

M & M Presents

The Sands of Elegance

Terre Alfieri & Pescaja Winery

History

Legacy of Terre Alfieri

Pescaja Revolution and
the Magic of Beppe
Pescaja

Viticulture

The terroir of Terre Alfieri and sands
of "Sabbie Astiane"

Arneis and Nebbiolo as
the grape varieties of the
Terre Alfieri

“Terre Alfieri – A land of various borders, capable of expressing the best of neighboring regions in its wines” – Marchesi Alfieri



Introduction

In the crowded and prestigious landscape of Piedmontese wine, dominated by the giants of Barolo and Barbaresco, there exists a "golden triangle" that has long remained a secret shared among locals. This is the Terre Alfieri, a distinct viticultural zone that serves as the geological and cultural bridge between the Langhe, Roero, and Monferrato. Officially elevated to DOCG status in 2020 (the highest classification in Italian wine law), Terre Alfieri is no longer just a satellite of its famous neighbors; it is a rising star defined by steep hills, ancient marine sands, and a philosophy of elegance over power. This essay explores the history, unique terroir, and viticulture of the region, while highlighting the producers—specifically the visionary Pescaja winery—who are defining its modern identity.

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Terre Alfieri & Pescaja Winery



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A Crossroads of Excellence

The Legacy of Terre Alfieri

Terre Alfieri is a young appellation by legal status, but an old wine landscape by practice. The name "Terre Alfieri" (Lands of the Alfieri) pays homage to the Alfieri family, one of the most powerful noble dynasties in Piedmont's history. The most famous scion of this house was Count Vittorio Alfieri (1749–1803), a celebrated poet and playwright born in Asti. The family's influence is physically stamped on the land through the imposing Castle of San Martino Alfieri, which still watches over the Tanaro River valley today.

Historically, this area was a strategic crossroads. For centuries, it produced grapes that were often sold off to blend into the wines of more famous appellations nearby. However, the distinct quality of the fruit—sharpened by the unique sandy soils—eventually demanded recognition. In 2009, the region was granted DOC status, and a mere decade later, the undeniable quality of its Arneis and Nebbiolo led to the prestigious DOCG classification in 2020. This rapid ascent from a sub-zone to the top tier of Italian wine law is a testament to the region's "renaissance," driven by a new generation of winemakers who refused to accept second place. Encompassing eleven communes—seven in Asti and four in Cuneo—it is morphologically linked to the neighboring Roero DOCG but boasts a distinct identity shaped by its terrain, climate, and historical roots. With only about 40 to 49 hectares under vine and an annual production of roughly 20,000 cases, Terre Alfieri remains a boutique appellation, emphasizing quality over quantity in a landscape dominated by rolling hills and ancient noble influences.

VITICULTURE AND TERROIR: THE “SABBIE ASTIANE”

To understand the wines of Terre Alfieri, one must understand the soil. Unlike the heavy, calcareous clay of the Langhe (which produces the tannic muscularity of Barolo), Terre Alfieri is defined by the "Sabbie Astiane" (Asti Sands).

Many years ago, this entire region was a seabed. As the waters receded, they left behind layers of loose, rich sediment and fossils.

- The Soil: The soil here is light, permeable, and rich in marine fossils. This sandy composition stresses the vines just enough to force deep root growth, but it also promotes high aromatics and elegance rather than sheer structure.

- The Topography: The vineyards are planted on steep, rolling hills (often referred to as bricco or sorì in Piedmontese dialect) that ensure maximum sun exposure.
- The Climate: Positioned between the Tanaro River and the higher hills, the region enjoys a distinct microclimate with significant diurnal shifts (hot days and cool nights). This temperature variation is crucial for preserving the acidity in white grapes like Arneis and locking in the floral aromatics of Nebbiolo.



“The sandy Nebbiolo of this region differs significantly from the Barolo style. It is less tannic and austere in its youth”

Terre Alfieri & Pescaja

The Grape Rules:

Arneis_Nebbiolo Axis:

85% Rule

The core requirement is a minimum of 85% in each variety.

