

Saignée - Cory Cartwright - 23 Agosto2010



## The Last Bottle of Wine: A Nascetta Story



*Above is what was most likely the last bottle in existence of 2001 Nas-Cetta from Elvio Cogno. Photo's courtesy of DoBianchi.*

So there we were drinking a bottle of 2001 Nas-Cetta, a Piedmontese white wine grown in microscopic quantities. It was a vin di tavolo from Elvio Cogno, a result of the idea often professed, in action more than word, by the Italian DOCG system (and the French AOC, Spanish DOC etc.) that tradition is only tradition when it suits commerce, and that some traditional wines were better left to die rather than confuse a public who probably doesn't care in the first place.

We were discussing the wine with Walter Fissore, who is the current winemaker at Cognito. The wine, as it were, had a special place in Walter's heart, given that growing it and naming as it they had (Nas-Cetta ) had gotten them heavily fined by the Italian government. "One of the neighbors [he gives a knowing look here indicating he knew the narc] told the government we were putting a grape variety name on a VDT wine" (Nascetta is the proper name, Nas-cetta and Anascetta are both archaic forms of the name. (Jeremy Parzen has promised a full post on the origins of the word "Nascetta" and I'm holding him to that) "we went to court for several years" he continues "we were the only ones to have bottled this variety for a long time and we have the oldest plantings." Eventually they lost and the fine leveled was hefty. Instead of quitting, however, they kept on, trying at this point to have the wine accepted into the DoC. Eventually they won and they can now bottle their nascetta as a Langhe Bianco "Anascetta."

The interesting thing about this bottle, with all it's history, was that it was almost certainly the last bottle of it in existence. When we had arrived that day we had asked if they made any whites. This is what started the conversation about nascetta, and when Walter realized that we were truly interested, he brought out this bottle, of which 4000 were made and all had been sold almost immediately. It was an aged bottle of something that was never meant to age, although it had held up fantastically. None of us had ever killed a wine, so to speak, or at least not that we knew. Walter had obviously thought the bottle was better off being drunk by us rather than sitting in is cellar as a museum piece. We mulled over the implications of what this meant for a while. The wine was good, the company was good so there was no sense in being sad that perhaps no will ever get to try the wine again, even if it wasn't something someone would actively seek out. i guess it was a fitting end.

