



GIANMARIA SFORZA FOGLIANI
Curator and Winemaker

MARINFERNO: VICOBARONE, PIACENZA, EMILIA

I first met Gianmaria about four years ago in some hip bistro in Milano. He was still just getting MARINFERNO started at that time. Over an accidental aperitivo, he described this whole integrative art and hospitality *agriturismo* experience and collaborative natural wine project at his provincial Piacenza family estate. The idea seemed a bit esoteric and very ambitious for a young university professor and architect living part-time in Milano, but after tasting his orange wines made from *Malvasia di Candia Aromatica* two years later, I was taken aback and was able to see the bigger picture.

Gianmaria took over the Monferrina farm and cantina after his father, Dottore Paolo Sforza Fogliani, passed in 2015. It was a lot to take on as the farm had been active for over 500 years, and along with it came an

international reputation and can be found in old wine guides as a reference to a typical cantina from the *Val Tidone*. With a PhD in Landscape architecture, Gianmaria



took to his creativity and cultivated his own idea of how to carry on the legacy of the historic family estate by refreshing



"We are in continuous motion, always projected forward, looking for the right synergy between creativity and authentic nature."

We have chosen to be custodians of this family history, started in these lands centuries ago, to share it as much as possible."

the company without swaying too far from his roots.

The Sforza Fogliani family is a branch of the Piedmontese family who moved to Vicobarone in Piacenza around 1600. In ode to the families origin, the farm was named "Monferrina" after the name of a traditional Piedmontese dance, which typically took place on the farmyard on the occasion of threshing or grape harvest festivals.



The name MARINFERNO is an anagram of Monferrina is an art-focused project within the company and makes wine in the Cantina Monferrina. For years, Monferrina sold nearly half of its grape production to nearby *cantine sociale*, and the highest quality selection was used for Monferrina's wine production. Gianmaria decided to continue selling grapes *negociant*, but goes a step further to dedicating the very few of the finest selections of their grape harvests for making the MARINFERNO wines.

In years past, the farm would cultivate on up to 26 ha of vineyards. The two estates, *Badenigo* and *Solana*, have now been reduced to 9 focused hectares of vineyards that yield much less quantity that in turn results in much higher quality. in 2016, Gianmaria started right away the conversion to organic agriculture, and after 5 years of conversion, this upcoming harvest (2021) will be the first vintage with an organic certification.

The 80-year-old steadfast steward of the farm, Flavio Crosignani, who worked most of his life closely with Gianmaria's father, still maintains his role as the guardian of the Monferrina tradition but played a leading role in the organic conversion.

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When I finally got the chance to spend some time with Gianmaria in Piacenza, the first line of business was a pre-lunch aperitivo (basically second breakfast - no shame) of *Coppa Piacentina* and the finest *Pancetta* at Enoteca da Renato with a side of white breakfast wine. On the way to the cellar, a quick tortelli-n-dash was in order. On the way out to Vicobarone, Gianmaria pulled off to this little roadside restaurant called Antica Trattoria Giovanelli for a heaping silver platter of herb and ricotta-stuffed tortelli with sides of melted sage butter and red wine sauce sauteed mushrooms.

In the spirit of a true artist, Gianmaria has a ton of projects in development and on his mind. In the cellar, he's added amphorae and has several new wines in the works and many of them currently refining in oak barrels. After spending some time at the cantina tasting through new vintages, Gianmaria gave us a tour of the old estate properties that he is converting into agriturismo quarters and art galleries for an artist



residence series he's organizing. We opened up a bottle of his first sparkling wine, "Gran Tuffo," a delicious refermented Barbera vinified in white, that he only made 150 bottles of as a trial. We found a stack of old books about Piacenza food and wine and stumbled across and started reading through sales guides, reviews and photo booklets of his fathers from the 80's.



"VIGNE VECCHIE" ORTRUGO VINEYARD

MARINFERNO

Total cultivated area: 9 hectares

Vineyard area: 9 ha currently cultivated, and 2 ha recently planted.

Other crops: None.

Annual Production: 20,000 Bottles

Cellar manager: Gianmaria Sforza, Giuliano Maini

Agronomist or agricultural manager: Fabio Bernizzoni

Employees: Flavio, Silvia (Office), Giuliano

Seasonal workers: *Harvest* - 5 - 8 friends of Gianmaria

Type of employment contract used for employees: OTD, or temporary contracts.

Type of employment contract used for seasonal workers: N/A

Supervised Labor Agreement Contract: Agreed

Agreed signifies both parties have agreed to signing the document and is currently under review by both parties. **Signed** represents a signed contract that permits efficient and complete transparency if any questions are raised at any time about onsite part-time and seasonal labor, compensation and treatment of laborers hired through contracted cooperatives, as well from any offsite properties that the winemaker may purchase grapes from.



MARINFERNO - "FOGLIANELLA" 2019

Emilia Bianco IGT

Production

Bottles produced: 1,500

Vineyard Name(s): "Vigna Vecchia"

Terrain: Gently undulating hills.

Soil: Predominantly clayey, deep, calcareous, moderate alkalinity.

Exposure of rows: Southwest

Altitude: 250 meters a.s.l.

Varieties: 95% Ortrugo,
5% Chardonnay

Rootstock: S04 *High phylloxera resistance. Effective in colder climates, moist clay soils.*

Vine Training: Guyot

Average age of vines: 32 years

Plant density: 3000 per hectare

Yield per Vine: 0.9 kg

Production per ha (kg/ha): 5000

Treatments: 6x per year - Max 4 kg copper. Max 7kg sulfur.



Fertilizers: None added, only the Natural compost of the plant.

Harvest start date: September 28th

Harvest mode: Manual in small boxes

Certifications: In conversion: vineyards organic certified Spring 2021.

MARINFERNO - "FOGLIANELLA" 2019

Emilia Bianco IGT

Vinification

Pre-press processing:

Automatic Destemmer

Pressing mode: Pneumatic press

Vinificators: Cement tanks

Maceration:

10 months with skins, no temp.
control, no punchdowns.

Yeasts: Indigenous yeast only.

**Sulphur dioxide and/or
ascorbic acid:** NO

Stabilization: NO

Filtering: NO

Steel refinement: Until August 2020

Refinement in the bottle:

1 month

Bottle type: Bordeaux

Cap in: *Monopezzo* natural cork

Analysis

Acidity: 4.55 g/L

PH: 3.99

ABV: 11.28%

Res. Sugar: 0.2 g/L

VA: 1.10 g/l

Total SO₂: 25 mg/l





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