



primavera

- SELECTIONS -



DOMENICO CLERICO

LOCALITY: Monforte,
Barolo

WINEMAKER: Oscar
Arrivabene

domenicoclerico.com



PIEDMONT

DOMENICO CLERICO

On trips to Barolo, our first memories of Domenico Clerico were from some years back. Driving south from the commune of Barolo and approaching the T-intersection to turn off towards Monforte, on the right is their magnificently impressive, architecturally designed estate. We suppose in some ways, before the first meeting, that we already had developed thoughts on Domenico Clerico's wines – rich, powerful and modern wines, with a certain level of polish and sophistication – and this building embodied that.

Taking over from his father in the late 70s, Domenico Clerico had the foresight to begin acquiring more real estate in Monforte, which included parcels of land in some of the most sought-after crus – Bussia, Ginestra and Mosconi. These included selected pockets within, almost 'lieux-dits' or crus within crus, that Domenico gave names to – Pajana and Ciabot Mentin.



Barolo Classico

Domenico was one of the original 'Barolo Boys', who were credited with putting Barolo on the international map by introducing the modernist approach to Nebbiolo in the 80s and 90s. This group championed modern winemaking practices, including the use of new French oak barrique and short, high-temperature maceration for maximum extract.

However, in the last decade – when the whole modernist vs traditionalist argument became a moot point, with both sides meeting more and more in the middle – Domenico Clerico has moved further and further away from this original position. Although in the 90s Domenico produced Barolo using entirely new French oak, his approach after only a few years of doing this was far more moderate, and he had started to move back to the estate's original roots of large-format Slavonian oak. Under the management of his protégé, Oscar Arrivabene, this direction has been cemented, with Oscar even introducing the occasional ceramic egg. Other changes introduced by Oscar, such as slower fermentations and longer maceration times, are highlighting each cru's individuality more keenly, something Domenico always sought to achieve. Oscar is one of the more inquisitive and experimental of our winemakers – he was playing around with sparkling Barbera and whole-bunch Nebbiolo when we last visited.

**“One of the most gifted
winemakers in Piedmont...
these are wines of
extraordinary richness,
amazing aromatics, &
sensual personalities
that satiate both the
hedonistic and the
intellectual senses.”**

—Robert Parker Jr.—



Given our current predicament, we have asked Oscar to video himself discussing the wines – you can access the video using the link on the left.

THE WINES



2018 Domenico Clerico Langhe Nebbiolo 'Capisme-e'

Capisme-e means understatement and, as the name suggests, is Nebbiolo in its purest form – unoaked, shorter maceration time, with fruit purity and some concentration and generosity from the warmer 2018 vintage. This wine shows some muscularity without being astringent – Monforte darker fruits with some dried herb complexity, soft supple tannins and lots of energy. Despite its depth, as Oscar suggests in his video, this wine is about approachability – he thinks you can “smash it in 10 minutes at a barbecue.” Salute Oscar.

2016 Domenico Clerico Barolo

This wine speaks overall of the estate and is always a varying blend of Ginestra, Mosconi and Bussia crus from within the Monforte commune. 15–20 days Maceration with a short time in 20% new and older barriques before being racked off into older 5000 litre botti for the ageing process. Silky tannins, bright acid and considerable length, particularly for a commune Barolo.

Lustrous mid ruby. Freshness and lift on the nose and with plenty of depth. Just a touch of oak. Lush and fresh palate with a polished, grainy layer of tannins. A wine to drink gallons of.

17.5/20 – (WS) jancisrobinson.com

This red is fresh, elegant and underscored by a solid tannic structure. A bit compact midpalate, compressing the black cherry, blackberry, iron, tobacco and spice flavours. Sleek and long, with terrific balance.

93/100 – (BS) *Wine Spectator*

2016 Domenico Clerico Barolo 'Pajana'

Monforte can produce more power and more tannin than some of the other communes, but 'Pajana', a vineyard within Ginestra, can be more giving than 'Ciabot Mentin' as a young wine. There is a little more sand in the soils here, and we often see more prettiness and perhaps a more supple frame.

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Bright, red fruit with a certain roundness to it. Polished palate of red fruit and firm, but ripe tannins and a wonderful succulent finish with clinging tannins. Firm grip and endless fresh fruit.

17.5/20 — (WS) [jancisrobinson.com](https://www.jancisrobinson.com)

The aromas are a little shy, but the flavours are expressive, featuring black cherry, blackberry, plum, liquorice and tobacco notes. Showing burly tannins, this powerful red will take a little longer to come around.

94/100 — (BS) Wine Spectator

2016 Domenico Clerico Barolo 'Ciabot Mentin'

Winemaking is similar to the commune Barolo above, but this wine is made entirely with fruit from within the Ciabot Mentin vineyard within the Ginestra cru. This Barolo usually shows more austerity as a young wine. The calcareous soils here produce grapes that are less fruity and more complex with a seriously mineral edge and a powerful frame. 'Ciabot Mentin' is the winery's most famous wine.

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Energetic red fruit over a massive, finely chiselled layer of tannins. Fragrant finish that is endlessly changing from succulent fruit to massive tannins and back again. Complete.

17.5/20 — (WS) [jancisrobinson.com](https://www.jancisrobinson.com)

A supple, luscious red, packed with cherry, black currant and violet flavours, showing light accents of tar, iron and wild herbs. This is backed by a dense structure, yet remains beautifully integrated, even at this youthful stage. Excellent length. Offers fine purity and harmony overall.

Cru 95/100 — (BS) Wine Spectator