Terre Alfieri DOCG codifies its focus clearly:

- Terre Alfieri Arneis: 85–100% Arneis, with up to 15% other permitted non-aromatic white grapes
- Terre Alfieri Nebbiolo: 85–100% Nebbiolo, with up to 15% other permitted non-aromatic red grapes

That “85% rule” matters stylistically. It gives producers flexibility for balance in difficult vintages, but keeps the wines unmistakably Arneis- or Nebbiolo-driven.



The Grape Rules:

Unique Wine Styles

At the core of Terre Alfieri's identity are two flagship grape varieties: the white Arneis and the red Nebbiolo, each requiring a minimum of 85% in their respective wines under DOCG regulations. Arneis, indigenous to Piedmont and historically known as "white Nebbiolo" for its finicky nature, produces crisp, aromatic whites. It thrives in the region's cooler sites, yielding wines **with notes of white flowers, pear, apricot, and subtle minerality**. Standard Terre Alfieri Arneis must achieve at least 12% alcohol by volume (abv), while the Superiore version requires 12.5% abv and six months of aging, often introducing added depth like stone fruit and honeyed aromas.

Nebbiolo, Piedmont's noble red grape, dominates the region's reds, known for its tannic structure and aging potential. In Terre Alfieri, it expresses **aromas of roses, red berries, violets, and earthy undertones, evolving with age into darker fruits, spices, leather, and tobacco**. The base Terre Alfieri Nebbiolo demands 13% abv and four months of aging; Superiore elevates this to 13.5% abv with one year of aging (including six months in wood); and Riserva requires two years (including one in wood), resulting in profoundly complex bottles. These varieties mirror those of Roero but benefit from Terre Alfieri's unique climate and soils, producing wines that are approachable yet capable of longevity. Blending with up to 15% other local grapes is permitted.



Winter



Entrance to Pescaja Winery

Autumn



Terre Alfieri Vineyards in Autumn

Summer



Beppe often employs advanced winemaking technologies—such as cryomaceration and liquid nitrogen in his still and sparkling wines

Spring



Green Harvest in Nizza Monferrato

Pescaja Winery Guide to Tour

Experiencing a tour with Beppe Pescaja at Pescaja Winery feels less like a formal tasting and more like being welcomed into the living soul of Piedmont. Beppe guides you through the vineyards and cellar with contagious energy and humility, weaving stories of land, family, and patience into every stop along the way. He speaks passionately about low-intervention farming, native yeasts, and the importance of listening to the vineyard rather than imposing on it. As you taste directly from barrel and bottle, each wine becomes a narrative—of marl and limestone soils, shifting seasons, and a relentless pursuit of elegance over power. By the end of the visit, you don't just understand Pescaja wines—you feel them, having seen firsthand the thought, restraint, and personality that shape every label.

"Sole, Cuore, Anima" Located in Cisterna d'Asti, Pescaja is the creation of Giuseppe "Beppe" Guido. Beppe is not a traditionalist in the dusty sense; he is a visionary who believes that wine is made of three elements: Sole (Sun), Cuore (Heart), and Anima (Soul). His approach is widely recognized as one of the most innovative in the region.



PESCAJA



Dr Ralph Madeb and Beppe Pescaja during their creation of Solo Noi Super-Piedmont Blend

Inspiring Producers

Terre Alfieri's production is driven by a cadre of small, family-run estates, each contributing to the appellation's rising profile. Notable producers include Carlin de Paolo, known for its Nebbiolo imported to international markets; Marchesi Alfieri, with its Costa Quaglia Nebbiolo tied to the region's namesake family;

Tenuta la Pergola, producing both red and white styles; and Vincenzo Bossotti, celebrated for its Camilin Arneis. These wineries exemplify the artisanal ethos of the area, blending tradition with modern techniques to craft wines that punch above their weight in quality.

“A philosophy of elegance over Power”

- Marchesi Alfieri: The Marchesi Alfieri is a natural reference point for the zone—an estate identity intertwined with the very hills that give Terre Alfieri its name and reputation. Their own materials emphasize a deep continuity of place and multi-hill vineyard holdings tied to the Alfieri family’s long history. In a young DOCG, this sort of historical continuity matters: it signals that Terre Alfieri’s “newness” is bureaucratic, not agricultural.

