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BARBARESCO RECOMMENDED WINES



Terre da Vino - cellars in Barolo

www.terredavino.it

UK: Vinum Ltd, Twickenham. T: 020 8891 6010

Vinitaly: Hall 7 Stand E6



Cantina del Nebbiolo sca

www.cantinadelnebbiolo.com

E: info@cantinadelnebbiolo.com

Vinitaly: Hall 9 Stand H2



Az Agr Grasso Fratelli

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Wines produced: Barolo, Barbaresco, Barbera d'Alba



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Vinitaly: Hall 9 Stand G2



Az Agr Albino Rocca

www.albinorocca.com

UK: Theatre of Wine, London SE1 09T

Vinitaly: Hall 9 Piedmont B2/C2 Marc de Grazia Selections

Barbaresco 2008 and riserva 2006

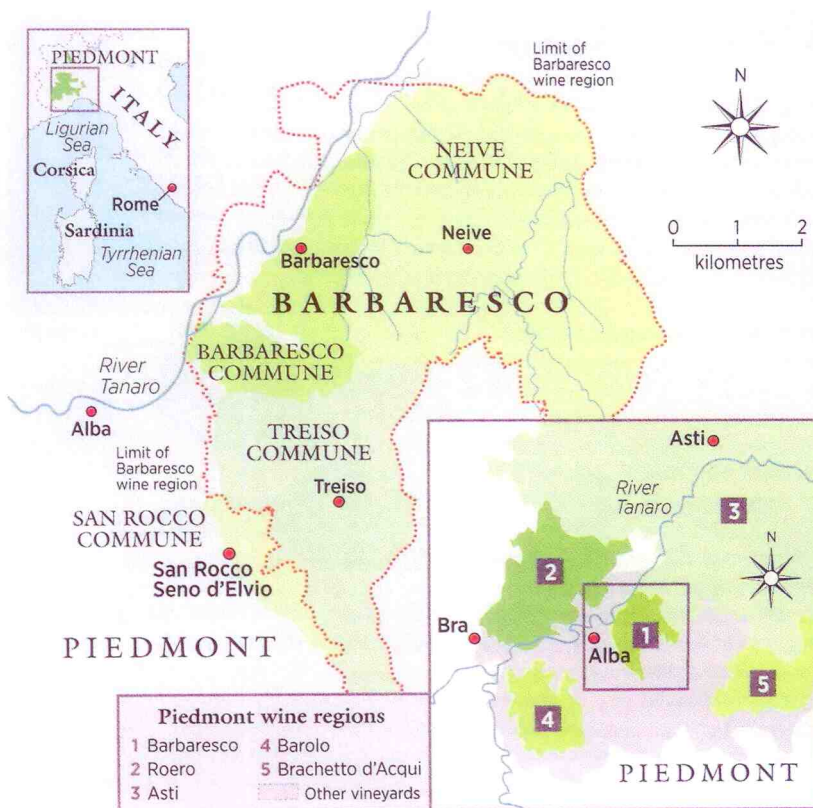
More than an understudy to Barolo, these powerful, elegant wines are stars in their own right, says Kerin O'Keefe – especially now that vineyard areas better highlight terroir

BARBARESCO, LONG SEEN as Barolo's junior partner, has popped out of the long shadow cast by its far larger, more famous neighbour by turning out structured wines that combine finesse and power. Like Barolo, Barbaresco is made with 100% Nebbiolo and can be produced in two versions – normale and riserva. While the normale must age for at least two years before release, riserva must age for four, and even though both versions are obliged to spend a minimum of nine months in wood, most producers release their normales and riservas for considerably longer, often 18 and 30 months respectively. While a number of Barbaresco producers continue to age their wines in barriques (which, when new, can mingle Nebbiolo's subtle nuances with invasive oak and impart bitter wood tannins to wines that are already naturally tannic), the latest vintages demonstrate more restraint across the board (although at the 2008 vintage put in Alba last May many tasters commented on the number of heavily oaked wines from Neive). Many Barbaresco producers now use seasoned barriques, while others have switched over entirely to the traditional Slavonian casks, or *botti*, with an increasing number of estates preferring a combination of the two barrels. Taking into account individual winemaking styles, a quintessential Barbaresco should boast Nebbiolo's hallmark floral, wild berry, mineral and earthy sensations, with a full-bodied elegant structure. Riservas, on the other hand, should demonstrate more depth, complexity and ageworthy structure, lasting well for 20 years or more in outstanding vintages.

