Forteto della Luja • Loazzolo

One look over your shoulder and you can see the Medieval tower of Barbaresco behind you. Loazzolo is where the Langhe hills rise into the green rooftops of western Monferrato. It’s home to unique floral and fauna, designated a "World Wildlife Federation Oasis," otherwise known as... Forteto della Luja. The Scaglione family is a trail of "firsts." Between 500m and 600m above the sea, they farm some of the highest vineyards in Piedmont. In comparison to the high terraced vineyards of Boca, in Alto Piemonte, Loazzolo benefits from a sunnier climate and more calcareous marl soils. The region was known for its late harvest Moscato Passito wines which were the elixirs of nobility in the 17th century. In the early 1980s Giancarlo Scaglione was the first to resurrect this forgotten sweet style, making his first Moscato Passito from the estate's oldest 19th century vineyard, Piasa Rischei vineyard (re-planted in 1938). The region achieved its DOC status in 1992, by virtue of Giancarlo’s pursuit and guidance from his close friend and colleague, Giacomo Bologna.

Forteto della Luja came to Giancarlo by way of his father, who purchased the farm from the original family in the 1970s. Forteto della Luja is more than a winery or a farm, it is an ecosystem of more than twenty unique species of floral and fauna, protected by the World Wildlife Fund. "WWF" winery... the first of its kind in Italy. Today’s protectors of Forteto are Giovanni and Cristina, Giancarlo’s children who grew-up with the bright colors and humming sounds that city kids dream-of. Whether it’s the power of "Le Grive," the meditation of "Pian dei Sogni," or the pure pleasure of "Piasa San Maurizio," it’s obvious they have inherited their father’s obligation to mother nature. Advocates of solar power, they installed photo-voltaic panels on the cellar roof’s south side. These panels produce and feed electricity to the winery, every day of the year, the first of its kind in Piedmont. They describe their farming practice as "Biological Agriculture." Horses are their plows, wooden nests and birds are their friends, artificial sprays are their enemies, and absolutely no weed killers!

The Wines of Forteto della Luja

Barbera d’Asti "Mon Ross"
Monferrato Rosso "Le Grive"
Moscato d’Asti "Piasa San Maurizio"
Moscato Passito "Piasa Rischei"
Brachetto Passito "Pian dei Sogni"
The 1930s Piasa San Maurizio vineyard of Moscato Bianco

Giovanni and Silvia Scaglione
The bowl-shaped Le Grive vineyard

Giovanni and his horse plow