



BONNEZEAUX GONZO

[Home](#) [About](#) [Contact](#)



Brezza Fresh Heir

🕒 November 29, 2013 📁 Xeno Files 📍 Barbera, Barolo, Brezza, Bricco Sarmassa, Cannubi, Dolcetto, Enzo Brezza, Italy, Nebbiolo, Piedmont, Sarmassa



They're not textbook tasting conditions – a tad dingy, bulbs missing from the chandelier above – yet the setting's perfect. The room's littered with old photos and pristine current-release wines. Dusty ancient bottles adorn the mantelpiece and fourth-generation family winemaker Enzo Brezza sits opposite me.

These organic wines, fermented with natural yeasts, are made from fruit sourced from 16.5 hectares of vines. Just over three-quarters are in **Barolo** itself, taking in vineyards such as Cannubi, Sarmassa and Bricco Sarmassa. Add to this a hectare in each of Novello and Monforte d'Alba and another two situated between Barolo and Barbaresco.

Enzo places a cheeseboard and grissini in front of me as we prepare for a look at his handiwork. We'll be here a while. The 2013 harvest ran pretty late and there's still a fair amount going on in the winery. Also, visits are sporadic this time of year and some open samples have to be tested for freshness. Any lack of would stick out like a sore thumb; my host has successfully made freshness a priority. "I like elegant style," he tells me. "I don't like overconcentrated wine. I like the character of the grape."



The wines bear out his claim. The Dolcetto d'Alba 2011 (13% alcohol, stainless steel, Vinolok glass closure or natural cork options) I found a bit too subtle for its own good, missing out on the juice and sport of this variety, but both the super-fresh, traditional Barbera d'Alba 2011 (14.5% alcohol, stainless steel, Vinolok) and the less lifted, rounded, plummy and smooth Barbera Superiore 2010 (14% alcohol; one year in big, newish oak, cork) were vibrant, gluggable and elegant. The light-bodied Langhe Nebbiolo 2012 (14.5% alcohol, stainless steel, Vinolok) with which we kicked off, was gorgeously fragrant and caressing, with strawberry compote, roses, liquorice and herbs. The Santa Rosalia Nebbiolo d'Alba 2011 (15% alcohol, one year in oak, Vinolok and cork) is clearly related: medium bodied this time, with roses, raspberry and earth.

The Barolos (there are five; I'll take a closer look at two of them) undergo a 20-30 day maceration and immediate malolactic fermentation, They get two years in large-format, seasoned Slavonian oak before an additional year in bottle. Enzo says he likes to drink Barolo between six to 15 years after the harvest, with the best window between eight and 10. "For me, you like it because you like it, not because it's old and you respect it," he adds.

Brezza Barolo Cannubi 2009 Barolo DOCG, Italy

Medium ruby in colour with a relatively pronounced nose of raspberry, strawberry and wood smoke. It's medium bodied with poise and strength, great depth of red fruit on the palate plus some sagey herb. The rich tannins are nicely integrated, the natural acidity high, and it finishes long with raspberry and a sensation of crushed flowers.

RRP €25 from the cellar* – Alcohol 14.5% – Tasted 19/11/13 – Cork

Brezza Barolo Sarmassa 2009 Barolo DOCG, Italy

The pick of the bunch for me. Nose of lifted roses and violets, plus red cherries, redcurrants and strawberry compote. The savoury side of things is catered for with earth, rosemary, fennel and fresh mint. It's high in tannin, of course, but these are almost lacy and well balanced with the fresh acid. There's some roundness to the fruit but there's nothing broad about it; it's focused and linear. Again, only medium bodied but superb strength across the palate, with a long finish of plum and raspberry. Sensational.

RRP €28 from the cellar* – Alcohol 14.5% – Tasted 19/11/13 – Cork

*Brezza's Australian distributor **Déjà Vu** expects the 2009 wines to arrive here in December. The best outlets to get them will be **Prince Wine Store** and **Winestar**. Prices are expected to be around \$79 for the Brezza Barolo Cannubi 2009 and \$85 for the Brezza Barolo Sarmassa.