

PIEDMONT

ROMANO LEVI

Late Owner: Romano Levi

Fast Facts

Owner:
Luigi Schiappapietra & Lucio Scaratti

Master Distiller:
Fabrizio Sobrero

Established:
1925

Location:
Neive

Province:
Cuneo



THE HISTORY

For over three centuries, distillers called “grapat” emigrated temporarily from Fraciscio di Campodolcino or Vallespluga to Piedmont during the grape harvest, where, using mobile stills, they proceeded to the distillation of pomace for the production of Grappa.

In the early 20th century, however, families began to set down roots in the area and opened permanent distilleries. Among these families were Serafino Levi and Teresina Balbo along with their two children, Romano and Lidia. The family settled in Neive in 1925 where the highest-quality pomace could be found, and they started a direct fire distillery.

Sadly, Serafino died young in 1933, leaving two small children and his wife, who continued to run the distillery. His wife also died early during an air raid in 1945. Romano Levi was 17 years old at the time and a student at Alba. He decided to quit his studies and, with the help of his sister Lidia, continued distillation.

Today the distillery is owned by Luigi Schiappapietra, a close friend of the late Romano Levi, and Lucio Scaratti. Fabrizio Sobrero acts as the Master Distiller while Elisa Scaratti oversees Sales & Events.

THE LABELS

The town of Neive has dedicated a museum to Romano Levi in the House of the Municipality. At the museum, visitors learn about the history of the distillery and read

biographies on Romano and, his sister, Lidia Levi’s lives. The distillery has become part of the tourist program, and thousands of people visit it every year.

Romano unintentionally created a cult following for his grappas. Each label was hand painted and people were known to wait for hours for their label to be finished. The most famous of these labels featured “The Wild Woman.” Romano Levi remembers

“As a child I used to walk to school, crossing the hills and vineyards. Among the vineyard rows you would often find the ciabot, which were tiny equipped shelters where the wine-makers and farmers took refuge in case a storm surprised them in the evening or in the morning if they had to be in the vineyard before sunrise. I used to pass by there in the morning and I would sometimes see beautiful scruffy-looking women come out of these shelters; women who appeared to be a bit crazy, lonely and often living on the margins of society. They were mysterious, without constraints. They disappeared and then came back, they were both partly witches and partly fairies. They were free, as all women should be, to live the best part of their life.”

Romano’s grappas were a favorite among celebrities such as actor Marcello Mastroianni, economist Cesare Romiti, and singers Andrea Bocelli, Antonello Venditti, and Roby Facchinetti, as well as many more, but Romano was neither impressed or put off by his following. He was known for turning away celebrities from his door. Most likely this was not out of rudeness; he just didn’t know how “important” these visitors were.



GRAPPA BIANCA: Made from the freshly-pressed skins, stems, and seeds of grapes grown on DOC and DOCG vineyards in Neive, Barbaresco, Trezzo, Treiso, and Alba. The Must is blended following an old Serafino Levi recipe and immediately compressed into underground pits for a natural curing process that is able to extract all the aromas and flavors of the grapes. The Grappa ages a minimum of three years in classic Piedmontese casks (700-litres) made of ash wood. Clear, transparent with intense fresh herbal notes on the nose. Intense, medium-dry fruity finish.



GRAPPA PAGLIERINA: Made from the freshly-pressed skins, stems, and seeds of grapes grown on DOC and DOCG vineyards in Neive, Barbaresco, Trezzo, Treiso, and Alba. The Must is blended following an old Serafino Levi recipe and immediately compressed into underground pits for a natural curing process that is able to extract all the aromas and flavors of the grapes. The Grappa ages a minimum of four years in classic Piedmontese casks (700-litres) made of different types of wood. Straw yellow in color with herbal and wood notes. Dry on the palate with a note of licorice.



GRAPPA MOSCATO: Made from the freshly-pressed skins, stems, and seeds of grapes grown in the Moscato d'Asti DOCG wine-growing villages of Neive, Trezzo, and Treiso. The Must is left to ferment following an old Serafino Levi recipe, and then immediately distilled to extract the classic aromas and fruity flavors of the grapes. The Grappa ages six months in barriques (220-liters) made of different types of wood. Light yellow with a fruity nose and an intense aroma of Moscato grapes. Light, sweet, and full-bodied on the palate.



GRAPPA SIGNORINA CAMILLE: Made from the freshly-pressed skins, stems, and seeds of grapes grown on DOC and DOCG vineyards in Neive, Barbaresco, Trezzo, Treiso, and Alba. The Must is blended following an old Serafino Levi recipe and immediately compressed into underground pits for a natural curing process that is able to extract all the aromas and flavors of the grapes. The Grappa ages for more than four years in barrels after which the grappa is blended with chamomile flowers. Next, it's filtered through a process specifically designed by Lidia Levi to maintain the aromas of the chamomile and the unique flavor of the grappa. Light yellow, with herbal and fresh

Chamomile notes. Soft and pleasant on the palate with long-lasting Camomile flavors in a pure grappa intensity.



GRAPPA BAROLO: Made from the freshly-pressed skins, stems, and seeds of grapes grown on DOCG vineyards located in Neive, Barbaresco, Trezzo, Treiso, and Alba. The Must is immediately compressed into underground pits for a natural curing process that is able to extract all the aromas and flavors of the Nebbiolo grapes. The Grappa ages a minimum of four years in classic Piedmontese barrels (700-litres) made of various types of wood. Light to medium amber, with intense tobacco and light chocolate aromas, with an initial note of wood and light vanilla.



GRAPPA BARBARESCO: Made from the freshly-pressed skins, stems, and seeds of grapes grown on DOCG vineyards located in Neive, Barbaresco, Trezzo, Treiso, and Alba. The Must is immediately compressed into underground pits for a natural curing process that is able to extract all the aromas and flavors of the Nebbiolo grapes. The Grappa ages a minimum of three years in classic Piedmontese barrels (700-litres) made of various types of wood. Light amber, with herbal, wood and vanilla aromas at the beginning. The aromas change into a long-lasting note of licorice and vanilla.