

GUIDE TO ITALIAN WINES • JUNE 2014
TOM HYLAND



**CASTIGLIONE FALLETTO IN THE HEART
OF THE BAROLO ZONE**
(PHOTO ©TOM HYLAND)

NOTES ON BAROLOS FROM THE 2010 VINTAGE

ALL TEXT AND PHOTOS ©TOM HYLAND

2010 BAROLO

In May, 2014, I was able to taste more than 125 examples of Barolo from the 2010 vintage at special tastings in Alba as well as during visits to several cellars in the production zone. I had heard excellent reports on the vintage, not just in the press, but also from the winemakers themselves. In fact, I had been informed about how special this vintage would be three years ago, when I was in Alba to taste the 2007 Barolos. A few producers told me about how much I thought I would enjoy the 2007s, but added, “wait until you try my 2010s.”

I'll only mention a few things about the growing season. Basically, it was ideal, perhaps even as close to perfect as possible. “We had the right weather at the right time,” says Franco Massolino, co-proprietor of his family estate in Serralunga d’Alba. “It is a vintage that is one of the best of my life.”

A few personal thoughts. I tasted any number of Barolos from producers that I have ranked as good, yet rarely special. Yet many of these producers made lovely wines in 2010, wines that are quite approachable even upon release. How nice to see wines such as these from producers such as **Giovanni Viberti, Clavesana** and **Francone**, to just name a few.

The finest wines have excellent to outstanding depth of fruit and excellent persistence along with very good acidity. The tannins are generally well balanced and thankfully, the oak is well integrated. The best examples should age for 35-50 years, (meaning that in my 50s, I won't be around to drink them at their peak, but I'm fortunate enough to try them now!), a sign of a great vintage.

Not every Barolo from 2010 was great, however. There were a few wines from the communes of Serralunga d’Alba and Monforte d’Alba that were quite aggressive in their tannins, leaving a harsh, bitter after taste. Now as a rule, these are among the most powerful, longest lived of all Barolos, so a certain amount of youthful assertiveness is to be expected. But some of these wines were not that well balanced, as it seemed that a few producers aimed for glory, emphasizing power over balance. For the few examples of 2010 Barolo – about a dozen – that I did not care for, I have opted not to comment on those wines.

I have arranged the wines by commune instead of by rankings. I think this is a more interesting way to view these wines. The initial group of wines consists of Barolos blended from various communes (an historical tradition); following that, I list the various communes.

The ranking are as follows:

***** **OUTSTANDING**

**** **EXCELLENT**

*** **VERY GOOD**

** **GOOD**

2010 BAROLO

WINES FROM VARIOUS COMMUNES

Bartolo Mascarello

Young deep garnet; balasamic, dried cherry, hint of orange peel. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration with an elegant mid-palate. Lovely balance, very good acidity and complexity, great Nebbiolo purity. Impressive hamony, this is a wine of great breeding. Best in 35 years plus. One of my top 10 Barolos of the vintage! *****

Umberto Fracassi

(This wine is largely from vineyards in Cherasco). Beautiful young garnet; complex nose – many elements; cherry, cedar, hit of tar, orange peel . Lovely ripeness and balance- wonerful mid-palate. Youthful tannins, rich but fine. Very good acidity and complexity. Excellent to outstanding persisence, Gorgeous wine –sublime with great intensity. Peak in 35 yrs plus. One of my top 10 Barolos of the vintage! *****

Luigi Oddero e Figli

Deep garnet; aromas of cedar, beechwood, hint of balsamic and dried cherry. Medum-full with rich, elegantly layered mid-palatepal; excellent persistence, beautiful balance, youthful tannins, very good acidity. Outstanding wine – needs a lot of time 30-35 yrs. *****

Pio Cesare

Deep garnet; gorgeous aromas- dried cherry, orange peel, dried roses, tar- classic! Medium-full with excellent concentration-lovely balance throughout- elegant finish- very good acidity; excellent persistence – classy! Peak in 30 years plus. *****

Francone “Francone”

Classic garnet; cedar, hint of balsamic; dried cherry, currant, hint of tar; Medium-full/ excellent concentration. – generous mid-palate. Gorgeous varietal puriry and balance- very good acidity,excellent persistence. Classy! 35 yrs plus. *****

La Toricella

Lovely young garnet. Beautiful fruit aromas; red cherry, currant, cedar, red roses. Medium-full with excellent concentration; generous mid-palate. Long, long finish; outstanding persistence. Gorgeous balance, very good acidity- classy, sleek – gorgeous wine, classic. Peak in 30 yrs plus. *****

E. Pira “Via Nuova”

Deep garnet; lovely aromas, beautiful ripe cherry and currant aromas, red rose, tar- classic. Medium-full/ excel concentration. Generous mid-palate. Lenthly finish, beautifully tuned acidity, excellnt to outstanding persisence. Ideal balance and structure. Classy! Great breeding! 35 yrs plus. *****

2010 Barolo – various communes

Batasiolo

Deep garnet; aromas of balsamic, dried cherry, dried currant. Medium-full with excellent concentration and very good length in finish. Youthful, graceful tannins; very good acidity. A touch astringent now, but this will round out nicely with time. Peak in 20 years. ****

