

# Aceto Balsamico Tradizionale

Acetaia Giorgio Barbieri

The „Aceto Balsamico di Modena“, which we can buy in supermarkets, cannot be compared to the „Aceto Balsamico Tradizionale“ – it does not mean it is something bad or even tastes bad. No, but yet the list of ingredients reveals that it is something special to taste and enjoy the sheer exquisite flavor of the amber-colored and viscous king of all Aceti. In connection with Parmigiano, meat, vegetable, desserts or fruits not only its own taste, but also that of the meals served with it particularly come into their own. The not minimal price of a fast produced Aceto di Modena, stands definitely in no relation to the one of the old, matured Tradizionale, which can be bought, depending on its age, at 40 to 70 Euros.





The Aceto Balsamico Tradizionale is subject to a strict purity requirement: No chemical substances may be added, for the production only certain regional types of grapes are allowed, which are cultivated 25 kilometers away from Modena at the maximum, and the transformation of the grape must into alcohol may only take place naturally.

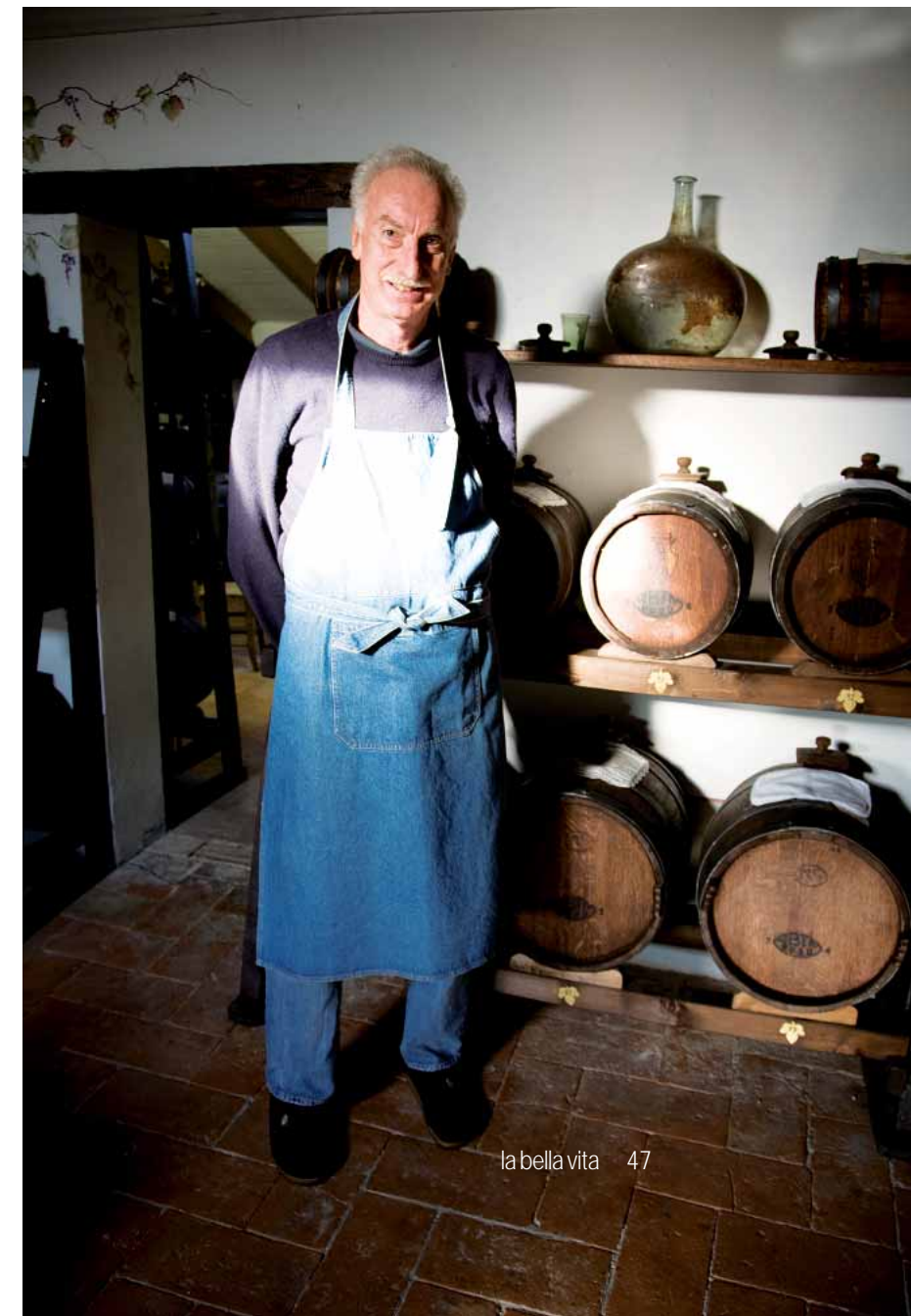


The *Aceto Balsamico Tradizionale* is more than just vinegar. To enjoy its pure exquisite taste is always a special experience for the young and the young at heart.



In these batteries of exotic wood barrels the „brown gold“ of the *Acetaia di Giorgio* ages.

Giorgio Barbieri is proud of the „secret recipe“, which has been passed on for three generations by the father to the son.



complex oxidation and fermentation processes, in the fourth and fifth barrel the ripening process begins, and in the sixth and seventh the aging. Once a year, usually in the spring, the evaporated portion of the casks is filled with must from the preceding larger and younger casks and the cooked must is again filled into the first (largest) cask. First time after twelve years a quantity of a maximum of two liters for household use or for sale may be taken from the smallest cask; taking out more would affect the quality and aging process. Here the value of the Tradizionale becomes obvious at the latest: of 75 liters grape must every twelve years a maximum of two liters turn into this exquisite liquid. If the 12-year-old Aceto is stored for further years, after 25 years maturing time it turns into the Riserva, from which a maximum of a liter to a liter and a half is taken out each year.

The whole procedure of the production and filling of Aceto Balsamico

The history of vinegar probably dates back to the time before Christ. In a document we read that a 360-year-old Balsamico was introduced in Modena in 1862, which would thus mean that the tradition here had already existed in the 15th century. If you enter a house in Modena, in which a wonderful sweet-sour smell greets you, you can assume that on the attic a “battery” of casks filled with the valuable must made from grapes is ripening under white lace covers, which is traditionally set as endowment for the daughters of the families.