Vintage variation

Barbaresco's growing zone, on the opposite side of the city of Alba from Barolo, spans the villages of Barbaresco, Neive and Treiso, and a sliver of Alba's hamlet of San Rocco Seno d'Elvio. Generally speaking, the wine's namesake age yields structured but graceful wines, Neive the most tannic and powerful, and Treiso the most elegant. Barbaresco producers appreciate the crucial role individual vineyards play in great Nebbiolo and, after years of careful evaluation, have officially delimited all their vineyard areas. Starting with the 2007 vintage, producers can only add one of 65 authorised geographic mentions to their labels. The 2008 Barbarescos aptly demonstrate the region's status as a maker of world-class wines. Although much of 2008 was marred by cool, damp conditions, late-ripening Nebbiolo benefited from warm, dry weather between late-August and early October. Most of the 2008s are sleek, if not overly complex, with higher acidity levels than preceding three vintages, balanced by succulent fruit. It will benefit from a few more years in bottle. The 2006 riservas are from a lauded vintage that, at the outset, promised classic wines of impressive complexity and longevity. While some have lived up to expectations, there have been reports of others being unbalanced and more evolved than anticipated. A mixed bag if you will, so if you have any in the cellar, best to start tasting a bottle early now and again to judge cellaring time.

In O'Keefe is a wine writer and the author of Brunello di Montalcino (2012, University of California Press)



Barbaresco: The facts

Grape 100% Nebbiolo
Under vine 685ha
Villages Barbaresco, Neive, Treiso and a bit of Alba
Ageing For normale wines: 26 months before release, including at least nine months in wood; For riservas, 50 months before release, including at least nine months in wood
Annual production 4.24m bottles

Barbaresco: know your vintages

2010 Uneven weather prolonged the growing season, but in the end yielded good quality fruit. Not as rich and ripe as previous vintages. Promise classic wines that will need time.
2009 Very hot, dry summer yielded grapes with high sugar. Look to be structured, tannic wines high in alcohol, but may not have enough acidity for long cellaring.
2008 Cold, wet spring then a warm, dry ripening season. Classic vintage with good fruit, firm structure and lovely aromas that need time to develop. Drink: 2013–2025.

2007 Round, ripe and warm with succulent fruit, although less than ideal acidity for lengthy ageing. Drink: 2012–2017.
2006 Tight, tannic and complex. The best wines come from top producers with well-known vineyards. Drink: 2013–2026.
2005 Elegant and approachable, but rain and cool temperatures compromised ageworthy structure and complexity. Drink: 2012–2015.
2004 Superb, classic vintage of structure and approachability. Drink: 2012–2024.



Highly recommended (continued) 16.5–18.49pts



Albino Rocca, Brich Ronchi, Riserva 2006 17.25

£35 L'Assemblage, Theatre of Wine

Lush, heady aromas of tar, spice, flowers, toffee, smoky oak and burnt caramel. Rich, suave and very concentrated with huge but ripe tannins. Old fashioned but magnificent and ethereal.

Drink: From 2015. Alc: 14.5%



Castello di Neive, Santo Stefano, Riserva 2006 17.25

£50.10 Fortyfive 10

Tar, dried fruit, crushed red berry, rosehip, cherry liqueur, sweet vanilla, wood spice and fresh orange peel on the nose. Grippy, with a vivid perfume, it is very classy with super terroir and style about it. Drink: 2013–2022. Alc: 14.5%