Vietti “Castiglione”

This is a blend of fruit from several vineyards owned by Vietti in various communes of the Barolo production zone. Pale garnet; aromas of currant, orange peel and tar. Medium-full with very good concentration. Medium-weight tannins, very good acidity. Quite stylish, this is one of the best examples of this wine produced to date. Peak in 12-15 years. ****

Paolo Scavino “Carobric”

This is a blend of three different vineyards: Cannubi, Rocche di Castiglione and Bric del Fiasc. Bright young garnet; aromas of cedar, dried cherry, currant and iris. Medium-full, this has very good acidity, notable persistence and is well balanced. Peak in 15-20 years. ***

Prunotto

Deep garnet/slight edge; aromas of orange peel, cedar, hint of tar. Lovely balance, round tannins, very good acidity. Long finish, a delight to taste. Beautiful elegant wine, nice Nebbiolo purity. 20 years plus. ****

Deltetto “Sistaglia”

Deep young garnet; aromas of currant, ripe red cherry and tar. Very good to excellent concentration, good acidity; very good to excellent persistence. Nicely balanced- give time. 20 yrs plus. ****

Clavesana “Olo”

Young deep garnet; aromas of ripe red cherry, red plum, currant; perfumed – red and orange roses. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Beautiful ripeness, round tannins, very good acidity, lovely balance. Nice structured. 20-25 yrs – longer? ****

Cascina Ballarin “Tre Ciabot”

Delicate garnet; orange peel, dried cherry, hint of balsamic; Medium-full with very good concentration, - juicy fruit, very good acidity, elegant tannins, nice winemaking. Best in 20-25 years. ****

Terre del Barolo “Vinum Vita Est”

Delicate garnet; aromas of balsamic; dried cherry, hint of strawberry,. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Very good acidity, balance is lovely, elegantly styled tannins. 30 yrs plus – lovely finesse. A wonderful wine from this cooperative. ****

Pelassa

Delicate garnet; delicate aromas of orange peel, currant and dried roses. Medium-full, sleek wine with very good acidity. Round tannins, nicely balanced. Elegant wine, with a nice sense of finesse. Peak in 15-20 yrs. ***

2010 Barolo – various communes

Luciano Sandrone “Le Vigne”

Deep garnet/deep color; closed aromas; dried cherry, currant . Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Excellent ripeness, very good acidity, young tannins- a bit tight. Peak in 20-25 years. ***

Mario Garibaldi

Young garnet; aromas of balsamic, dried cherry, orange roses; Medium-full with very good concentration, very good persistence, balanced tannins, good acidity. Nice Nebbiolo character and impressive complexity. More subdued style. 20-25 yrs. ***

Armando Parusso

Pale garnet; aromas of dried currant, cedar, china (tree bark). Medium-full, very good concentration. Young tannins, not overly powerful; good ripeness, good acidity, A bit angular now – best with time; peak in 15-20 years. ***

Armando Piazzo

Pale garnet; dried cherry, orange peel aromas. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Young tannins, slight bitterness, very good to excellent persistence, very good balance- this needs time. Peak in 20-25 years. ***

Commune of Novello

Vietti “Ravera”

Young, deep, bright garnet; aromas of red cherry, menthol and eucalyptus. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Beautiful ripeness, very good acidity, excellent persistence, beautifully balanced tannins and outstanding complexity. A great expression of terroir, this is beautifully made, as it displays a great sense of charm and finesse. Lovely, lovely wine! Peak in 25-30 years. *****

Elvio Cogno “Ravera”

Beautiful young garnet; aromas of orange peel, cedar, dried cherry and truffle. Medium-full with excellent concentration; generous mid-palate. Very good acidity; rich, refined tannins and subtle wood notes, which is typical for this producer. Valter Fissore makes elegant, graceful Barolo, not powerhouse versions, so this is never the biggest Barolo in any given year, but it is one of the most harmonious, displaying great finesse. He says that the Barolos from Ravera are “a little like Pinot Noir.” Peak in 20 years plus. *****

Rattalino “Trentaquattro 34”

The grapes for this wine were sourced from the Bergera cru in Novello. Delicate young garnet; aromas of cherry, currant, red spice and dried rose petals. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Generous mid-palate, quite rich. Very good acidity, long finish. Graceful with perfectly integrated oak, excellent to outstanding persistence. Lovely wine with classic, traditional styling, Best in 30-40 yrs. *****

Commune of Novello (continued)

Le Strette “Bergera Pezzole”

Young garnet; aromas of orange peel, cherry, hint of sage, hint of tar. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Elegant wine with fine tannins, very good acidity; cleanly made with excellent persistence. Lovely wine of grace and class. Beautiful structure. Peak in 25-30 yrs. *****

Franco Conterno “Panerole”

Deep garnet; tight aromas, red cherry, red roses, hint of tar. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Rich mid-palate, excellent persistence, very good acidity, tightly packed tannins –needs time. Peak in 25-30 years. ****

Elvio Cogno “Cascina Nuova”

