

**Wine & Spirits**  
MAGAZINE

INTERNATIONAL

WINERIES OF  
THE YEAR

## ELVIO COGNO



Valter Fissore

### PIEDMONT

**Founded:** 1991  
**Winemaker/Viticulturist:**  
Valter Fissore  
**Acres owned:** 27  
**Annual production:** 5,833 cases  
**Estate grown:** 100%  
**Owners:** Valter Fissore & Nadia Cogno  
**Known for:** Classical Barolos from  
Novello's Ravera cru.  
**Importer:** Vias Imports, NY  
**Website:** elviocogno.com

Elvio Cogno began his career in wine in 1961 at Macarini in La Morra. Over the next few decades, he honed his technique while making wine from one of the best sites in Barolo—Brunate. Later on, an 18th century farmhouse came up for sale smack dab in the middle of the commune of Novello—which, in this case, means at the top of the beautiful Ravera cru. He purchased it in 1990 and within a year had restored the farmhouse, completing a winery with which he could begin making his own wine.

Today, Elvio's daughter Nadia and her husband Valter Fissore run the show, focusing on the vineyards surrounding their house at the top of the Ravera hill, at around 1,200 feet in altitude. This year's best in show was the 2005 Bricco Pernice. A new wine for Fissore, Bricco Pernice is made from five acres of what Elvio had believed to be the best vineyard in Novello. It is immediately stunning in its raspberry and truffle aroma, a scent that leads into cool brambly fruit flavors driven by impressively firm tannins.

Cogno's flagship wine, Vigna Elena, is always a top performer, and it's worth the effort to seek out the 2004. Named after Elvio's granddaughter, it is an uncompromising view of yesteryear Barolo. It's made from a 2.5-acre vineyard planted to the rosé clone of nebbiolo—an unpopular choice today because of its light color, but the gold standard for the classics. It undergoes a spontaneous fermentation before aging in large Slavonian oak for three years, and then in bottle for another year. The result is a wine with lean, iron-like tannins surrounded by buzzing acidity; savory elements of cherry and dried porcini appear in flashes between cracks in the young wine's tannic wall.

For pure deliciousness now, however, look to Cogno's 2008 Dolcetto d'Alba Vigna del Mandorlo. It's limpid and fennel-scented, the dusting of tannin and tight acidity on its figgy fruit making it immediately mouthwatering. —C.H.



### TOP-SCORING WINES

**93** '05 Barolo Bricco Pernice \$115 (12/10)

**90** '08 Dolcetto d'Alba Vigna del Mandorlo \$23 (12/10)

**89** '07 Barbera d'Alba Bricco del Merli \$31 (12/10)