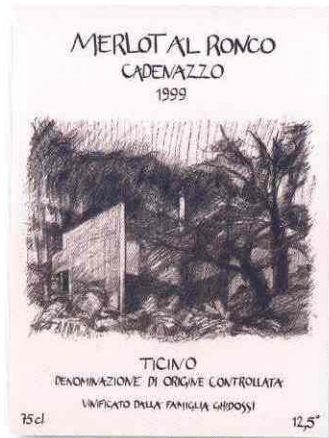


CANTINA GHIDOSSO

CADENAZZO, SWITZERLAND

Aurelio Galfetti, 2002



Gianfranco Ghidossi is an electrical engineer, living and working in a small apartment building he designed in Bellinzona, the tiny capital of Ticino canton. His father made *vin ordinaire*, as is common in this farming region; the son resolved to improve on this by making small quantities of premium wine. He bought a five-acre plot on a steep slope just outside the town, and planted it with Chardonnay and

Merlot grapes. A funicular leads up through the first block of vines, planted in serried rows, to a rocky bluff; the second tier rises from there.

For the design of the winery, Ghidossi turned to Aurelio Galfetti, a friend and one of a talented group of Italian and Swiss architects who have made the Ticino Valley a center of rationalist architecture. Their work is distinguished by its simple forms and materials, a lack of pretension, and a quiet, humane poetry—exactly the qualities an engineer most appreciates. Galfetti produced a triumph of minimalism that engages the landscape: a two-story concrete box built into the hillside, just above the road. Production activities are located at the lower level, and exterior stairs lead up to the shady roof terrace, from where you can gaze back to the town and the medieval fortress that Galfetti restored.

Visitors drive to the upper level, and enter a long reception room. At one end is a kitchen with a window framing a view of town and its signature castle to the east. Side walls are lined with bottles in climate-controlled vitrines. At the west end, glass sliders open up to a paved terrace, separated from the vines by a dry-stone wall.

Galfetti offered a few observations on his modest modern farm building: “With today’s electronic systems, wine-producing conditions are as good as, if not better than, those of the old wineries. What can our times add to the two rows of aluminum and glass cupboards, one for reds and the other for whites? Quite a lot, actually. A table big enough to enjoy people’s company among the bottles; two large glass walls offering beautiful views over the vineyard and the countryside away in the distance (cozily warm in winter and refreshingly cool in winter); and two walls and a concrete roof to round everything off. What place does nostalgia have here? It is found in the wisteria-draped steel pergola that covers the concrete and the glass, making the light softer, and taking some of the sharpness from the aluminum window frames, while the machine-finished local stone floor and the wooden table transport us back to another age.”

Not open to the public. info@galfetti.com