

# Il Pendio

## Profile

Il Pendio, or "the slope", was founded in 1988 but completely overhauled by Michele Loda when he took it over in 2003. A local to the area, Michele dreamed of making "real wine" from his native land. When he discovered that 3 hectares of vines, isolated on a mountain-top in the commune of Monticelli Brusati were for sale, he jumped on the opportunity to make his dream come true.

The first major challenge was re-training the vines; the entirety of the land had been planted in the extremely high yielding Pergola, resulting in grapes "full of water" and lacking any personality or concentration. Today, everything is trained in guyot. Pinot Blanc, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Cabernet Franc were planted on clay and limestone soils in 1988 when the estate was founded. The vines are some of the highest in the region, spanning 420 to 450 meters.

Each grape is vinified on its own in stainless steel before any blending occurs. The base wines age about ten months in stainless, followed by dosage and left *sur lattes* for 48 months, then disgorged and untouched three to four months before release. Each bottle is disgorged manually; due to the four year aging regime, this represents an insane amount of cellar work. Michele disgorges bottles 365 days of the year, averaging about 1800 a month (most mechanized Franciacorta wineries average 18 000 when done mechanically). Three sparkling wines are produced: *Contestatore*, *Brusato* and *Brusato Rosa*. A small amount of still red wine is also bottled under the titles *Etichetta Rosso* and *La Beccachia*.