Barbaresco Riserva DOCG 2016

Decanter Silver Award

Francone – Neive

Why We Chose This Wine

Giovanni Battista started making wines in 1940 in Neive (Barbaresco area). His 2 sons built one of the first winery buildings to welcome visitors and consumers in 1964 which is still home to the Francone winery today. The next generation of the family, now comprised of the two brothers Fabrizio and Marco are evolving by combining tradition and improved techniques. Today they believe in using low sulfites and making wines that are not big and brawny but elegant and drinkable.
Francone has many delicious Barbarescos to choose from but we selected this one because firstly, it is from the epic 2016 vintage and secondly, it is a limited production of Riserva made only in the best years. Francone has a long history of making Barbaresco and although at the moment of tasting it still seemed very young to us, we could sense that there was something special about this wine. Francone's riserva comes from the best selection of grapes from their oldest vineyards and we are happy to share it with you.

Winemaking

20 days fermentation and maceration with approx. 42 months of aging in big French oak barrels (botti) with at least 16 months in bottle before release.

Tasting Notes

Ruby red with hints of brick orange. Complex nose of red fruits and violets with classic hints of tobacco, tea leaves and licorice. This is a classic traditional style Barbaresco.

Pairing

Rack of lamb with fava beans and spring onions

GRAPE VARIETALS
100% Nebbiolo

VINEYARD LOCATION
Coming from the oldest vines in the family's possession from the village of Neive

AGE OF VINES
54 Years Old

DRINK OR HOLD?
Drink or Hold

SERVING TEMPERATURE
18°C/65°F

Barbaresco Gallina Riserva DOCG 2016

Ugo Lequio - Neive

Why We Chose This Wine

Ugo Lequio is a friendly quirky man whose winery is completely underrated, making it one of our secret gems.
We thought it would be fun for you to compare 2 Barbaresco Riservas in the same shipment from the same vintage and town so you can find similarities and differences. We can't wait to hear which one you prefer!
Ugo wanted to make wine back in 1981 but had no vineyards so he had to convince a grape grower to sell him some grapes. After a lot of persistence he finally was able to buy Barbera. Eventually he was able to procure the Nebbiolo from the Gallina hill in Neive which was once sold to the legendary Bruno Giacosa! Ugo does nearly everything in the winery and follows a generally traditional wine making philosophy.

Winemaking

15-18 days of fermentation and maceration in stainless steel. 20 months aging in big Slavonian oak barrels and 15 months in used French casks with at least 6 months of bottle aging before release.

Tasting Notes

Ruby red color with aromas of cherries, licorice, spice with faint roses and pepper. On the palate, full and austere with balanced tannins and long persistence.

Pairing

Braised and roasted meat dishes

GRAPE VARIETALS
100% Nebbiolo

BOTTLES PRODUCED
250 Cases

VINEYARD LOCATION
MGA Cru Gallina - Neive

AGE OF VINES
70 years old

DRINK OR HOLD?
Drink

SERVING TEMPERATURE
18-20°C/64-68°F

Barolo Brunate DOCG 2016

97 points JS & 97 RP

Mario Marengo – La Morra

Why We Chose This

Marengo is a very small winery run by husband and wife team Jenny and Marco who are joined by their son. It is always a pleasure to visit this tiny winery up on the hill in La Morra where you are guaranteed to find one of the family members. There is no wine snobbery here and they make you feel like old friends while pouring the wines from their amazing line up, always with a smile on their face. The Marengos have had Brunate in their family for 3 generations and know well how to work in the vineyard, the most important part! Marengo's Brunate vineyard is located on the higher part of the hillside, giving drier and more austere expressions. During our blind tasting we found this Barolo to be one of the most unique! Not the typical reserved Brunate we were used to but a big open and intriguing dark wine straight out of the gates. Usually wines from this grand cru in La Morra need more time to express themselves but not in this vintage.

Winemaking

Fermentation in stainless steel and aged 24 months in used neutral French casks.

Tasting Notes

Ruby red color with an expressive nose of sweet cherries and ripe plums with faint lavender and smoky leather. This wine just exudes a dark sultry character which sets it apart from others in their line up.

Pairing

Venison and game

GRAPE VARIETALS
100% Nebbiolo

BOTTLES PRODUCED
460 cases

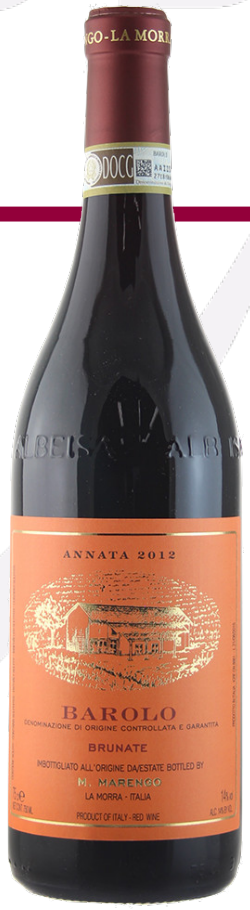
VINEYARD LOCATION
1 hectare from Brunate - La Morra

AGE OF VINES
80 Years Old

DRINK OR HOLD?
Drink or hold

SERVING TEMPERATURE
18°C/65° F

"Marco Marengo is one of Piedmont's emerging superstar producers. Although the Marengo family has made wine here since 1899, it's as if someone turned on a switch a few years ago, when the wines, the Barolos in particular, went from excellent to outstanding, a level they have maintained ever since. "*Antonio Galloni, Wine Advocate March 2010*"



