

Vittorio Bera & Figli

Profile

You find good wine even when you are not looking for it. We often have a harder time when we go off searching for great wine but, this time, Alessandra Bera found us.

Late in 2002, we received some exuberant e-mails from a wine maker in [Piedmonte](#), Italy telling us we had to work with her wines. She had been given our address by her good friends in France, like [Pierre Breton](#) of [Bourgueil](#), [Marcel Richaud](#) of [Cairanne](#), [Jean-Marie and Thierry Puzelat](#) in [Cheverny](#) and [Claude Maréchal](#) in Burgundy. All these French vigneron, vigneron we proudly work with, told Alessandra that her style of natural farming and natural wine would be a perfect fit for Louis/Dressner Selections.

Alessandra had our attention. We learned that she would be joining the festivities surrounding Catherine & Pierre Breton's legendary Dive Bouteille tasting held every year the Saturday before the *Salon des Vins de Loire* in Angers. We told Signora Bera that we would see her there.

The estate dates back to 1785, when the Bera's ancestors originally purchased some of the land from the [Knights of Malta](#). By this time, the cultivation of grapes -- and in this area particularly [Moscato](#) grapes -- was already well-established since the 13th century (and once again we are indebted to those reviled Crusaders for their faithful spreading of the word "Grape" to every corner of the known world they traveled to!). By the end of the 18th century -and continuing the 19th and 20th centuries- the fame of Moscato (read: Asti Spumante) spread worldwide -- and so did slipshod production methods. With few exceptions, the bulk standardization of this wine has been the norm ever since.

The Bera family is different. This was the first estate to bottle and market its' own wine in the [Canelli](#) region. The estate lies in Sant'Antonio di Canelli, within the region of Serra Masio, the most prestigious and ancient of the area's Moscato production. The grapes are entirely Muscat Blanc à Petits Grains and are cultivated on steep, southeast slopes of calcereous marl (of ancient oceanic origins). All of the estate is cultivated in organic viticulture with an emphasis on creating an active, healthy ecosystem. All grapes are harvested by hand and their juice is fermented without yeast inoculations. All the winemaking is done by Alessandra's brother, Gian Luigi.

In addition to Moscato, the Bera family also grows the precocious white grapes [Cortese](#), [Favorita](#) and [Arneis](#) which they blend to make a fantastic white wine called *Arcese*. For reds - all vinified with no filtering or fining - [Dolcetto](#) and [Barbera](#) are cultivated using the same careful techniques as the Moscato.