

Stephen Tanzer's
INTERNATIONAL WINE CELLAR

Valter Fissore was in Switzerland on the day I was able to visit the Elvio Cogno estate, so I tasted with his wife Nadia, Elvio Cogno's daughter. Cogno was a trailblazer in the town of Novello, where even today there are just a few wineries. The Cogno Barolos spend 40 days on their skins in stainless steel tanks, with the traditional cappello sommerso (submerged cap) method used, plus plenty of post-fermentation maceration. After the end of the malolactic fermentations, the wines go into large barrels (the Cascina Nuova gets a bit of used barriques). Interestingly, Nadia told me that she prefers 2007 to 2008, explaining that "2008 is easier, and has the same smell of pinot noir herbs across the board, while the 2007s have more structure, richness and alcohol and are becoming drinkable now. They're more typical Barolo."

2007 Elvio Cogno Barolo Ravera

Winery: Elvio Cogno

Style: Red Wine

Varietal: Nebbiolo

Region: Piedmont

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By [Stephen Tanzer](#)

Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar, Nov/Oct 11

Good bright medium red. Pure red cherry, rose petal, camphor, menthol and spices on the classic Barolo nose. Round, ripe and full, with impressive medicinal reserve to the sweet flavors of red berries, flowers and spices. Finishes chewy and very long, youthfully medicinal but not hard, with a broad, firm dusting of tannins and lovely lift. From 40- and 50-year-old lampia and michet vines kept to a moderate crop level by two green harvests. **93 points**

2005 Elvio Cogno Barolo Vigna Elena Riserva

Winery: Elvio Cogno

Style: Red Wine

Varietal: Nebbiolo

Region: Piedmont

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(100% rose clone, from 20-year-old vines planted in 1991, the year of daughter Elena's birth; aged three years in large barrels): Very bright medium red. Scented nose combines spices, medicinal herbs and rose petal, plus a whiff of leather. Juicy, penetrating and highly aromatic, with lovely lift to the flavors of red cherry, white pepper, herbs, menthol and spices. Really expands and lingers on the firmly tannic back end, finishing long and chewy, with a light touch and lovely energy and perfume. **92(+?) points**

2006 Elvio Cogno Barolo Bricco Pernice

Winery: Elvio Cogno

Style: Red Wine

Varietal: Nebbiolo

Region: Piedmont

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Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar, Nov/Oct 11

(100% lampia, planted in the original part of the Ravera cru; this spent 30 months in large casks and is just being released now in Italy): Medium bright red. Subdued aromas of currant and menthol open to reveal higher-pitched notes of red cherry, rose petal and white pepper. Serious, dry and rich, with a touch of austerity to the flavors of red fruits, menthol and licorice. Comes across as drier than the 2007 Ravera, with a more serious tannic structure: "more difficult to understand," according to Nadia Fissore. The wine's finishing medicinal toughness will require several years of additional cellaring. **91(+?) points**

2008 Elvio Cogno Barolo Ravera

Winery: Elvio Cogno

Style: Red Wine

Varietal: Nebbiolo

Region: Piedmont

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Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar, Nov/Oct 11

(bottled two weeks before my visit): Good bright red. Lovely ethereal perfume of exotic fruits, peach, orange, flowers and medicinal herbs, plus a whiff of Barolo Chinato. Silky on entry, then sweet, juicy and perfumed in the middle, with flavors similar to the aromas. Saturates the palate without any impression of weight. The firm, sappy finish features big, dusty, granular tannins that reach the front teeth. Very sexy aromatics here but Nadia emphasizes that the 2007 is "much more typical and richer Barolo. The 2008 shows the pinot side of nebbiolo and should be drunk before the 2007 and 2006." **91(+?) points**

2007 Elvio Cagno Barolo Cascina Nuova

Winery: Elvio Cagno

Style: Red Wine

Varietal: Nebbiolo

Region: Piedmont

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Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar, Nov/Oct 11

(from the estate's youngest vineyards): Good bright red. Complex nose melds raspberry, red cherry, menthol, clove, camphor, mint and subtle oak spices. Sweet, supple and seamless, with lovely breadth to the cherry and floral flavors. Has the stuffing to support its slightly dry, building tannins. **90 points**

2009 Elvio Cagno Montegrilli Langhe Rosso

Winery: Elvio Cagno

Style: Red Wine

Varietal: other red varietal

Region: Other Italy

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Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar, Nov/Oct 11

(a 50/50 blend of nebbiolo and barbera, aged for a year in second- and third-use *barriques*): Good bright medium red. High-toned aromas of raspberry, rose petal, licorice and spices. Sweet, vibrant and light on its feet, with juicy acidity giving lift to the mid-palate. This fruit-driven, silky wine finishes pure and long. **90 points**

2010 Elvio Cagno Anas-cetta di Novello

Winery: Elvio Cagno

Style: White Wine

Varietal: other white varietal

Region: Piedmont

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Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar, Nov/Oct 11

(30% in used *barrisques*, 70% in stainless steel, with *batonnage*): Bright, full green-tinged yellow. Captivating aromas of wild herbs, rosemary, lemon, licorice and exotic mango. Dense and fat, with lovely sweetness but a firm acid edge to its flavors of herbs, lemon and honey. This is not yet ready to drink, notes Nadia Fissore, adding that the honeyed character will gain in the bottle. She recommends pairing this variety with salami, fresh cheeses or white meats more than with fish. Incidentally, several other producers make *nascetta*, but their wines must use the appellation Langhe Bianco. **89 points**

2009 Elvio Cagno Barbera d'Alba Bricco dei Merli

Winery: Elvio Cagno

Style: Red Wine

Varietal: Barbera

Region: Piedmont



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Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar, Nov/Oct 11

(aged for one year in big barrels, some new): Very bright ruby-red. Blackberry, cassis, mint and violet on the vibrant nose. Sweet and fine-grained in the mouth; bright and dense but with a lovely light touch and noteworthy energy to the intense flavors of raspberry, blackberry, cherry and flowers. Finishes with fine tannins, very good length and solid minerally, medicinal grip. **89 points**

2008 Elvio Cogno Barbaresco Bordini

Winery: Elvio Cogno

Style: Red Wine

Varietal: Nebbiolo

Region: Piedmont

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(from vines in Neive; made at a friend's winery): Good bright medium red. Musky aromas of blueberry and menthol. Enters with good texture, then turns a bit firmer in the middle, with medicinal mint and herb flavors currently dominating dark fruits. Could use a bit more sweetness and flesh. Finishes with substantial tongue-dusting tannins. **88 points**

2010 Elvio Cogno Dolcetto d'Alba Vigna del Mandorlo

Winery: Elvio Cogno

Style: Red Wine

Varietal: Dolcetto

Region: Piedmont

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Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar, Nov/Oct 11

(done entirely in stainless steel): Good bright red-ruby. Slightly metallic aromas of cherry and licorice, with a green, herbal side. Juicy and bright but dry and a bit pinched, with a medicinal black cherry flavor dominating. Finishes firmly tannic but not dry. Could use a bit more flesh and personality. **87 points**