Pasquale Pelissero, Bricco San Giuliano 2008 17.19

N/A UK www.pasqualepelissero.com

Intensely fruity aromas of vanilla, raspberry, blackberry, dried red cherry and coffee. Fir tannins and good acidity provide a powerful structure, showing off lovely fruit definition some gamey notes. Good classic style with warmth and class. Drink: 2013–2020. Alc: 14.5%



Marchesi di Barolo, Riserva 2006 17.17

£24.50 Try Wines

Ethereal and sweet aromas of boiled plum, flowers, tar, smoke, cherry, undergrowth and mushrooms. Needs food as it has hefty, ripe tannins and a good weight of fruit. Assertive and youthful with integrated oak. Old fashioned but imposing. Drink: From 2014. Alc: 13.5%



Sottimano, Pajoré 2008 17.17

£41.50 Lea & Sandeman

Sweet ripe cherry, cranberry, herb and berry notes on the nose. Powerful and tannic with a great body and a lot of liquorice and red cherry fruit. Good acidity with tannins that need time to soften. Balanced and long. Drink: From 2014. Alc: 14.5%



Marchesi di Barolo, 2008 17.13

£19.85 Try Wines

Warm, red fruit, good oak, oregano and thyme bouquet. The palate shows a sumptuous, dense cherry fruit core with layers of tannin and good sharp acidity. Very good structure and use of oak. Fine vineyard character. Drink: 2012–2020. Alc: 14%



Bruno Rocca, Coparossa 2008 17.06

£60 Fine & Rare, Liberty Wines, WoodWinters

Aromas of brooding fruit overlaid by oak, black pepper, smoke, mint and cloves. Rich and structured with good appeal. Oaky notes dominate but it has the stuffing for mid-term ageing. Very easy to drink. Needs time.

Drink: 2012–2018. Alc: 14%



Bruno Rocca, Rabajà, 2008 17

£60–£80 Fine & Rare, Liberty Wines, Swig

Sweet fleshy aromas of red apple, spice, complex oak, rose, tar, herb and liquorice. A hugely energetic wine with lots of power coiled up inside. Precise, elegant and very, very good. It has super-chewy, gripping tannins and a long, red fruit finish. Drink: 2012–2018. Alc: 14.5%



Ceste, 2008 17

POA Philglass & Swiggot

Flowers, dried red cherry, vanilla, blackberry and strawberry aromas. Fantastic, lively, clear fruit with grippy, fine-grained tannic frame. Very good and easy-going with a long length. Fun to drink. Drink: 2012–2017. Alc: 14%



Giovanni Negro, Cascinotta 2008 17

£26 Enotria

Sweet, stylish aroma of raspberry, elegant oak, vanilla and plum. Modern style which is rich, suave, juicy and concentrated with luminous, fine-grained tannins. Spicy and perky, it has some complexity. Sweet, tannic and young.

Drink: From 2013. Alc: 14.5%



Produttori del Barbaresco 2008 17

£23.65–£29 Astrum, WoodWinters

Intense violet, dried cherry, medicinal notes and herb liqueur on the nose. Good balance of fruit and tannins with much more flavour and character than expected. Dried red fruit, flowers and spice notes all intertwine in the mouth.

Good, classic wine. Drink: 2012–2017. Alc: 14.5%



Sottimano, Cottá 2008 17

£41.50 Lea & Sandeman

Very ripe nose of raspberry, dried cranberry, herb, tar, roses and violets. Robust and almost earthy on the palate. Tannins are quite highly integrated and fine-grained. A bit austere but there's freshness and lift too. Drink: From 2012. Alc: 14.5%

Barbaresco 2008 and riserva 2006



Highly recommended (continued) 16.5–18.49pts



Albino Rocca, Ovello Vigna Loreto, 2008 16.88

N/A UK www.roccealbino.com

Dark, brooding black cherry, graphite, tar, minerals, spice and autumnal fruit on the nose. Good ripeness and oak well blended in with sweet and stinky mineral tannins. Plush and full in the mouth. Excellent balance. **Drink:** 2013–2018. **Alc:** 14.5%



