

2010 Vintage

The vintage which has just been harvested endured a particularly long, hard winter which lasted until the beginning of March: fairly unusual when compared with recent years, but within the average going back over a longer period of time. Heavy snowfalls ensured considerable water reserves in the soil, and together with the temperatures recorded in April and May these were conducive to excellent bud break and vigour for all the vines in the area. The beginning of the summer was distinguished by plenty of rainfall, which was at times very heavy, and some light, localized hailstorms, which could have caused considerable damage to production. Mild temperatures at the beginning of August were lower than in the years that had gone before, suggesting the grapes would ripen later than in previous vintages, though fully in keeping with "historic" averages. A rise in daily temperatures was noted through the last ten days in August and the month of September, with excellent variations between daytime and night temperatures making a fundamental contribution to the properties of the grapes, especially in terms of polyphenols. This phenomenon was particularly evident in the late-ripening varieties.

As far as the health of the grapes is concerned, 2010 is a complex vintage. Indeed, in the areas most affected by the rain in early June, producers had to take agronomical and other action to prevent the danger of fungal attacks. In conclusion, it can be said that the vintage was very particular from a climatic point of view, rewarding once more the "great vineyards" and the areas where the choice of variety was made very carefully, taking into account the position of the vineyards, the nature of the soil, and the climatic variables that characterize the hills of the Langa and Roero and make them quite unique on the world wine-growing scene.

The white wine varieties immediately provided the prospect of very fresh wines with marked acidity, which would ensure a good cellar life without being detrimental. This was supported by periodical ripening checks: these showed a slight drop in the sugar content if compared with the 2009 vintage, while at the same time revealing a very positive aromatic profile, suggesting that the wines would be slightly less alcoholic with intense aromas. Arneis and Chardonnay are showing a lot of balance, maybe with slightly less body than last year, but with marked freshness due to the not too high early summer temperatures, which helped to protect the acid and aromatic profile from the oxidation that often occurs with high temperatures. The same can be said of all the area's white varieties.

For Dolcetto, the situation varied from vineyard to vineyard as regards both the soil and climate, and the management techniques used. Prudent growing techniques and agronomic decisions in keeping with the vintage certainly played a role of fundamental importance in the final properties of the grapes that reached the wineries. Barbera, though, was maybe the variety grown in the Langa and Roero that showed the greatest degree of variability: the best-placed vineyards in terms of exposure to the sun emerged clearly from the results of analyses performed on samples of grapes, especially as regards the acid profile: already fairly marked on obvious genetic grounds, this can prove to be too high in vintages like this when the vineyards are not so well-positioned. Nebbiolo, on the other hand, was able to enjoy fine weather throughout the month of September, offsetting the slight delay in the ripening of the grapes due to the wet weather between July and August. Ripening checks showed that the sugars continued to accumulate during the second half of the month, while the acid profile gradually dropped to very acceptable levels. Ripening of the phenolic components which are essential for ensuring body and ageing capacity has been excellent. Without question, Nebbiolo has responded sublimely this year too, demonstrating once again that our area is this variety's natural habitat, and justifying expectations that this will prove to be an excellent vintage for the Nebbiolo denominations.