonder why it is not more widely planted. It is darker than *Grignolino* in Ottavio above. Attractive wild berries with a hint of spice. Floral. Delicious. Like all of Nadia's wines, this bottling is fermented with ambient yeasts. Aged in neutral vats for about a year prior to bottling. That is a sketch of Nadia's mom Teresa on the label, who used to farm (now semi-retired) the very *Ruché* vines. Nadia named this cuvee after her mom Teresa because *Ruché* gives soft, caressing texture that is always open. Drink this wine and be calm and chill as Nadia's mom Teresa. I met her and she is chill. It is best slightly chilled, naturally.



ROSETTA 2021

SKU: 146346 Speculative 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$28.43 Wholesale / \$37.00 Retail per bottle

This is a rosato (rosé) made from 100% *Freisa*. *Freisa* is also a disappearing indigenous varietal in the Piemonte region. *Freisa* is a thin-skin grape that gives light and perfumed wines. I can't recall drinking many rosatos made from *Freisa*. So, every time I see *Freisa* on a wine list, I order a bottle. This one is lovely. The grapes are sources from the vines grown by a Nadia's friend, whom Nadia trusts. While tasty on release, this rosato really picks-up speed, revealing its unexpected depth and complexity, even with a few months of cellaring. This wine comes in a crown cap.



BIANCA 2021

SKU: 117989 Speculative 750ml 12 bottles/ case
\$28.43 Wholesale / \$37.00 Retail per bottle

Lovely. Perfumed. A compelling and unusual blend of Cortese, Moscato, Chardonnay, and Vermentino. Unfiltered. Cloudy. Delicious. Aromatic. Joyous. Most of the varietals see a brief skin contact for about four days. The grapes are de-stemmed and gently pressed by hands, where the skin-contact begins. The blended wine is aged in neutral vats and bottled in the following spring. Nadia and her husband Pietro have two daughters. The label depicts their daughter Bianca. This wine comes in a crown cap.



Vino Rosso 2021

SKU: 184107 Speculative 750 ml 12 bottles/ case
\$24.16 Wholesale / \$31.00 Retail per bottle

For this new vintage, it is a blend of *Barbera* and *Freisa*. *Barbera* gives body and acidity, while *Freisa* gives tenderness and aroma. It is made from the younger vines that are grown on sandy soil, which gives this wine fragrance and light body – just the way a great trattoria wine should be. It is a thirst-quenching wine. Nadia intentionally keeps some of the naturally occurring effervescence, which makes this wine

fresh and gulp-able. You can decant if you do not like the effervescence but the magic of an easy-going trattoria wine will be lost. The blend changes every vintage. Comes in a crown cap. Best served slightly chilled.



'68' 2021

SKU: 075300 Speculative 750 ml 12 bottles/ case
\$28.43 Wholesale / \$37.00 Retail per bottle

It has been a couple of years since we received this wine. A wine of immense drinkability and pleasure. This wine is an equal blend of *Barbera* and *Ruché*. *Barbera* brings body and freshness while *Ruché* adds perfume and elegance. *Barbera* and *Ruché* are fermented together. The maceration is long, about two months. Then, the wine is transferred to various vats to rest for a few months prior to bottling

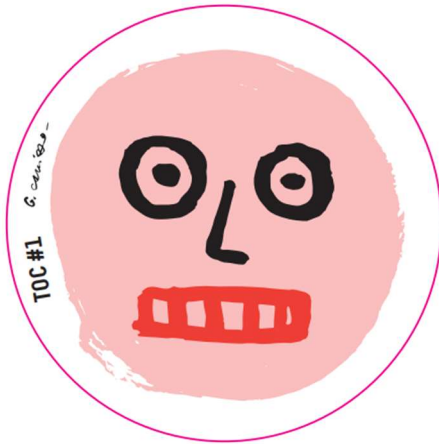
without filtration. The label sports a rendition of Nadia's dad Ottavia and her uncle Sisto in their youth, who used to run her family winery a generation ago. Best served slightly chilled.



MOSTRO 2021

SKU: 105326 Speculative 750ml 12 bottles/ case
\$28.41 Wholesale / \$37.00 Retail per bottle

This is a Pet Nat made from *Grignolino* grapes, which come from the lovingly cared one-hectare vineyard *Mezzena*. Partially fermented wine is bottled and capped, where fermentation continues in bottles, creating bubbles. This Pet Nat sees no sulphur. Very light pretty colour but has a bit of grip and bite. Full of energy. Lovely. Floral nose with spices from the *Grignolino* grapes. Comes in a crown cap. Nadia likes to bottle this sparkler with a little more pressure to give extra bubbles. So, it is best to gently handle this sparkler prior to opening at a table. *Grignolino* grapes has very little colour and this drinks like a rosato Pet Nat.



TOC#1 (Slarina – red wine) 2021

**SKU: 379716 Speculative 750ml 12 bottles/ case
\$34.00 Wholesale / \$43.00 Retail per bottle**

This wine is made with 100% *Slarina* grapes. The grapes are sourced from Nadia's friend, whose vines are planted on a high altitude in the village of *Pinerolo* near the Nadia's family farm. *Slarina* is also a disappearing indigenous varietal. This wine is pretty and perfumed with good acidity – a type of wine I prefer to drink at a dinner table. This is the first time we received this wine. I am so proud of Nadia Verrua for championing all these indigenous varietals (*Freisa, Grignolino, Ruché, and Slarina*). To me, these local disappearing varietals are compelling and

delicious approach to appreciating the true Italian wines at a dinner table.



TOC#3 (Ruche - Rosato) 2021

**SKU: 379707 Speculative 750ml 12 bottles/ case
\$34.00 Wholesale / \$43.00 Retail per bottle**

Refreshing and perfumed. This is a rosato (rosé) made with the *Ruché* varietal, which is the indigenous grape. *Ruché* gives dark colour with a floral nose. “A rosato with a little deeper colour”, Nadia wrote to me. The skin of *Ruché* has intense colour, which explains the slightly deeper colour of this rosato. Try to save a few bottles for the spring and summer. TOC is a series of small batch wines (just a few hundred bottles) that Nadia started making in 2020. All grapes for the TOC series are purchased

from Nadia's friends, who farm their land in harmony with nature. TOC series wines are only made in certain vintages when Nadia has access to the grapes.



Italian style: how the locals buy wines from Cacina Tavijn.

www.racinewineimports.ca