Barolo Cannubi DOCG 2015

Virna Borgogno – Barolo

Why We Chose This

It was due time to put a Barolo from Cannubi into one of our selections! It is one of the most historical and well-known vineyards in the world. The vineyard is situated in the central hill between the 2 valleys of the Barolo appellation making it a combination of the older soils from the Eastern Helvation soils and the younger Western Tortonian soils giving it the perfect balance. In fact, Cannubi comes from the word Cannubio which means marriage (of the two soils types). Although the tannins might feel soft, Cannubi is unique for being approachable yet surprisingly one of the longest living Barolos. I was eating lunch with a winemaker when we mentioned Virna Borgogno so I paid her a visit. She was the first woman in Italy to graduate with a degree in Technical Winemaking and decided to carry on her family's tradition of making wine in Barolo. Virna is a strong willed and fun woman who let me taste all their Barolos as well as from different vintages. I was impressed with the 2015 which is very approachable and a delicious wine which captures the essence of this vineyard site.

Winemaking

Maceration and fermentation relatively short for 10 days. The wine is then transferred to mixed sized French and Slavonian oak barrels where it ages for approximately 18 months. Unfiltered and rests in the bottle for at least 6 months before it is released.

Tasting Notes

Dark ruby red color, with garnet reflections. Nose of red forest berries and spices. Full bodied and smooth on the palate with a long finish with licorice flavors.

Pairing

Roasted chicken and herbed aged cheeses

GRAPE VARIETALS
100% Nebbiolo

BOTTLES PRODUCED
580 cases

VINEYARD LOCATION
MGA Cru Cannubi Boschis (Cannubi)

AGE OF VINES
50 Years Old

DRINK OR HOLD?
Drink or hold

SERVING TEMPERATURE
18°C/65° F

Barolo Capalot DOCG 2017
"Vecchie Viti"

Burzi – La Morra

Why We Chose This Wine

There is a lot of buzz around these 2 newcomers who are making a name for themselves. The wines of Alberto and sister Caterina are pure and speak the terroir of La Morra. The winery is in an unassuming basement / cellar of their family's apartment building which gives it a sort of garagiste feel. Capalot is one of the most well known crus in La Morra thanks to Roberto Voerzio's Riserva Vecchie Viti whose vineyard he used to lease from the Burzi. This was true until Alberto decided to keep these vineyards in the family and produce their own Vecchie Viti from this same site. The production is extremely limited and Antonio Galloni even wrote that the 2017 is "easily the best wine I have tasted from Burzi". Keep your eyes on these guys!

Winemaking

30-50 day fermentation and maceration in stainless steel with daily pump-overs, followed by submerged cap with wood planks that hold down the cap and allow for a harmonious and expressive aromatic character in the wine. Malolactic fermentation and aging is done in large untoasted Slavonian oak barrels.

Tasting Notes

Ripe black cherries with aromatic herbal notes with faint hints of coffee and leather. There is something darker about the flavors in this wine uniquely coming from the single cru Capalot. On the palate it is so elegant and lifted and seems light yet full of nuances and complexity.

Pairing

Braised beef, red meat

GRAPE VARIETALS
100% Nebbiolo (Lampia)

BOTTLES PRODUCED
330 cases

AGE OF VINES
75+ years old

VINEYARD LOCATION
MGA Cru Capalot– La Morra

AGING POTENTIAL
Hold

SERVING TEMPERATURE
16-18°C/60-64° We recommend opening a few hours before serving.

Barolo Ravera DOCG 2016

99 pts. Wine Enthusiast

Elvio Cogno – Novello

Why We Chose This Wine

Elvio Cogno left the restaurant business in the 1950s to start a career in winemaking. He collaborated with Marcarini in La Morra where he gained great experience until he decided to go back to his family village in Novello and make high quality wines. Elvio passed down the business to his son in law Valter Fissore in 1996 where they craft high quality terroir driven wines, and brought the Ravera MGA cru to fame.
Last year when the hyped up 2016 Barolos were just released. we tasted over 20 young Barolos from this vintage blind on night. From the first moment I put my nose in this glass it was love at first "whiff"! It was everything a classic Barolo should be, deep and profound with such an amazing complexity of flavors so typical of Nebbiolo. This was my number 1 pick. Supposedly I was not the only one since soon after all the awards started flowing in for this Barolo Ravera in Novello making the demand so high that we struggled to set enough aside. We feel fortunate that Cogno was so kind to hold them for an extra year just for us and we hope you enjoy this!

Winemaking

Fermentation in stainless steel. 24 months in large oak barrels and 6 months in bottle before release.

Tasting Notes

Intense garnet red with nose of violets, tar and spice with incredible complexity and hints of mint, licorice and leather. Full bodied and balanced with flavors of dark fruits on the palate with great persistence matching the aromas. A classic austere Barolo with tannins capable of great aging.

Pairing

Cured meats and cheeses

GRAPE VARIETALS
100% Nebbiolo

VINEYARD LOCATION
MGA Cru - Ravera in the village of Novello

DRINK OR HOLD?
Drink now or hold

SERVING TEMPERATURE
17-18°C/62-64F°