In the Acetaia di Giorgio this tradition is already being preserved in third generation – since the 17th century. Giorgio Barbieri is the present guardian of that tradition and thereby affectionately maintains a few characteristics that his grandfather passed on to him - and of course the endowment for his daughter Carlotta. His wife Giovanna

comes from Bologna, but her feeling for and her knowledge about the Aceto are not at all inferior to that of the native Modenese.

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The trademark for connoisseurs: The real *Aceto Balsamico Tradizionale* is sold only in particularly designed, standardized, and numbered bottles.



Tradizionale is subject to strict controls. Only numbered and documented casks may be used, which one recognizes at its brand marks and obtained types of Aceto are evaluated and judged in a blank test. When the industrially manufactured Aceto began to take over the market, the Acetaie of the region created a vinegar organization, which enforces strict controls and examinations, takes care of the bottling into standardized bottles only used for Aceto Balsamico Tradizionale, and seals them with numbered and particularly marked caps. The white caps are intended for the 12-year-old Aceto and the golden ones for the 25-year-old Riserva. The small round bottle with the long neck, which is a trademark of the Tradizionale from Modena, was by the way designed by the famous automobile-designer Giorgetto Giugiaro – perhaps a tribute to the second “specialty” of the region, which is also called the Motor Valley

But now to the characteristics of the Barbieris and the pride of the Acetaia di Giorgio: the juniper and cherry Aceto. Grandfather Barbieri was a hunter and wanted to produce a spicy vinegar, which goes well with venison. Therefore he began to build up a battery of juniper casks and as a sweet counterpart, a pure cherry wood battery. This specialty of the Acetaia di Giorgio always gets a high score in national and international evaluations and has recently caused a great sensation. At the beginning of October 2007 «Gusto Balsamico» took

place in Modena, an event that is dedicated to the traditional food culture of the Emilia region. For the first time during this event the «ASTA Evento», a Sotheby’s auction, was held. Giorgio Barbieri’s juniper Riserva did not only achieve the highest score in the blank test but the bottle was sold at the auction for 400 Euros. The money went to a good cause because the award is honor enough.

[www.acetaiadigiorgio.it](http://www.acetaiadigiorgio.it)

