

La Spinetta One Liter Club, for the real wine lover...



Newsletter July 2009

A word before the words

Please excuse that it took us a while to put this first One Liter Club newsletter together. We knew, that to prevent you from future deleting without reading, we better came up with a special newsletter, one that interests you as it is different from the norm and might be worth your time reading.

We hope we have achieved what we wanted to achieve and invite you to continue to read.

Bruno, Carlo and Giorgio Rivetti and the La Spinetta Team

The idea behind the One Liter Club

The idea to bottle La Spinetta in One Liter was not ours, it actually was inspired by our dear German friend, who together with his wife, finishes a bottle of La Spinetta, before even being half through the meal. He told us, that for he and his wife, the ideal format of a great bottle of wine is a one liter.

We took this idea seriously and together with our desire to be more closely linked to the people, who at the end are those who enjoy our wines, we founded the One Liter Club at the beginning of May 2009.

In only two months, we have collected more than 60 members from around the world, which proves that many of you feel equal to this German friend.

Together with the newsletter, that should reach you every two months, (we will try and do our best), we would like to keep you posted on what is going on at La Spinetta, on what is going on in the Italian wine world, give you interesting "behind the scenes" information and update you on events here or anywhere we travel in the world.

As a member, you are not only eligible to buy our One Liters, which are Club exclusive and to receive this newsletter, but you will also be invited to special events and are welcome any time to visit us at any winery for a VIP tour and tasting.

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Our ultimate dream is, to one day host an One Liter Club winery party, where most of you can come to have a great and unforgettable night together. Real wine lovers that will party with more real wine lovers.

A word from Giorgio

As one of the major noses behind La Spinetta, I would like to use this opportunity to welcome you to our Club.



Benvenuti.

At first I was skeptical in regards to bottling our wines as one liters, because this is something very unusual and my conservative farmer mind was not set to it. After some evaluation by paying attention to my friends during lunch and dinners, I realized that a one liter format might be much more ideal than I ever thought. I also realized that it was time to do something special for so many of you that love our wines. We don't only respect our work in the vineyards and in the cellar, but we do also tremendously respect the people that in the end enjoy the wines that we make.

Respect is my and La Spinetta's key philosophy. We respect tradition, what people before us have done well and put lots of thought into, we respect the environment, not because it is something new, but because we strongly believe that everybody should support a healthy environment. Our father taught this to us and we will teach this to our children. To respect the environment for us means, to not use chemical products in the vineyards, no herbicides and no pesticides. To fertilize with natural fertilizers such as horse manure and to do most vineyard work by hand.

Respect for the vines and the grape variety. I believe that it is my responsibility to continue to work with indigenous grape varieties, to make wines that reflect the region, the identity and character of the land they grow on. Nebbiolo, Barbera and Moscato from Piedmont and Sangiovese and Colorino from Tuscany, in my opinion are real Italian wines. For La Spinetta it is not interesting to plant international varieties like Cabernet, Syrah or Merlot. Not because

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we don't like these kinds of wines, but we believe that the best Cabernet, Syrah and Merlot expressions do not come from Italy, they come from where those grape varieties originally come from.

I strongly believe, if you want to really enjoy and drink great Italian wines, you have to buy and drink real Italian wines, made of indigenous Italian varieties. That means Barbera, Dolcetto, Barolo, Barbaresco, Arneis and Moscato from Piedmont and from Tuscany Brunello di Montalcino, great Sangiovese, Prugnolo, Colorino and Canaiolo, great wine from Aliano varieties, Nero d'Avola from Sicily. Whites from Campania (Greco di Tufo, Falingina) and Verdicchio, Pecchorino, Faleirio from Marche, Vermentino from Tuscany and Liguria, Soave from Veneto, Grillo from Sicily, and one hundred other varieties from Italy.

I need to ask you to pay not only attention to what grape variety of Italian wine you chose, but also that you pay attention that behind the wine of your choice, are farmers, that like us respect tradition, environment, variety and the people who drink their wines.

The difference between a farmer and a wine maker in my opinion is, for farmers 90% of the quality of the wine is a result of their work dedicated to the vineyard and only 10% of the work dedicated in the cellar, the winemaker's focus lies in the cellar.