Delicate garnet; aromas of dried cherry, dried roses and cedar. Medium-full with very good concentration. Lovely complexity, elegant, subdued wine, very good acidity, polished tannins and impressive persistence. Lovely introduction to this producer’s style of Barolo. Best in 10-12 years. ****

Commune of Roddi

Paolo Scavino “Bricco Ambrogio”

Beautiful young garnet; currant, hint of tar, red cherry; medium-full with excellent concentration. Very good ripeness, excellent persistence. Juicy fruit, very good acidity, excellent balance and typicity, with young, but ideally balanced tannins. Lovely wine – nice sense of place. Give time – peak in 30 years. *****

Bruna Grimaldi “Bricco Ambrogio”

Young garnet; cedar, orange peel; dried cherry and thyme aromas; Nicely balanced, very good persistence, youthful tannins. Earthy style with very good acidity, not overly intense or fruit-driven, but nicely balanced with very good persistence. Peak in 20 yrs. ****

Commune of Roddi (continued)

Negretti “Bricco Ambrogio”

Beautiful young garnet; aromas of red cherry, hint of balsamic, talc powder. Medium-full, this is ripe with juicy fruit and very good depth of fruit. Very good Nebbiolo character – young tannins, good acidity. This needs a bit of time. Peak in 15-20 years. ***

Commune of Verduno

Paolo Scavino “Monvigliero”

Lovely young garnet; aromas of wild strawberry, currant and a hint of tar. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Very good acidity, nicely integrated wood notes, rich, sleek tannins, excellent persistence and lovely balance. Peak in 20 years plus. ****

Commune of Verduno (continued)

Pietro Rinaldi “Monvigliero”

Bright young garnet; aromas of dried cherry, currant, cedar and balsamic. Medium-full with very good concentration; sleek wine with very good acidity, fine tannins and impressive Nebbiolo character. Nicely balanced; peak in 20-25 years. ***

Agostino Bosco “Neirane”

Bright young garnet; balsamic, dill, dried cherry and cedar aromas. Medium-full, terroir wine, fine tannins, light spiciness in finish. Very nice complexity, very good persistence and balance. Peak in 15-20 years. ***

Gian Carlo Burlotto

This producer is also known as Cascina Massara, named for the cru in Verduno, where it sources many of its grapes for Barolo; all of the grapes in this wine are from vineyards in Verduno. Beautiful young garnet; aromas of cherry, currant and a hint of sandalwood. Medium-full with very good concentration. Youthful tannins, very good acidity and persistence. Needs time to round out- nicely made but a bit shy. Peak in 20-25 years. ***

Bel Colle

The grapes for this wine are entirely from vineyards in Verduno. Deep garnet; aromas of orange peel, balsamic, sandalwood, dried cherry. Medium-full with very good concentration; good acidity, good ripeness, light brown and red spice in the finish; good persistence. Not a powerhouse, but nicely made. Best in 15-20 years. ***

Fratelli Alessandria “Monvigliero”

Delicate garnet; aromas of sandalwood, cedar, orange peel and dried cherry. Medium-bodied with very good concentration; earthy finish, notes of brown spice in finish, fine tannins, good persistence. Nicely made in a traditional style. Peak in 15-20 years. ***



Vineyards at Verduno (Photo ©Tom Hyland)

Commune of Grinzane Cavour

Scuola Enologica “Castello”

Young garnet; aromas of beechwood, cedar, dried cherry and currant. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Elegant tannins, sleek wine with very good acidity. Lovely typicity, excellent persistence. Not overly ripe- ideal; beautifully made wine. Peak in 25-30 years. ****

Commune of Castiglione Falletto

Vietti “Rocche di Castiglione”

Lovely young garnet; aromas of spiced cherry, currant, wild strawberry and hints of tobacco and balsamic. Full-bodied with outstanding concentration. Layered mid-palate; outstanding persistence, long, long finish. Very good acidity, outstanding complexity and harmony with beautifully integrated wood notes and young, perfectly balanced tannins. A great Rocche, certainly one of the finest ever produced at Vietti, this is an amazing wine! This is one of the top 10 examples of Barolo from the 2010 vintage I have tasted. Peak in 40-50 years (yes, you read that right!). ***** (Note: This wine has previously been labeled as “Rocche”, but new regulations now state that the wine must be labeled as “Rocche di Castiglione”; this is to differentiate it from “Rocche dell’Annunziata” from La Morra.)

Massolino “Parussi”

Massolino is one of the great Barolo producers and for years, they made Barolos only from fruit sourced from Serralunga. Starting with the 2007, vintage, the family added this cru from Castiglione Falletto; it has quickly become one of their finest wines. Bright young garnet; aromas of red roses, red cherry, orange roses with hints of cigar and balsamic. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Generous mid-palate, big explosion of fruit. Long, long finish with very good acidity, refined tannins and excellent persistence along with a note of minerality. Lovely expression of terroir (especially with the balsamic note found so often in young Barolo from Castiglione Falletto) and outstanding harmony! Peak in 30-45 years. One of the top ten examples of 2010 Barolo that I have tasted. *****

Paolo Scavino “Bric del Fiasc”

