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Paolo Manzone - A Great Success Story From Serralunga



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Food & Drink

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Paolo Manzone and his wife Luisella in their vineyards in Serralunga d'Alba PHOTO COURTESY OF PAOLO MANZONE

Throughout the Barolo zone in the Langhe district in Piedmont, there are hundreds of producers. Many are famous, even world renowned, but the majority are not as well known. Most of these producers craft excellent wines, yet for one reason or another, don't receive the recognition they deserve. This is the story of Paolo Manzone, one of those truly notable vintners.

Manzone and his wife Luisella are at the helm the winery as well as a lovely agriturismo (I highly recommend a stay here on your next visit to Piedmont). They are located in the commune of Serralunga d'Alba, one of the eleven communes of the Barolo production zone. Each of these communes offers a slightly different style of Barolo, from more floral to more tannic. The typical Barolo from Serralunga is a tightly packed, medium-full wine that is meant for the long haul; while you certainly can enjoy most of these wines upon release, their greatest pleasures are evident some 12-20 years down the road. Among the best examples of Serralunga Barolo are the Bruno Giacosa "Falletto," the Roberto Conterno "Monfortino," Vietti "Lazzarito" and the Pio Cesare "Ornato." All single vineyards, all famous and all offering notable cellaring potential.

You get the idea then that Serralunga d'Alba is prime terroir for Barolo, and Paolo Manzone makes several examples of Barolo that live up to the glory and strength this commune's wines are known for. There is a Barolo "Del Comune di Serralunga d'Alba" offering that is a blend of several vineyards that is meant for earlier consumption, as well as the cru Barolo Meriame that is from the eponymous vineyard situated at the entrance of the winery (this gives its name to the property- Cascina Meriame). The Meriame Barolo from Manzone is his signature wine, with excellent depth of fruit, notable black spice, a generous mid-palate with ideally ripe fruit, and a lengthy finish; recent vintages such as 2012, 2013 and 2014 were all of excellent to outstanding quality.

Then there is his Barolo Riserva, which he first produced in the late 1990s. The wine is from the oldest vines of the Meriame vineyard, more than 65 years of age. The wine is matured in a combination of large and mid-sized casks (no barriques here for Barolo), and then for a third year in *anforae*. This is an outstanding Serralunga Barolo, one that is powerful and ethereal, with great staying power; however, this would be a sublime pairing tonight with roast veal or lamb, or braised rabbit. *Gambero Rosso*, considered the "wine Bible" of Italy has awarded the 2011 and now the newly released 2013 Barolo Riserva from Paolo Manzone with their highest rating of *Tre Bicchieri*.

Manzone produces several other wines, including a lovely Roero Arneis, an excellent Barbera d'Alba Superiore named "Fiorenza" and now, in limited production, a very impressive *metodo classico* sparkling wine. If you do ever decide to stay a night or two at the Cascina Meriame agriturismo, Paolo or Luisella will gladly organize a tasting for you of their wines. Given the quality of the wines, the setting and the graciousness of this couple, I guarantee you will have an exceptional experience, as you taste the wines of Paolo Manzone and wonder why they aren't more celebrated.



Courtyard of Cascina Meriame agriturismo PHOTO ©TOM HYLAND

New Releases from Paolo Manzone

2009 Millesimato Blanc de Noirs (Metodo Classico) - 100% Pinot Noir, disgorged in 2018. Light yellow; aromas of yellow plum, yellow peach and golden crocus. Medium-full with very good acidity. Lovely balance, very dry, very good complexity and persistence. Enjoy with food over the next 5-7 years. **Excellent**

2018 Roero Arneis - Textbook aromas of pine, lemon peel and lilacs. Medium-full this offers very good persistence and acidity, with notable complexity. From the beautiful 2018 vintage, this is very refreshing and nicely balanced and is very well made. Enjoy over the next 3-5 years. **Excellent**

2017 Barbera d'Alba Superiore "Fiorenza" - Aromas of black plum, black raspberry and mace. Very good concentration, good acidity (2017 was a very hot summer, so the acidity is lower in this year's wine), very good persistence. Ripe and flavorful with impressive varietal character. Enjoy over the next 3-5 years. **Very Good**

2015 Barolo "Meriame" - Aromas of morel cherry, orange peel and rose petals. Medium-full with very good concentration. Elegant tannins, very good persistence. Subtle notes of sweet red spice in the finish. Very good complexity and very approachable now. Peak in 10-12 years. **Excellent**

2013 Barolo Riserva - Lovely young garnet color; gorgeous aromas of morel cherry, sweet red spice, cedar and sweet tobacco. Finely tuned acidity, graceful tannins, excellent persistence, subtle wood notes. Outstanding complexity. One of the year's best wines! This will reward those who can wait 12-15 years, though it will certainly drink well for a few more years after that. **Superb**

I also tasted the **2016 Barolo Meriame**, which will be released early in 2020. I will write a detailed report on the 2016 vintage for Barolo soon - this is the vintage Barolo lovers have been waiting for. I will have a full tasting note for the 2016 Paolo Manzone Barolo Meriame in that report. A few words for now - excellent harmony, very good acidity, rich, balanced tannins and great persistence. **Outstanding**

Note - For information on reserving a room at the Cascina Meriame agriturismo, click [here](#).

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Tasting Barolo From The 2016 And 2018 Vintages



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Paolo Manzone Barolo Meriame 2016 - Meriame is the MGA at the Manzone estate; the oldest vines in this vineyard average 70 years of age. Deep young garnet; aromas of morel cherry, orange peel, red poppy. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Elegant tannins, very good persistence, very good complexity, excellent harmony, very good acidity. 12-15 years peak- perhaps longer. **Excellent** at present, with the potential to be **Outstanding**