

Franciacorta (Lombardy)

Updated: September 2008



Bellavista

*Location: Erbusco,
Province of Brescia*



Scale and charm do not generally go together; yet in Bellavista's case, they are perfectly

compatible. This remarkable operation, masterminded by owner **Vittorio Moretti** and winemaker **Mattia Vezzola** combines grandeur and star quality with familiarity and simplicity. The estate's larger-than-life facilities, miles of underground cellars, impressive contemporary architecture (helipad included), and 1,250 surrounding acres of Franciacorta soil – **462 acres** of which (187 hectares: **nearly 10% of the entire appellation!**) are now under vine – leave you awestruck. At the same time, the exuberant Mattia, ebullient Morettis and likable, friendly Bellavista staff inspire immediate empathy.

Moretti founded the estate in **1976**, and the first bottle of

Franciacorta was issued in **1984**. Over these three decades, the style of Bellavista has become a **benchmark to the DOCG** – so much so it has prompted



countless imitations.

The property's **104** superb vineyards and 60-odd selections go into some one million bottles yearly, with another **3.5 million** resting in the immense subterranean cellars. The latter constitute a treasury of excellence that nurtures the Bellavista *cuvées* year after year, providing the winery's signature consistency.

Consistency, naturalness and digestibility are the heart itself of the Moretti/Vezzola philosophy.

Recent years have seen Mattia implement yet another phase in the estate's constant quality crescendo:

increasing *élevage*, on average from 36 to 48 months.

Note: *Gambero Rosso/Slow Food* has recently crowned Mattia with their top recognition as **Winemaker of the Year 2008**.



Map of Lombardy: Franciacorta borders shown in red

Below, view of the Bellavista property



All 60-plus selections are separately fermented in oak/stainless steel), vertical presses (**Marmonnier** and **Coquard**), up to **6 years' bottle age** in the vast

underground cellars, refermentation directly in the bottle for the larger-format sparkling wines, *remuage* by hand for all sparkling wines etc. Both still and sparkling are from prime hillside vineyards, clonally selected material, densely planted stock. The still DOCs of the range are called **Curtefranca** (an ancient designation for the area).

FRANCIACORTA CUVÉE BRUT DOCG: 80% Chardonnay/20% Pinot Bianco and Pinot Nero. The most characteristic of Franciacorta sparkling wines. Its balance derives from a subtle orchestration of at least 30 selections, as well as the blending of younger and older wines (this is a non-vintage), conferring consistency, roundness and finesse.

FRANCIACORTA GRAN CUVÉE BRUT DOCG: This vintage Champenois, from approximately 72% Chardonnay and Pinot Bianco and 28% Pinot Nero, is a special selection of some of the best grapes on the estate, fine-tuned by maturation in **small oak barrels for c. 7 months**. Dry, elegant, reminiscent of blackcurrant preserve and incense, extremely long. Just as fabulous are the satin-textured **SATÈN** version, the rose-hued **ROSÉ**, and zero-dosage, richly luscious **PAS OPÉRÉ**.

CURTEFRANCA BIANCO DOC: Intense Chardonnay varietal; elegant, silky-textured and fragrant, with nuances of lavender, sage, lemon, apples and pears.
UCCELLANDA DOC: 100% *cru* Chardonnay, oak-fermented and aged for **12 months in barriques**. Light gold, bouquet of vanilla, marzipan, spice, Golden Delicious apples, quince & ripe fruit; elegant, structured, dense, chewy and aromatic on the palate, with superb breed and persistence.

CONVENTO DELL'ANNUNCIATA DOC: From a distinct property, a former 16th-century convent, this **pure, single-vineyard Chardonnay** is fermented and aged in barriques. Complex varietal nose, full body, extremely long finish, superb concentration deriving from great soil and 60-year-old vines.