Lovely young garnet; lovely aromas of red cherry and strawberry and a hint of anise. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Very good acidity, rich young tannins that are beautifully balanced. Subtle notes of brown spice and balsamic in the finish. Lovely complexity and very site-driven. Beautiful Barolo with a classic sensibility. Peak in 20-25 years. *****

Monchiero “Rocche di Castiglione”

Bright young garnet; lovely aromas of orange peel; currant, red roses; medium-full with excellent concentration, rich mid-palate. Excellent persistence, very good acidity, fine tannins. Terroir driven, lovely balance, give time for fruit to emerge and tannins to subside, but it is all there. Peak in 25 years plus. ****

Commune of Castiglione Falletto (continued)

Oddero “Rocche di Castiglione”

Bright young garnet; aromas of red cherry, currant, hint of sweet brown spice. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Rich mid-palate, rich, but balanced tannins, very good acidity, terroir-driven. Beautifully made wine. Peak in 25 years. ****

Ceretto “Bricco Rocche”

Lovely young garnet; aromas of currant, red cherry, hint of wild strawberry. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Good acidity, assertive tannins, excellent persistence. Earthy finish, give time to round out. Peak in 20 years plus. ****

Tenuta Montanello “Montanello”

Beautiful young garnet; aromas of orange peel, dried cherry, dried rose petals. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Excellent persistence, very good acidity, nicely balanced. Young, needs time to shed tannins. 20 yrs plus to peak. ****

Roccheviberti “Rocche di Castiglione”

Delicate young garnet; aromas of dried orange peel, dried cherry, thyme and balsamic. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Good acidity, rich, young tannins, needs time to shed youthful edge. Peak in 20 years plus. ****

Cavalier Bartolomeo “Garbaletto Superiore”

Bright young garnet; aromas of dried cherry, hint of mint, currant and dried roses. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Excellent persistence, very good acidity, give time to settle down its youthful tannins. Peak in 20 years plus. ****

Cavalotto “Bricco Boschis”

Bright young garnet; aromas of coffee and sage, as the fruit is hidden. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Astringent finish; assertive tannins. Good acidity, needs a lot of time. Peak in 15-20 yrs. A bit disappointing, given this producer's track record, but time should round out the traditional wine nicely. ***

Anna Maria Abbona

This excellent Dogliani producer also crafts a nice Barolo from Castiglione Falletto. Bright young garnet, red cherry, currant and a hint of anise seed in the aromas. Medium-full, a bit closed now; good acidity, rich tannins, well integrated wood. Peak in 15-20 years. ***

Sobrero “Ciabot Tanasio”

Delicate young garnet; aromas of coffee, dried brown spice, dried cherry, hint of tobacco; medium-full with very good concentration. Earthy finish with notes of tobacco, good acidity, youthful tannins, a bit ragged. Give time- peak in 12-15 years. ***

Boroli

Sourced from vineyards near the winery in Castiglione Falletto. Delicate young garnet; aromas of cedar, balsamic and dried orange peel. Medium-full, this is an earthy wine and a bit difficult at present to find the fruit. Good acidity, balanced tannins. Give a bit of time to round out, but this is not an impressive wine. **

Commune of Monforte d'Alba

Elio Grasso “Gavarini Chiniera”

Beautiful deep young garnet; lovely floral aromas with notes of red poppies, red cherry, wild strawberry and a hint of cedar and allspice. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Rich mid-palate, big young tannins, very good acidity and excellent persistence. Outstanding complexity. This is always an excellent to outstanding wine, but the 2010 is as rich and as complete as I can remember in years. Peak in 25 years plus. One of my top 10 wines from the 2010 Barolo vintage. ****

Elio Grasso “Casa Maté”

Bright, young deep garnet; aromas of cedar, red cherry, orange peel and menthol with a hint of eucalyptus. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Very good acidity, rich young tannins - quite fine. Great complexity and beautiful finesse. Peak in 20-25 years. ****

Rocche dei Manzoni di Valentino “Perno Vigna Cappella di S. Stefano”

Beautiful young garnet; aromas of orange peel, cedar, red cherry. Medium-full, very good to excellent concentration. Lovely balance and Nebbiolo purity; very good acidity, lovely balance; oak is subdued. Best in 20 years plus- graceful wine! ****

Poderi Ruggeri Corsini “Corsini Bussia”

Bright young garnet; aromas of orange roses, currant and hint of balsamic. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Young tannins, very good acidity. Excellent persistence, slight bite in the finish. Relatively graceful wine with good fruit character. Peak in 20 years plus. ****

Pecchenino “Le Coste”

Delicate young garnet; balsamic, hint of dill and red cherry aromas. Medium-full with very good concentration. Good acidity, wood nicely integrated, balanced tannins, overall, lovely harmony. Nice traditional winemaking. This producer is best known for his examples of Dogliani, but this Barolo is also a beautifully made wine. Peak in 15-20 years. ****

Seghesio Fratelli “La Villa”

Deep young garnet; aromas of red cherry, orange peel, currant, cedar. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Excellent persistence, lovely ripeness, very good acidity and balance. Nicely made. Peak in 20 years plus. ****

Cascina Amalia

Grapes sourced from various sites in Monforte. Bright young garnet; aromas of cedar, orange peel, dried cherry. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Excellent persistence and balance – wood well integrated. Lovely balance. Best in 25 years plus. ****