- Cascina Vèngore: A newer, dynamic face of the region, focusing heavily on organic farming, biodiversity, and creating an ecosystem where vineyards coexist with hazelnut groves and woodlands.

- Tenuta La Pergola: A staunch traditionalist producer that has been instrumental in the formation of the DOCG, producing honest, terroir-driven wines that represent the “peasant” roots of the region.

Hills of Terre Alfieri



Among these producers, one winery stands out for its unique blend of flamboyant modernity and deep spiritual connection to the land: Pescaja.

Pescaja Revolution



If Marchesi Alfieri represents lineage, Pescaja represents momentum. According to the Consorzio del Roero, Giuseppe Guido (“Beppe”) bought his first vineyards in 1990 in Cisterna d’Asti, and the winery today manages about 19 hectares (estate + leased). Pescaja’s own site highlights a broad portfolio across Roero and Terre Alfieri and positions the winery around a strongly personal, almost philosophical signature—very much a “winemaker as author” approach. ***The Philosophy: “Sole, Cuore, Anima” Located in Cisterna d’Asti, Pescaja is the creation of Giuseppe “Beppe” Guido.*** Beppe is not a traditionalist in the dusty sense; he is a visionary who believes that wine is made of three elements: Sole (Sun), Cuore (Heart), and Anima (Soul). His approach is widely recognized as one of the most innovative in the region.

PESCAJA MATTERS SPECIFICALLY FOR TERRE ALFIERI

Pescaja is frequently associated with Terre Alfieri Arneis bottlings (often seen under names like Solei / Sololuna on various markets). What’s notable is the stylistic intention: some descriptions emphasize that most of the wine is aged in stainless steel, while a small portion sees new barrique, aiming to keep clarity and freshness while adding a controlled layer of texture and spice. Pescaja stands out for its innovative spirit and commitment to Terre Alfieri’s potential.

That method—steel-first purity with selective oak—fits Terre Alfieri perfectly. It uses the appellation’s strengths (aroma, brightness, mineral tension from sandy/marine soils) rather than trying to force a heavier international profile.

Among these producers, one winery stands out for its unique blend of flamboyant modernity and deep spiritual connection to the land: Pescaja.

Pescaja Revolution



WINEMAKER: BEPPE PESCAJA

The Winemaker Beppe Guido is known for his colorful personality and meticulous, almost obsessive, attention to detail. He often employs advanced winemaking technologies—such as cryomaceration (using cold to extract aromatics without extracting bitterness)—to ensure his wines are pristine, clean, and explosively aromatic.

PESCAJA WINERY: MODERN ENERGY, DISTINCTIVE STYLE, AND A DIRECT LINK TO CISTERNA D' ASTI

The Pescaja Experience Visiting Beppe Pescaja in his winery is distinct from the typical Piedmontese cellar tour. It feels like entering a design studio or a modern art gallery. The winery utilizes specific tank rotations and temperature controls that are rare in small family estates. Yet, despite the technology, the goal remains the preservation of the "Sun" that ripened the grape. Beppe Guido has successfully marketed Terre Alfieri to the world by proving that a small, sandy region can produce wines that rival the sophistication of the most famous international labels.

PESCAJA LABELS: THE WHITES

Arneis (The White Star) Once nearly extinct and used merely to attract pests away from Nebbiolo vines (or blended to soften red wines), Arneis has found its spiritual home here. In the sandy soils of Terre Alfieri, Arneis expresses a distinct profile:

Character: Unlike the broader, waxy Arneis of the Roero, Terre Alfieri Arneis is often sharper and more vertical. It is renowned for notes of **pear, apricot, chamomile, and white flowers**, underpinned by a distinct saline minerality derived from the fossil-rich soil.