Gigi Bianco, Ovello 2008 16.88

N/A UK www.gigibianco.it

Fine, soft nose of red fruit, oak, red apple, wood spice and tar. Vibrant, rich, plush and sweet with good extraction and sweet tannins. A very appealing wine with dense, creamy liquorice fruit and an almost silky texture. Long and balanced. **Drink:** 2012–2019. **Alc:** 15%



La Contea, San Cristoforo, Riserva 2006 16.88

£29 (2005) Laithwaites, Sunday Times Wine Club. Chocolate, red baking apples, waxy incense, spice and red berry fruit bouquet. Robust, warm and rich palate with good zesty, juicy acidity and fine ageing. A very good wine. Complex and powerful. **Drink:** 2013–2020. **Alc:** 15%



Socré 2008 16.88

N/A UK www.socre.it

Aromas of iron, sweet fruit, aniseed and dried red cherry. An interesting palate with drying tannins and typical Nebbiolo fruit character. It has natural sweetness plus some toasty oak. Good now but has a great future. Has finesse. **Drink:** 2012–2017. **Alc:** 14%



Albino Rocca, Duemilaotto 2008

16.83

£28.50 Theatre of Wine

Smoke, tar, cherry, toast and rosemary bouquet. Quite complex palate: structured with sweet yet gripping tannins and acidity on the finish. Rich, juicy and concentrated, with jammy blackberry fruit combining with flowers and herbs. **Drink:** From 2013. **Alc:** 14.5%



Carlo Giacosa, Montefico 2008

16.83

POA William Baber

Delicate cherry, dried cranberry, thyme, berry, plum and floral perfume. Elegant, with a good structure. Beautiful dried cranberry and cherry fruit surrounded by fine grained tannins. Classy. **Drink:** From 2014. **Alc:** 14.5%



Abrigo Orlando, Vigna Rongalio Meruzzano 2008 16.75

N/A UK www.orlandoabrigio.it

Modern aromas of fruit cake, wild roses, caramelised cherry, black plum, leather and vanilla oak spice. It shows good definition and grip thanks to muscular tannins. The fruit is dense and opulent with good complexity. **Drink:** 2012–2019. **Alc:** 14%



Bera 2008 16.75

N/A UK www.bera.it

Balsamic notes, chocolate, black cherry, berry fruit, tobacco, thyme and tar bouquet. Rustic, broad tannins framing sweet mid-palate fruit, with oak softening the acidity. Broad flavoured with good depth. Not typical but well balanced. **Drink:** 2012–2017. **Alc:** N/A



Ca' Rome' di Giuseppe Marengo, Rio Sordo, Riserva 2006 16.75

N/A UK www.carome.com

Cooked dark cherry and red apple fruit, cinnamon spice and melted tarmac bouquet. Exotic and very fine fruit mixes with a suave texture and grippy, crunchy tannins. Great balance. You can see the class of the vineyard behind this. **Drink:** 2014–2021. **Alc:** 14%



Dante Rivetti, Bracco, Riserva 2006 16.67

N/A UK www.danterivetti.com

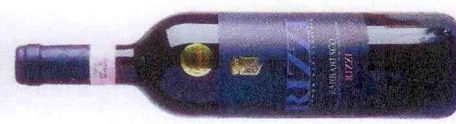
Ripe rose petal, raspberry, tea, raisin, caramel and mushroom aromas. Intense, warm fruit combines with balanced tannins and a long length. It has weight, spice and some complexity. **Drink:** From 2014. **Alc:** 14%



Negro Giuseppe, Pian Cavallo 2008 16.67

N/A UK www.negrogiuseppe.com

Burly red fruit, floral charm, vanilla and coffee bouquet. Rich, juicy, concentrated palate which is solid and powerful. Good tannins and acidic bite support the sweet mint and plum fruit. **Drink:** From 2014. **Alc:** 14.5%



Rizzi 2008 16.67

POA Vinexus

Aromas of spice, leather, tar, dried black cherry, raspberry, rosemary and sage. A classy wine with good integration of oak. Nice drinkability. Mint, orange and black cherry fruit melds with fine-grained tannins and fresh acidity. **Drink:** From 2012. **Alc:** 14%