Poderi Colla “Bussia Dardi Le Rose”

Bright young garnet; aromas of currant, hint of thyme, hint of orange peel. Medium-full with very good concentration. Earthy finish; youthful tannins, but balanced. Good acidity, a bit ragged, but this should round out nicely. Best in 20 years plus. ***

Commune of Monforte d'Alba (continued)

La Fusina

Grapes sourced from various sites in Monforte. Beautiful young garnet; hint of truffle, dried cherry and thyme notes in the aromas; Medium-full, very good acidity, bright fruit, very good ripeness, young, balanced tannins. Well made. Peak in 20 yrs plus. ***

Gianmatteo Ranieri

From Monforte grapes – primarily from the Perno vineyard. Deep young garnet; aromas of ripe red cherry, ripe strawberry, some wood (new?). Medium-full with excellent concentration. Ripe fruit, ample oak, modern style. Astringent tannins. Big wine, a bit unyieldy. Give plenty of time. Peak in 20-25 years. ***

Giovanni Manzone “Castelletto”

Bright young garnet; aromas of caraway, orange peel, currant and cedar aromas. Medium-full with very good concentration. Earthy, light bitter finish, youthful tannins, good acidity. Peak in 15-20 years. ***

Tenuta Arnulfo “Bussia”

Beautiful young garnet; aromas of morel cherry; cedar, hint of currant. Medium-full with vg to excellent concentration. Very good to excellent persistence, good acidity, light earthiness in finish. Peak in 20 yrs. ***

Franco Ceste

Bright garnet; aromas of balsamic, orange peel and dried red roses. Medium-full, ripe fruit, ample oak – definitely a modern style. Good acidity, youthful tannins, excellent persistence. Nice local character. Peak in 20 years plus. ***

Simone Scaletta “Chirlet”

Beautiful young garnet; aromas of coffee, thyme, balsamic. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Earthy, herbal finish, lacks some fruit persistence. A bit ragged now, so give time to round out. Peak in 15-20 years. ***

Commune of Serralunga d'Alba

Massolino “Parafada”

Lovely young pale garnet; aromas of dried cherry, spiced red cherry, red roses and currant. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Lovely mid-palate, excellent persistence, long, long finish. Beautifully structured with perfectly balanced tannins and very good acidity. Typical class from this producer. Peak in 30 years plus. *****

Vietti “Lazzarito”

Deep garnet; aromas of red cherry, currant, tar and caraway. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Very good acidity, rich, firm, nicely balanced tannins. Long finish with notes of tobacco and pepper. Excellent persistence. Outstanding complexity- this is always one of the finest Barolos from Vietti each year. A complete wine and one that expresses its origins extremely well. Peak in 25-30 years. *****

Commune of Serralunga d'Alba (continued)

Guido Porro “Lazzairasco”

The lower section of Lazzarito is farmed by Guido Porro, who labels this wine as Lazzairasco. Beautiful young garnet; currant, red cherry and sandalwood aromas. Big finish-excellent persistence, nice structure. Rich, balanced tannins. Powerful wine, beautifully balanced. Richer than most vintages of this wine, but this Porro offering is always an elegant, graceful wine. Peak in 25 years plus. ****

Massolino “Margheria”

Beautiful pale garnet; lovely aromas – red roses, red poppies, red cherry and a subtle hint of oregano. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Rich tannins, perhaps a touch astringent now, but these will surely round out. Very good acidity, excellent structure and harmony. Peak in 20 years plus. ****

Alessandro Rivetto “Commune di Serralunga”

Delicate young garnet; aromas of orange peel, dried cherry, rose petals. Medium-full, very good concentration and persistence. Nice balance, excellent persistence, give time to round out. Peak in 15-20 years. ****

Cascina Cucco “Cerrati Vigna Cucco”

Delicate young garnet; aromas of red cherry, orange pekoe tea and a hint of tar. Medium-full with very good concentration. Elegant tannins, very good acidity and very good persistence. This is a very dependable and underrated Serralunga producer. Peak in 20-25 years. ****



**Looking toward the snow-covered Alps from the Lazzarito vineyard,
Serralunga d'Alba
(Photo ©Tom Hyland)**

Commune of Serralunga d'Alba (continued)

Fontanafredda "Serralunga d'Alba"

Light young garnet; aromas of currant, cedar and orange peel. Medium-full with very good concentration. Lovely balance, good acidity, very good persistence; medium-weight tannins that are nicely balanced. Elegant wine and a nice sense of terroir. Peak in 12-15 years. ****

Luigi Pira "Margheria"

Beautiful young garnet; aromas of orange peel, a hint of cinnamon and dried cherry. Tart acidity, powerful wine with excellent persistence, good acidity. Tannins are nicely balanced. Give time to round out; peak in 15-20 years. ***

Rivetto dal 1902 "Commune di Serralunga"

Beautiful young garnet; aromas of currant, red cherry, coffee; very good concentration; good acidity, very good persistence. Light tannic bite, but this should round out nicely. Peak in 20 years plus. ***

Ettore Germano "Commune di Serralunga"

