

PORTOVINO

VALLI UNITE BIANCO

WHY BE CURIOUS: Valli Unite, in the Tortona Hills of southeast Piemonte, may be Italy's only natural wine cooperative. Vineyards lie amid beehives, grain fields, orchards, woodlands with truffles, and livestock herds. 30 members work on the 100-hectare farm and call it home, making everything from honey to salumi and wine in between. During harvest you can still stomp grapes with your bare feet, without feeling the need for an Instagram pic. Their wines range from the glou-glou - Bianco, Rosato, Rosso, and a crown cap farmer fizz - to more complex natural wines, all at great quality-price ratios. "We believe natural vinification is a social responsibility" is the philosophy; soil humus, livestock manure, native yeasts, local grapes, time, and parsimonious sulphur compose the winning formula. Visit one morning, work hard, and then stay for the communal lunch. It's a visit unlike any other winery - or working farm - that we've been to.

Valli Unite Bianco is the farm's everyday white wine, made from Cortese. (This part of Piemonte is right next door to Gavi.) There's just enough skin contact to provide texture and a bit of complexity. It's a true farmer's wine that plays equally well off the farm: on a city stoop, around a suburban barbecue, or at your favorite wine bar.

REGION: Piemonte

FARMING: Certified organic by ICEA (Certification ID # IT BIO 006 I19)

VINEYARD: Various plots from the cooperative

ALTITUDE: 300 m / 984 ft

SOILS: Clay

VARIETIES: Cortese (100%)

VINE AGE: 20 years old

VINE TRAINING: Guyot

HARVEST DATE: Beginning of September

YEASTS: Native

FERMENTATION: 3 days maceration on the skins and fermentation in stainless steel tanks. Light filtering, with 5 micron cardboard filters.

MALOLACTIC FERMENTATION: Yes

SULPHUR: 30 mg/L total added: 10 mg/L at rackings and 20 mg/L at bottling

ALCOHOL: 12.0%

ANNUAL PRODUCTION: 300 cases