Thank you very much for participating in the One Liter Club. I hope to see you soon and many greetings from Italy

Giorgio, the farmer

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Interview: speaking with Angela from Fracchia



In every newsletter we will interview somebody, who we think has great passion for wine. We are honored to present to you today, Angela Fracchia, who has been running one of Piedmont's best Enotecas (3000 wines from 20 countries in inventory) since 1975 and who has discovered her passion for wine by pure coincidence:

Angela, what made you start a wine shop in Alba?

I was pregnant with my second child and did not have the opportunity to continue to work at a chocolate factory with two children at home. I had to think about a new more flexible job and decided to open a shop together with my sister in law, who with 3 children at home was in the same boat as me. It could have been any shop, it was more or less coincidence that this liquor store was up for sale. We would have sold shoes, if the shop for sale, was a shoe shop. At this point of my life, I was

not interested in wine. Today, my life is the wine shop and the wines. I discovered this passion by chance and I am fortunate to have found passion in something that has always been hard work, but never seemed as such.

How much have the wines changed in those years and the people who are coming to buy them?

Since I started selling wine until today, the Piedmont wines have very much increased in quality. 20 years ago, when we tasted 20 Barolos, I was lucky to find 2, that I liked. Today I taste 20 wines and I like all of them.

The customers have also changed very much. During the recent years, I have received and seen more and more people that come into the shop, that know their wines very well, but are also eager to learn more, especially about this region. They ask many questions and are happy to find a person to share their wine passion with.

The most common question, Angela, which is your favorite Italian and non Italian wine?

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My heart beats for Barolo. I actually think that Barolo and Barbaresco lack the world recognition that they deserve. When I compare my favorite Barolos with the great French wines from Bordeaux and Burgundy, I have to realize, that I can enjoy a great Piedmont red without spending a fortune. For the same quality of wine in France, I have to spend this fortune. When I drink an expensive wine, I need to feel something special. That wine needs to fill me with emotion, I need to feel the atmosphere of the place the wine comes from and I have to associate the local foods with it. I might sound patriotic, but if I want to drink a great red, I chose a wine from Piedmont. Years ago that might have been different, today the best red wines come from here. In regards to whites, I really like sparkling wines, so naturally my favorite non Italian wine is Champagne, preferably from small growers.

Which is your ideal customer?

A customer, who is educated about wine, who nevertheless wants my advice and has faith in me and my knowledge.

What was the most expensive bottle of wine you sold?

A bottle of Krug special reserve, special cuvee for 2.880,00 Euro. But the best part about this sale, was not the price, it was the answer of the customer, after my asking, on which occasion he is planning to drink this bottle. The customer replied: I will open it the day my mother in law passes away!

With your daughter working in the shop now, do you consider to retire? If so, what are you planning to do for your retirement?

I sometimes do think about retirement, but the problem is that after all these years my heart is here in the shop with my wines and my customers.

If I ever retire, I first need to find out, what people do that don't work, as I have no clue. Whatever it is, that I will do, my retirement will be accompanied by bottles of great wines.

Carlo Petrini, founder of Slow Food, will be answering our questions in the next newsletter

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Barolo Campe Vine: work in the vineyard

We are planning to follow a vine from our Barolo Campe vineyard for a year, in order to show you the development of the plant as well as to explain the work that we are doing in each phase to this Barolo vine, and to any other red variety plant, that we cultivate.



This photos was taken on June 1st:
First development of the grapes



This photo was taken on July 1st:
Small grapes have turned into fully size grapes, the color development will not take place for another month.

At the beginning of June it is important to take off the leaves around the grapes, that are preventing the grapes from being exposed to the sun, this is done by trained hands (10 people work for 8 days at Campe to finish this work). By hand the ground under the plant gets turned for better air circulation, and the wheat is cut by machine and hand (10 people work for 8 days at Campe to finish this work). There are two ways of controlling the quantity in the vineyard, one way is to prune the plant very short at the beginning of the year and the other is to do a thorough "Green Harvest" by cutting out fruit to a maximum of three times during July. Doing "Green Harvest" sounds much easier, than it actually is. It needs very trained hands, that know which bunches to cut and which are the best bunches to leave on the plant. One has to

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evaluate each vine, consider its age and its strength in order to judge how many grapes to leave. This is why we only let the vineyard worker, that have been with us for many years do the green harvest, yet being supervised by Giorgio and his sister Giovanna. Green harvest at Campe vineyard needs 8 people for 10 days.