Beautiful young garnet; aromas of cedar, dried currant and roses. Medium-full with very good concentration. Nicely balanced tannins, good acidity and very good persistence. A bit tough now, give time. Peak in 12-15 years. ***

Le Cecche "Sorano"

Bright young garnet; aromas of dried roses, orange peel, currant and cedar. Medium-full with very good concentration. Very good acidity, rich, firm, young tannins and very good persistence. A bit astringent now, so give time. Peak in 15-20 years. ***

Franco Boasso "Gabutti"

Delicate garnet; aromas of ripe red cherry and wood notes. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Ample oak, tart acidity, slightly astringent tannins, drying sensation in finish. Give time – peak in 20 years. ***

Fontanafredda "La Rosa"

Deep young garnet; aromas of ripe red cherry, tar, orange roses and a hint of oregano. Medium-full with very good concentration. Very good acidity, rich, firm tannins, very good persistence. A bit astringent now, so give time to round out. Peak in 15-20 years. ***

Cascina Luisin "Leon di commune di Serralunga"

Bright garnet; aromas of dried cherry, orange peel and a hint of balsamic. Medium-full, this has young, balanced tannins, very good acidity and a light earthiness; good persistence. Peak in 15-20 years. ***

Gigi Rosso "Arione"

Delicate garnet; aromas of morel cherry and light earthy notes. Medium-full, this has good ripeness, tart acidity and good persistence. It is a bit angular now, so give time to round out. Peak in 12-15 years. **

Commune of Barolo

Francesco Rinaldi “Cannubi”

Bright young garnet; gorgeous aromas of red cherry, currant, orange peel, hint of orange roses. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Lovely, lovely balance and finesse. Lengthy finish with graceful tannins, excellent persistence, very good acidity. Subdued wood notes – perfectly integrated. Classic styling. 30-35 yrs. I have always loved this producer's traditional Barolos; this is the finest examples of Cannubi – formerly labeled as “Cannubio” – in years. One of my top 10 Barolos from 2010! *****

460 Casina Bric “Bricco delle Viole”

This Barolo is a project of Gianluca Viberti, the winemaker for his family's estate in Vergne (see below the review on his “Buon Padre” Barolo). Delicate young garnet; aromas of red cherry, currant; cedar, and a hint of talc powder. Medium full to excellent concentration. Generous mid-palate, lovely balance throughout. Elegant tannins, very good acidity, excellent persistence, beautiful Nebbiolo character. Styled for elegance, but will hold. Peak in 30 plus years. *****

Mario Marengo “Bricco delle Viole”

Delicate young garnet; perfumed aromas, red cherry, orange roses and cedar. Medium full with very good to excellent concentration. Rich mid-palate, excellent ripeness, round tannins, wood beautifully integrated. Lovely wine, classic styling. Nice harmony. Peak in 25 years plus. *****

Sylla Sebaste “Bussia”

Although Bussia is known as a cru in Monforte, a small section of this vineyard is located in the commune of Barolo. Young garnet; aromas of orange peel, cedar and dried cherry; Medium-full with a generous mid-palate, long, long finish- graceful wine with very good acidity, lovely balance, perfectly integrated wood. Classic Barolo – beautiful Nebbiolo purity. Peak in 30 yrs plus. *****

Cantina del Nebbiolo “Cannubi Boschis”

Cannubi Boschis is part of the same long hill of Cannubi and is situated just north of Cannubi proper. Lovely young garnet; aromas of cedar, balsamic, red cherry, currant and dried rose petals. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Generous mid-palate, lovely entry on palate. Graceful tannins, very good acidity, excellent to outstanding persistence. Beautiful Nebbiolo purity and classic Barolo styling. Peak in 30-40 yrs. *****

Virna Borgogno “Cannubi Boschis”

Deep young garnet; orange pekoe tea; dried cherry and currant. Cedar and hint of anise seed. Medium-full with very good concentration. Rich, generous mid-palate. Graceful finish of excellent length, excellent persistence. Lovely, elegant wine; peak in 25-35 years. *****

Paolo Scavino “Cannubi”

Delicate young garnet; aromas of cherry, wild strawberry, tar and purple iris. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Silky tannins, very good acidity, nicely integrated wood notes, excellent persistence. Lovely Nebbiolo purity and delicate extraction. Long, long finish. Peak in 20 years plus. ****

Commune of Barolo (continued)

Giuseppe Rinaldi “Tre Tine”

Lovely young garnet, lovely aromas of currant, orange roses, cedar and dried cherry. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Very good acidity, refined tannins. Lovely classic styling, beautiful balance, excellent concentration. Peak in 25-30 years. ****

Giovanni Viberti “Buon Padre”

This is blended from several vineyards in the commune of Barolo. Lovely young garnet; balsamic, dried cherry and sage aromas. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Rich mid-palate. Excellent persistence, very good acidity, beautifully balanced tannins. Impressive complexity and varietal character. Very harmonious. One of the finest releases ever of this wine. Peak in 25 years plus. ****

G.D. Vajra “Albe”

