

## Barbaresco's best sites

In 2007, Barbaresco's different crus were officially recognised (the so-called *Menzioni Geografiche Aggiuntive* or MeGA), and these 65 hallowed sites are now recognised on labels. It was about time, too, as locals have long known that some sites always deliver better grapes than others – much like in Burgundy, where a patchwork of premiers and grands crus also exists. In fact, one of the most fascinating aspects of Barbaresco is just how different wines can be depending on where the grapes were grown. Just like there's a world of difference between a Musigny and a Corton, the same is true of a Barbaresco from Rio Sordo and one from Montestefano.

### The crus of Barbaresco

The majority of this sub-region's best crus are located south of the town of Barbaresco towards the hamlet of Tre Stelle and Treiso. Other quality vineyards lie to the town's north-east, and of these, Montestefano is an exceptional site. Its higher-lying vines have benefited the most from climate change, as

its slightly cooler microclimate guarantees wines of both body and finesse. Generally speaking, the Barbarescos of Barbaresco are the most complete and balanced of all.

**Best crus** Pajè, Pora, Asili, Martinenga, Montefico, Montestefano, Muncagota, Rabajà, Rio Sordo, Roncaglette and Secondine. This latter site is where Angelo Gaja sources the grapes for his world-renowned Sori San Lorenzo (no longer a Barbaresco because he chooses to include a little Barbera in it; Barbaresco, like Barolo, must be 100% Nebbiolo).

**Top producers** Albino Rocca, Bruno Giacosa, Bruno Rocca, Ca' del Baio, Cascina Bruciata, Cascina delle Rose, Cascina Luisin, Ceretto, Cisa Asinari Marchesi di Gresy, Giuseppe Cortese, Moccagatta, Produttori di Barbaresco, Roagna.

**Need to know** The ridge that includes Asili (mainly south/south-east exposure), Rabajà and Martinenga (mainly south/south-west) is the real grand cru of Barbaresco. These three sites, plus Neive's Santo Stefano and Treiso's Pajorè (see p24) are the five best vineyards

of the entire Barbaresco DOCG – true grands crus in all but name only. Barbaresco's Pajè, Montestefano and Rio Sordo (see left) are the three best premiers crus.

### The crus of Neive

Neive is divided into a lower-lying modern town and a picturesque medieval hamlet. Geology here is complex: moving southwards from Neive, where sites like Cotta and Basarin are found, soils are more sandy (with less limestone and clay) than Barbaresco's, but more northerly sites, where Santo Stefano and Gallina lie, are ➤



Neive