PESCAJA ARNEIS AND CHARDONNAY

Terre Alfieri Arneis "SoLei": The name is a play on "Sun" (Sole) and "She/Her" (Lei). This wine is a benchmark for the region. It bursts with tropical fruit, citrus, and a flinty back-bone. It proves that Arneis can be a wine of serious complexity, not just a simple aperitif.

Terre Alfieri Chardonnay "Klaris": Pescaja Klaris Chardonnay is a kosher Italian white wine from Piedmont, known for its fruity, fresh profile with notes of grapefruit, pineapple, peach, and hints of almond, offering a balanced, soft palate.

Pescaja Reds



01

Terre Alfieri Nebbiolo "Tuké":

This wine showcases the Pescaja style of Nebbiolo—plush, round, and intensely floral. By managing the tannins carefully, Beppe creates a Nebbiolo that is inviting and velvety, stripping away the harshness sometimes associated with the grape while keeping its varietal soul intact.



02

Barbera d' Asti "Soliter":

The wine offers inviting and fresh aromas of red fruits and balsamic memories. On the palate, notes of rich strawberry and raspberry jam are prominent, along with hints of dark chocolate, licorice, and warm forest floor. Finish is long, balanced and harmonious. The Pescaja Soliter has received high scores from critics, with Luca Maroni awarding the 2024 vintage a 96/100 and the 2023 vintage a 97/100.



03

Monferrato Rosso "Solo Noi":

Born from the shared passion of Beppe Pescaja and Dr. Ralph Madeb, this wine is the result of an obsessive pursuit to capture the true identity of Piedmont's finest grapes. Together, they envisioned a "Super-Piedmont" blend—a bold, unique harmony of Cabernet, Barbera, and Nebbiolo that defies traditional boundaries. In this liquid collaboration, the Cabernet acts as the wine's austere backbone, providing a powerful structure and deep notes of dark, brooding fruit. This strength is softened by the best of Northern Italy: the Barbera and Nebbiolo breathe life into the glass with layers of bright raspberry, delicate tar roses, and the earthy warmth of a sun-drenched forest floor. It isn't just a blend; it's a masterclass in balance, representing the absolute pinnacle of what North Italian terroir can achieve.

Other Wines



01

Pescaja Rose "Le Flery":

The Pescaja "Le Fléry" Rosato presents a pale salmon pink hue with soft coppery reflections, hinting at its crisp, Provençal-style character. On the nose, the bouquet is aromatic and floral, dominated by fresh notes of white peach, wild strawberry, and grapefruit, underscored by delicate hints of citrus blossom and a subtle mineral dustiness. The palate is dry, energetic, and refreshing, where the tart red berry and stone fruit flavors are perfectly balanced by a sharp, mouth-watering acidity.



02

Pescaja Cabernet "Controvento"

The Pescaja "Controvento" Cabernet Sauvignon pours a deep, impenetrable ruby red, signaling the robust and unconventional character that gives the wine its name ("Against the Wind"). The nose is brooding and intense, slowly unraveling layers of rich dark fruit—think ripe blackberries and cassis—intertwined with balsamic undertones, savory spices, and a sophisticated touch of integrated oak. On the palate, it is full-bodied and powerful, defying the delicate expectations of the region with a dense core of black fruit supported by firm, velvety tannins and a distinct structural depth.



03

Pescaja Piccaliera - the Flagship Wine

The Pescaja "Piccaliera" stands as the estate's crowning achievement—a Terre Alfieri Nebbiolo that rivals the complexity and stature of a fine Barolo. He typically ages them between 7-9 years depending on the vintage. First one for the kosher production will be the 2019 and should be released in 2026. It will rival even the best Barolo's of La Morra!! It pours a brilliant garnet red that deepens with time, offering a profound and evolving bouquet where dried rose petals, macerated cherries, and wild raspberries mingle with darker, savory notes of licorice, truffle, and a distinct balsamic lift. On the palate, it is austere yet majestic; the tannins are firm and fine-grained, providing a rigorous architectural structure that supports a core of concentrated red fruit and sweet spices. The finish is interminable, unfolding layers of tobacco, leather, and mineral earthiness that speak to its aging potential. The Essence: The Piccaliera represents "Patience and Mastery." It is a meditation wine that refuses to be rushed, embodying the uncompromising soul of the Nebbiolo grape when pushed to its absolute limit of elegance and power.



