New consumers, territory, culture: Pertinace’s model for adapting to a fluid and demanding market

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Pertinace, a cooperative winery based in Treiso in the Barbaresco area, is redefining its role in the contemporary wine landscape. Director Cesare Barbero outlines a strategy that blends product innovation for younger markets, collaborations with contemporary artists, and deep social engagement with the local community, presenting wine as a cultural and human experience beyond the glass.

The wine world is facing shifts in consumption, languages, and expectations of those who visit a winery or choose a bottle. In this scenario, Pertinace, from the heart of Barbaresco, is

carrying forward initiatives that seem to move along a precise direction: expanding the boundaries of wine, from its consumption to the experiences it accompanies.

No longer just a product to be appreciated technically, but an opportunity for encounter, cultural storytelling, a relationship with the territory, aesthetic experience, and social impact. We spoke about this with director Cesare Barbero.

Director, wine is going through a complex phase, marked by new consumption patterns and an evident generational shift. What production and commercial strategies have you decided to put in place to interpret this moment?

We have acknowledged that the wine market can no longer be approached with the same tools as ten or fifteen years ago. Today there are new consumption habits, new forms of socialising, and above all new generations approaching wine in a completely different way. **Standing still would mean losing touch with reality.**

For this reason, we have developed some new projects, the most recent of which also emerged through dialogue with our national importer in the United States, with whom we have been collaborating for over twenty years, and who knows the dynamics of the American market very well. I am referring to the idea of building products capable of engaging a younger audience and democratic distribution channels open to everyone.

We have developed a new white wine, an Arneis in a half-litre format, with a completely new graphic design and a more immediate concept, intended for entry into major US

distribution chains. Along the same lines, we have created the Terramata line, which we share with the other cooperatives that are part of The WineNet network, comprising a Barbaresco, a Barbera, and a Nebbiolo.

At the root of all this is a very concrete reflection: wine today competes with many other worlds of consumption and entertainment. Young people have an enormous number of alternatives available, from ready-to-drink products to cannabis-based ones, very present for example in certain American contexts: there are venues that look like real wine bars but dedicated to that type of product. **The visual language has also changed: colourful packaging, very fast communication, content designed for those who live constantly on their phones.**

We do not want to distort wine, but to make it more accessible in language and approach. We believe that wine must step away from certain self-referential dynamics and learn to engage with those who today do not feel involved by communication that is too technical or too exclusive.

This openness also passes through a new way of communicating wine, using languages that go through contemporary art and experience. How did this idea come about?

It stems from a very simple conviction: wine is not only an agricultural or commercial product, but a form of cultural expression. And art, in all its forms, has a natural closeness to wine. **For this reason, we have decided to build a dialogue between the winery and the art world.** In July, we will inaugurate a sculpture by the Paduan artist Made 514, which will be placed directly in the vineyard and included in the winery’s visiting route. At the same time, we are also working

on a photography project with British artist Olivia Arthur, whose works will be hosted within the company’s spaces.

The idea is to engage a curious visitor, one who is not simply looking for tastings or food pairings, but wishes to live a broader experience, capable of nourishing the emotional and cultural side of their person.

This vision is also reflected in the new look we have chosen for the fiftieth anniversary of our Barbaresco, which we will celebrate on the coming 8th of June. For the occasion, we wanted a commemorative label created by Ugo Nespolo. It is a way of underscoring once again how wine can engage with different languages and become a meeting point between creativity, territory, and identity.

Alongside the productive and cultural dimension, there is also a strong commitment to enhancing the Piedmontese territory. How important is this aspect in your vision?

It matters enormously. We believe that a winery must also bear a social responsibility towards the territory in which it operates. **For this reason, we have been supporting the Premio Pertinace for years, organised together with the Municipality of Treiso.**

The award was created with the aim of recognising figures who have contributed to making Piedmont known through art, culture, music, but also voluntary work and civic engagement. Over the years, personalities such as Luciana Littizzetto, Ugo Nespolo, Salvatore Accardo, Evelino Pidò, and many others have been honoured, including some less known to the general public, such as volunteer doctors who have dedicated part of their lives to humanitarian projects in difficult countries, such as Chiapas or Kenya. We are interested in telling a story

of Piedmont that goes beyond productive excellence, to include cultural sensitivity and care for people.

Among the projects you are pursuing, there is also one directly linked to social support for the local community. What does it involve?

Historically, we have always sought to maintain a concrete relationship with the territory and with those living in situations of vulnerability. In previous years, we made a house available for housing migrants working in the fields of the area. **Today we are supporting a new project together with the Municipality of Treiso: a financial contribution earmarked for the renovation of the local primary school.** It is an initiative we care deeply about because it directly concerns the future of the local community and the families of the area between Treiso and Barbaresco.

We believe that a company rooted in a territory must not limit itself to producing economic value for itself. It must also contribute, as much as possible, to the quality of life of the surrounding community. For us, this is an integral part of the identity of Pertinace.

Key points

1. **Pertinace developed new accessible wine formats** and the Terramata line to reach younger, international consumers.
2. **A sculpture by Made 514 and a photography project by Olivia Arthur** bring contemporary art into the winery.
3. **The fiftieth anniversary of Barbaresco is marked by a commemorative label** designed by Ugo Nespolo.

4. **The Premio Pertinace celebrates figures who promote Piedmont through culture, art, and humanitarian work**.
5. **Pertinace is funding the renovation of Treiso’s primary school**, reinforcing its social commitment to the local community.