Lovely young garnet; dried cherry, cedar, hint of tobacco and thyme. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Big tannic finish, excellent persistence, good acidity, bright, juicy fruit. Give plenty of time, as this is a bit astringent now. Peak in 20-25 years. ****

Fratelli Serio e Battista Borgogno “Cannubi”

Lovely young garnet; aromas of ripe red cherry, orange peel and wood notes. Medium-full with very good concentration. Modern wine with ripe fruit and noticeable new oak notes. Nicely balanced throughout with fine tannins and very good acidity. Beautiful classic styling. Best in 20-25 years. ****



Early morning view of the town of Barolo and surrounding landscape
(Photo ©Tom Hyland)

Commune of Barolo (continued)

Barale Fratelli “Castellero”

Lovely young garnet; aromas of orange roses, red cherry, wood notes and a hint of tar. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Excellent persistence, notable wood notes, very good acidity and impressive harmony throughout. Peak in 25-30 years. ****

Terre da Vino “Essenze”

Beautiful young garnet; aromas of red cherry, cedar, thyme and dried rose aromas. Medium-full with very good concentration. Ripe fruit, balanced tannins, excellent persistence. Very nice complexity. A bit modern, but not too much. Best in 20-25 yrs. ****

Bric Cenciurio

Produced from vineyards solely in the commune of Barolo, this is a blend of the three Nebbiolo clones: Michet, Lampia and Rosé (this last one not used by many producers these days). Lovely young garnet; lovely aromas of dried orange peel, caraway and red cherry. Medium-full with very good concentration. Nice harmony throughout. Good balancing tannins and acidity, with subdued wood notes. Graceful wine. Peak in 20 years plus. ****

Cascina Adelaide “Cannubi”

Delicate young garnet; aromas of red cherry, orange pekoe tea, and tar. Medium-full with very good concentration. Excellent persistence, wood is nicely integrated. Balanced tannins, very good acidity. Bit modern, slightly bitter now; give time. Peak in 20 years. ***

Cascina Brutiana “Cannubi Muscatel”

Cannubi Muscatel is the southernmost strip of the Cannubi hill. Deep young garnet; aromas of vanilla, ripe red cherry and orange roses. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Ripe, modern style with ample oak. Very good acidity, excellent persistence, balanced tannins. Best in 25 years plus. ***

Giacomo Grimaldi “Le Coste”

Deep young garnet; aromas of ripe red cherry, tar, vanilla, hint of coffee. Medium-full with very good concentration. Slightly modern style with ripe fruit; slightly bitter finish. Very good acidity and persistence. Nice wine, but the finish is a bit short. Peak in 20 years. ***

Giacomo Brezza “Sarmassa”

Delicate young garnet; dried cherry, orange peel, hint of tar, chervil. Medium-full with very good concentration. Good ripeness, balanced, graceful tannins, very good acidity, a bit tart. Nice wine, but lacks overall complexity. Peak in 15-20 years. ***

Marchesi di Barolo “Sarmassa”

Deep young garnet; aromas of red cherry, strawberry and orange peel. Medium-full, this is ripe and slightly modern with very good persistence and acidity along with balancing tannins. Structured for 20 years or so of cellaring potential. ***

Commune of La Morra

Renato Ratti “Rocche dell’Annunziata”

Bright deep garnet; aromas of red cherry, violets and red poppies. Full-bodied with excellent concentration. Rich mid-palate with layers of fruit. Very good acidity, elegant tannins, outstanding persistence. Long, long finish. Outstanding Nebbiolo purity. This is a layered Barolo, one from arguably one of the four or five finest cru in the Barolo production zone. Pietro Ratti calls this “the most Burgundian Barolo we have.” Outstanding wine – peak in 45-50 years. One of my top 10 Barolos from the 2010 vintage. *****

Renato Ratti “Conca”

This small cru is located just below the winery (Rocche dell’Annunziata is above and behind the winery) and regularly results in a more powerful wine than Rocche, often with a wild side to it, sort of like a wild animal, but one under control! Lovely bright garnet; aromas of red cherry, coriander, nutmeg and a hint of tar. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Strong, but elegant tannins, very good acidity, lovely structure, excellent persistence and complexity. I would rate the Rocche dell’Annunziata a touch higher than the Conca, but this too is an outstanding wine! Built for the long haul – peak in 35-40 years. *****



View from Renato Ratti winery, Annunziata sub-zone, La Morra

(Photo ©Tom Hyland)

Commune of La Morra (continued)

Cascina del Monastero “Bricco Luciani”

Lovely young garnet; balsamic, dried cherry, and thyme aromas. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Rich mid-palate. Excellent to outstanding persistence. Lovely harmony throughout. Graceful tannins and styling; slightly modern, but very well made and appealing. Peak in 35-40 years. *****

Michele Chiarlo “Cerequio”

Lovely young garnet; balsamic, cedar, dried cherry, rose petals. Medium-full, tightly compacted with excellent structure. Beautifully balanced tannins, very good acidity, classic Cerequio that demands time. This is always the best Barolo for Chiarlo. Meant for the long haul; peak in 35-40 yrs. *****

Marcarini “Brunate”