How Terre Alfieri Wines Are Meant to Be Enjoyed

Terre Alfieri wines are inseparable from food culture. Historically, these wines were produced for local consumption — not for extended cellaring or international prestige, but for daily life. This origin remains evident in their structure, acidity, and balance.

Arneis from Terre Alfieri is defined by freshness and salinity. Its aromatic profile — white flowers, stone fruit, citrus peel — makes it a natural partner to classic Piedmontese dishes such as vitello tonnato, tajarin with butter, anchovies in green sauce, and soft local cheeses. The wine's acidity and mineral tension refresh the palate rather than dominate it.

Nebbiolo from Terre Alfieri expresses the grape's floral and red-fruited character without excessive tannic weight. These wines pair seamlessly with roasted poultry, veal, mushrooms, and lighter meat preparations. Their approachability allows them to be opened young while still offering aging potential.





SOLO NOI

Monferrato Rosso DOC

THE "SUPER PIEDMONT"
REVOLUTION

GENRE:

Where tradition meets power

MY RATING:



THE CREATION

Born from a decade-long friendship between winemaker Beppe Pescaja and Dr. Ralph Madeb, Solo Noi (Italian for "Only Us") was created with a singular vision: to break the rules of tradition and craft a wine of uncompromising excellence.

This is a "Super Piedmont" blend—a daring union that marries the soul of Monferrato with the structure of the world's greatest red wines. It is not just a wine; it is a statement.

THE BLEND

A proprietary composition of Piedmont's noble native grapes and a classic international varietal, each playing a vital role:

- **THE SOUL:** NEBBIOLO (25%) - The King of Piedmont. Adds its signature aristocratic structure, freshness, and high-toned red fruit aromatics.
- **THE HEART:** BARBERA (25%) - The Native Son. Infuses the blend with essential freshness, vibrant acidity, and notes of ripe red berries, making it incredibly food-friendly.
- **THE BODY:** CABERNET SAUVIGNON (50%) - The International Powerhouse. Provides the wine's backbone, tannins, dark fruit notes of ripe plum and blackberry, and a long finish.

- **AROMA:** A complex, evolving bouquet. The nose opens with rich aromas of fresh red berries (raspberry, cherry), layered with distinct balsamic nuances and hints of spice.
- **PALATE:** voluptuous and full-bodied with a rich, smooth texture. The palate reveals a core of blackberry, ripe plum, and a luxurious layer of dark chocolate and coffee.

15 A Winery that Inspires



Terre Alfieri's appeal is its precision. It's a narrow set of hills, defined by Pliocene marine sands, a Tanaro-side geography, and a two grape identity that keeps the region focused.

The Terre Alfieri is no longer a "pass-through" territory. It is a destination. Through the elevation to DOCG status and the tireless work of producers like Pescaja, it has carved out a unique identity. It is a region that champions the "lighter shade of Piedmont"—wines that celebrate perfume over power and elegance over extraction. As the wine world increasingly shifts toward drinkability and aromatic complexity, the sun-drenched, sandy hills

of Terre Alfieri are poised to become the region's next great success story. From its noble Alfieri roots and recent DOCG ascent to its focused viticulture and dual-variety mastery, it offers a compelling narrative of resilience and refinement. Producers like Pescaja not only honor this legacy but propel it forward, ensuring Terre Alfieri's place in the pantheon of Italian wine.

M & M Importers

Ralph Madeb, MD

The Wine Doctor

PICCALIERA

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M & M importers is a fine wine import company representing boutique and mid-size, family owned and operated wineries. Our focus is on quality wines of distinction, soul and tradition that reflect the unique character of the worlds diverse regions. M & M import-ers comprehensive portfolio includes over 75 indigenous varietals from some of the most prominent growing regions throughout the world. Our wineries strive to maintain the wine-making traditions of their region in order to produce wines of the highest quality and the best value.

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