Crazy members, passion for wines...

This month, our dear friend and One Liter Honor Member, Dietmar Alge, is celebrating his 50th birthday with a big bottle party. Dietmar's friends can call themselves extremely lucky, as they get to taste amazing wines. Among the big bottles are: 9 Liter Taittinger, 3 Liter Hirtzberger - Gruener Veltliner Honigvogel 2007, 6 Liter Gantenbein Pinot Noir 2005, 6 Liter Luce 2001, 5 Liter Kollwentz-Steinzeiler 2002, 5 Liter Chateau Mouton Rothschild 1996 and 6 Liter Chateau d'Yquem-Sauternes 1991!



We asked Dietmar how he was able to buy all these special wines in such special formats, he replied: "I had 50 years time to collect them!"

We at La Spinetta wish Dietmar and his wine friends a wonderful birthday!

Cooking Piemontese with Giovanna Rivetti

Giovanna Rivetti was born in 1947. She is our "vineyard manager" and our "in house chef". She learned the work in the vineyard from her father and the work in the kitchen from her mother. Both parents taught Giovanna skills, which until today are great assets to La Spinetta.

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In each newsletter Giovanna will share one of her secret recipes with us. Today she is teaching us how to make "Tajarin con Sugo di Carne". (The Piedmont version of Fettuccine with meat sauce).

You will need the following ingredients (portion to serve 6 people):

For the pasta:

400gr flour, one table spoon of olive oil, 10 eggs (3 entire and 7 yolks)

For the meat sauce:

500gr ground veal, 500 gr ground pork, a bit of fresh rosemary, 1 onion, 2 tablespoons of olive oil, 3 cloves, 250gr of purred tomatoes and sea salt

"To make fresh pasta is very easy", says Giovanna. "The only mistake one can make is to add water to the dough. You simply take the flour and make a little volcano. In the center you put the eggs and the oil, and then you mix everything until you have nice solid dough". Traditionally the Tajarin are knife cut, the dough is pressed into one big flat, thin piece, folded and cut into tiny stripes. Giovanna however prefers to use the machine. She presses the dough flat and then lets it run through the pasta machine.

"To make the pasta sauce is also very simple, one just needs time", says Giovanna. "Fry the chopped onions with olive oil, rosemary and meat in a pan on low temperature. When the meat is still a little rosé add the cloves and the pureed tomatoes. Cook everything on very low temperature for 4 hours". You heard right, 4 hours as in 240 minutes. "At the end add salt to your personal taste".

P.s. Who likes to enjoy wine, while cooking, might end up drunk before dinner with this recipe!

Buon appetito!

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Events

September:

NYC: Giorgio will be in NYC on September 15th to 17th. We are currently planning two winemaker dinners. If you like to receive further information, please e-mail Anja.

Ohio: a second trip to Ohio and Indiana is planned for September 22nd to September 25th. Also here please e-mail Anja for further information.

Anja: acramer@la-spinetta.com

Anything new at La Spinetta

We like to welcome Morro, the Belgium work horse.

After a very long journey from Mol Belgium to Grinzane Cavour, Morro arrived at La Spinetta at the end of April. He is already the second work horse, that took up residence at Campe. Morro and his colleague Pippo have to work for room and board. They are used to plowing our most prestigious vineyards.

During the hot Summer months, both horses enjoy their vacation, but in the Fall they have to go back in the vineyard and work off that summer fat.

New tasting room in Castagnole Lanze



The new tasting room came with the new offices. As we were literally sitting on each other's laps and some of us were tired of working in a little storage room without sunlight, so we finally fulfilled the need to build new office space and with having builders in the house, we used the opportunity to update our tasting room. Lots of wood and light give a modern atmosphere.



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Your opinion on..

Wine producers are very pleased when the press awards big scores to their wines.

What do you think of scores and in how much do they influence your buying decision?

If you like to share your thoughts and opinion with us and would like to have them published in our next newsletter, please write to myopinion@la-spinetta.com