Lovely young garnet; aromas of balsamic, orange peel, dried cherry and cedar. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Lovely balance and tannins, very good acidity, subtle wood notes. Earthy style, subdued fruit; will develop beautifully with time. Typical Marcarini style, one that is traditional and classic and displays a beautiful sense of place. Peak in 30-35 years. *****

Ceretto “Brunate”

Beautiful pale garnet; currant, dried cherry, orange peel. Medium-full with excellent concentration. Beautiful acidity, balanced tannins and subdued wood notes. Lovely wine, classic styling with excellent persistence. Mean for the long haul – peak in 35-40 years. *****

Stroppiana “San Giacomo”

Lovely young garnet; aromas of dried cherry, cedar, currant and dried rose petals. Lovely wine with beautiful, precise acidity. Lovely complexity and sense of place; youthful, balanced tannins and excellent persistence with subdued wood notes. Classic styling - grace and elegance. An underrated producer that has been on the rise the past four or five years. Peak in 25-35 yrs. *****

Francesco Rinaldi Brunate

Delicate garnet; orange rose, dried cherry, currant and dried strawberry aromas, Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Stylish graceful tanins, very good acidity, excellent persistence. Classic, traditional winemaking, in which terroir shines through - a hallmark of this great producer. Peak in 25-35 yrs. ****

Vietti Brunate

Lovely deep garnet; aromas of cedar, dried orange roses, dried cherry and currant with a hint of thyme. Medium-full with very good concentration. Very good acidity, excellent persistence. Very young- how this will improve with time! Very terroir-driven, as is usual for this wine. Peak in 25 years plus. ****

Commune of La Morra (continued)

Oddero Brunate

Lovely young garnet; aromas of orange peel, dried currant, cedar and tea leaves. Medium-full, classic old style – earthy finish with very good acidity, excellent persistence and grace. Lovely terroir-driven wine; this will most assuredly reveal more of its best qualities with time. Peak in 30-35 yrs. ****

Rocche Costamagna “Rocche dell’Annunziata”

Lovely young garnet; cedar, balsamic, orange peel and dried cherry aromas. Medium-full with very good concentration. Lovely, elegant wine with graceful tannins and very good acidity. Excellent persistence, subtle wood and impressive persistence. Beautiful overall harmony. Peak in 20-25 years. ****

Renato Ratti “Marcenasco”

Bright young garnet; aromas of currant, cedar, hint of tar and dried orange roses. Medium-full with very good to excellent concentration. Excellent persistence, very good acidity and impressive complexity. Nicely integrated wood, light spice notes in the finish, very good acidity. Very nicely made and a nice introduction to the La Morra style. Year in and year out, this is a solid Barolo. Peak in 25 years. ****

Cordero di Montezemolo “Monfalletto”

Bright young garnet; aromas of orange peel, cedar, currant, dried rose petals. Medium-full with very good concentration. Stylish wine with very good acidity, excellent persistence and graceful tannins. This has been a solid wine from this producer for a long time and usually one of the best value Barolos. Peak in 20 years. ****

Tenuta L’Illuminata “Tebavio”

Bright young garnet; aromas of cedar, dried cherry and orange roses. Medium-full with very good concentration. Excellent persistence, subdued wood, very nice complexity. More subtle style, a bit shy, but all components are there. Peak in 25 years. ****

Batasiolo “Brunate”

Delicate young garnet; cedar, dried cherry and tar aromas. Medium-full with very good concentration; very good acidity. Finish a bit short, but a little bit of time will help bring out greater complexities. Nicely styled. Peak in 20-25 years. ***

Pertinace

This cooperative producer is best known for its stylish examples of Barbaresco, but they also produce a very fine Barolo. Light young garnet; coffee, balsamic and tar aromas. Medium-full with very good concentration. Nicely balanced with very good acidity and refined tannins; traditionally styled. A bit shy- give time. Peak in 15-20 years. ***

Mauro Veglio “Rocche dell’Annunziata”

Bright young garnet; aromas of currant, thyme and red roses. Young tannins, slightly modern style with ample oak; good acidity, balanced tannins. Very good to excellent persistence. Peak in 20-25 yrs. ***

Commune of La Morra (continued)

Giuseppe Ellena

Deep young garnet; aromas of ripe red cherry, cherry preserves and wood notes. Modern style with ripe fruit; very good to excellent concentration. Ample oak, balanced tannins, good acidity. Peak in 20 yrs. ***

Trediberri

Lovely young garnet. Aromas of Oriental spice (soy); burnt cherry, hint of tar and coffee. Medium-full with very good concentration. Very good to excellent persistence. Balancing tanins, good acidity. Needs time to round out and show more. Peak in 20 years. ***

Agricola Dosio

Beautiful young garnet; aromas of red cherry, currant and wood notes; Medium-full with very good concentration. Ripe, slightly modern, very good acidity and persistence. Modern style with forward fruit. Give time – peak in 20 years. ***

Serradenari

Lovely young garnet; cedar, dried cherry, orange pekoe tea, hint of balsamic in the aromas. Medium-full; this has a slight herbal streak, with good acidity and persistence, but it comes up short on complexity. Peak in 15-20 years. **



La Morra landscape, looking towards Barolo and Monforte d'Alba
(Photo ©Tom Hyland)

