



Nebbiolo Stolpman Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley, 2002

Piedmonte's answer to Pinot Noir - arguably Italy's most noble red grape, Nebbiolo is grown only in a small section of Lombardy and in Piedmonte, where the best wines are named for their principal villages, for example Barolo and Barbaresco. Nebbiolo ripens only in the most favorable of sites but when fully ripe it can produce long-lived hauntingly-seductive wines.

The Stolpman vineyard is unique. While it looks like one of your typical vineyards on oak-studded rolling hills, closer inspection reveals its secret. The vineyard is planted on only a maximum two feet of real soil. Below that is a clay layer and then soft white chalk rock. The lack of soil and the chalky underlayer gives the wine a special distinction. Extreme slope, manicured vines and lingering fog definitely evoke Piedmonte.

The grapes were picked in November and then fermented in a small open top bin for four weeks, while being punched down by hand four times a day. The free-run juice was then put into a mixture of new and old Slovenian oak barrels for 22 months before being bottled, unfined and unfiltered. Only 176 cases produced.

This is a complex one, with a huge variety of aromas, flavors and textures. The nose hints at lilies, lavender and rose petals, while wild berry and ollalaberry flavors combine with those of nutmeg and toasted hazelnuts and almonds. Beautifully integrated oak tannins hint of cocoa powder and apple butter.

"Possesses abundant quantities of sweet cherry, tobacco leaf and cigar smoke in its authentic tasting personality. This aromatically complex, medium-bodied Nebbiolo is best consumed over the next 2-3 years."
Robert Parker, Jr, The Wine Advocate, August 2004

This wine screams for food, so while you could enjoy this wine by itself, but try pairing it with hearty food such as roast turkey or osso buco.