

Sandrone Dolcetto d'Alba Italy 2022

Selected by: Master Sommelier Evan Goldstein, Master Sommelier Madeline Triffon, and Master Sommelier Tim Gaiser



Final Deductions

VINTAGE 2022
GRAPE Dolcetto
GEOGRAPHY Europe
COUNTRY Italy
LARGER REGION Piedmont

Rationale

Meaning 'little sweet one' in Piemontese dialect, Dolcetto is a dark-skinned wine grape from the Monferrato hills of northwestern Italy, producing soft, fruity wines with colors varying from deep ruby to purple. It greets you with its deep purple-violet hue and aromas of violets and black fruit. On the palate, one will generally experience deep red and black fruit (I often think raspberry jam on toast) with hints of licorice and coffee.

Due to the inherent low acidity of Dolcetto, it is approachable when young but still modestly age-worthy, especially when aged in oak barrels. Those examples offer dark, gently spicy aromas with earthy undertones of almonds – or walnuts. But most bottlings today lean into their playfulness and often come off as soft, approachable, plush, almost Beaujolais-like but with a less aggressive bite. Indeed, most Dolcettos are characterized particularly by their low acidity, which is the source of the variety's name.

Luciano Sandrone was one of the most iconic producers in Barolo. He started to learn viticulture at the age of 14 or 15, and after years of work as a cellarman, he depleted his life savings and purchased his first vineyard on Cannubi hill in 1977. Sandrone's Dolcetto vineyard parcels are situated on the highest hills of Barolo: they have "white soils" with high limestone content, with challenging slopes and altitudes often exceeding 1200 feet. Sadly, Luciano passed in 2023, but the estate continues in the hands of his daughter Barbara, his brother Luca, and his granddaughter Alessia, who had just begun working at his side when he passed.

Sight

BRIGHTNESS Day Bright
CLARITY Clear
COLOR DEPTH Light
COLOR Ruby
RIM VARIATION Purple
Stained Tears: Low

Structure

RESIDUAL SUGAR Dry
ACID Medium
ALCOHOL Medium
TANNIN Med-
TEXTURE Round / Smooth
FINISH Med+
COMPLEXITY Med+

Aroma & Taste

RED FRUIT Red Plum • Red Raspberry • Strawberry • Red / Sour Cherry *Condition: Fresh*
BLACK FRUIT Blackberry • Black Cherry • Black Raspberry *Condition: Fresh*
CITRUS FRUIT Tangerine • Mandarin *Condition: Fresh* *Part: Peel / Zest*
FLORAL Rose • Lavender *Condition: Fresh*
HERBAL Oregano • Thyme
OTHER SPICES Paprika / Pimenton • Chinese Five Spice • Licorice (Red)
ORGANIC EARTH Turned Dirt / Potting Soil
INORGANIC EARTH Mineral / Rock
OAK AGING No
PERCEIVED WINEMAKING CHOICES Partial / Whole Cluster