



Barbaresco vs Barolo (2004 Vintage)

Tuesday, May 12, 2015; 6:00 PM

Faculty Club, Univ. of Toronto, 41 Willcocks Street, Toronto

Members' Fee: \$82; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$110

Barbaresco and Barolo communes are situated in the Piedmont area of Italy about 10 miles apart and both produce wine from 100% Nebbiolo grapes. Yet, despite the proximity of these two wine producing zones that use the same grape, they produce two distinct styles. Many refer to Barolo as 'masculine' and the Wine of the King and Barbaresco as "feminine" and wine of the Queen. Or to draw from the title of a popular book, "Barbaresco is from Mars, Barolo is from Venus".

How is it possible to produce very different styles from the same general area using the same grape? Well, terroir plays a significant role as do the winemakers' techniques. Barbaresco is situated closer to the Ligurian sea of the Mediterranean than Barolo and the maritime influence and warmer temperatures allow the grapes to ripen earlier and have a shorter maceration time. The grapes grown in Barbaresco are less astringent and less tannic and thus Barbaresco wines soften faster with time – hence they are regarded as more "feminine". Their aging requirements are also less than Barolo: 26 months and 50 months for Riserva while Barolos are 38 months, 62 months for Riserva. Barolo wines tend to be very concentrated, bigger bodied, firmer and more structured. Barolo also has a long history linking it to the noble House of Savoy and its court of Turin, which has helped create and reinforce its reputation as the "king" of Italian wines, a link that Barbaresco didn't have. Today however, thanks to the efforts of some very influential winemakers such as Angelo Gaja and Bruno Giacosa, Barbaresco wines are now considered some of the finest in Italy to rival those of Barolo.

The Nebbiolo grape is one of the world's most distinctive, with aromas and flavors utterly its own. "When Barolos are young, typical aromas and flavors include roses, violets, dried flowers, baking spices, anise, dried herbs, tar, new leather, cherries, plums and prunes. With age the wines often gain volume and depth and the flavors turn to more tertiary notes of dried flowers, stewed plums, prunes, pine, menthol, baking spices, tar, and worn in leather." Parker's Wine Buyer's Guide, 7th Ed. p 791. Barbaresco wine has a similar profile but is generally lighter in body because it is barrel- and bottle –aged for less time and more drinkable at a younger age.

Toronto Vintners has 5 Barolos and 3 Barbaresco wines to sample and compare. All are from the 2004 vintage which is rated as "excellent" and "classic" scoring 96/100. Berry Bros. & Rudd (England) wrote, "Arguably the most eagerly awaited Barolo and Barbaresco vintage since the statuesque 1996, the fine-boned, nuanced 2004s possess both power as well as poise; the finest examples show pinpoint aromas of raspberry, sage and licorice, with a compact, finely-structured, suave, savoury and rose scented flavours delighting the palate." The best Barbaescos from 2004 should cellar for 20-25 years and the top Barolos for as long as 35-40 years.

TVC provides a reception wine at the start of the evening followed by a formal sit down, blind tasting with a guest speaker; light appetizers will be served after the wines have been tasted. Dress is business casual; please refrain from wearing scented products.

REGISTER/BUY TICKETS. You must register online and pay by credit card or cheque. **NOTE: ALL ticket sales/reservations are final.** Cheques must be received by Friday, May 8. The cheque-payment option will be disabled at midnight Tuesday, May 5th after which only credit card sales will be accepted until Tuesday May 12th or earlier if the event sells out. You will be sent an email confirmation after completing your registration. If you tried to register but did not receive your confirmation, please contact chris@torontovintners.org before trying to register again.

Tasting Notes and Information – 2004 Barbaresco vs Barolo

2004 Moccagatta Barbaresco Bric Balin (Barbaresco) \$75

The 2004 Barbaresco Bric Balin reveals greater depth than the Basarin. Ripe dark fruit, scorched earth, toasted oak, grilled herbs and spices are all woven into the fabric of this full-bodied, elegant wine which reveals outstanding length and exquisite balance. Anticipated maturity: 2011-2024.

92 pts. Wine Advocate, October 2007

2004 Negretti Bricco Ambrogio Barolo DOCG \$75

“This exhibits fresh cherry and black currant flavors, and there’s a meatiness to its texture. The firm grip of tannins sweeps in on the finish, which echoes fruit, along with eucalyptus and spice notes. Best from 2014 through 2032. Score: 93. Bruce Sanderson, www.winespectator.com Nov. 30, 2011.”

2004 Cavallotto Fratelli Barolo Bricco Boschis (Barolo) \$59

The 2004 Barolo Bricco Boschis tastes just like it did from barrel, which is to say sweet, layered and totally irresistible. The ripe red fruit is incredibly primary, and this wine is years away from offering its finest drinking, but it is already very impressive at this stage. This is an especially refined, elegant vintage for this wine, and I can only say that I await the Riservas with eager anticipation. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2024. *93 pts. Wine Advocate, October 2008*

2004 Vietti Barolo Castiglione (Barolo) \$80

Vietti’s 2004 Barolo Castiglione is superb. This impressively rich, concentrated Barolo is fresh and perfumed, with plenty of sweet fruit supported by awesome structure and power. With air delicate notes of herbs and tobacco emerge, adding further complexity. With this effort, the Castiglione bottling takes an important step in Currado’s plan to make this wine much closer in quality to his single-vineyard offerings. No longer the accessible easy going wine it once was, the 2004 is a big, big wine. The Castiglione is made from a variety of plots, many of which are too small to vinify separately for purely practical reasons. These include Bricco Fiasco, Ravera, Fossati, Bussia and Le Coste (Monforte). Anticipated maturity: 2010-2022. *92 pts. Wine Advocate, December 2007*

2004 Sottimano Barbaresco Cotta (Barbaresco) \$83

Sottimano’s 2004 Barbaresco Cotta is perhaps slightly less elegant than the Curra, but it reveals a more immediate personality in its powerful, fruit-driven style, with sweet dark fruit, toasted oak and mentholated, balsamic notes. Despite its generous ripe fruit this wine has plenty of length and supporting structure underneath. It is fairly approachable today, but should also age gracefully. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2022. *92 pts. Wine Advocate, October 2007*

2004 Aldo Richardo Seghesio Vigneto la Villa (Barolo) \$65

Seghesio is yet another producer who seems to have arrived at a newfound level of elegance. Fermentations have gradually been lengthened and the use of French oak is down from previous vintages. The 2004 Barolo La Villa is notably elegant and restrained for this bottling. It opens with perfumed aromatics that meld into layers of ripe dark fruit intermingled with sweet notes from the French oak. This superbly well-balanced, poised Barolo should be even better with another few years of bottle age. Anticipated maturity: 2011-2022. *92 pts. Wine Advocate, December 2007*

2004 Giovanni Manzone Barolo le Gramolere (Barolo) \$69

Manzone’s 2004 Barolo Le Gramolere reveals gorgeous notes of candied cherries, spices and menthol in an elegant, sweet expression of this vineyard. It offers greater freshness than the Castelletto, with notable vibrancy to its generous fruit. The finish is delicate and long, as ethereal aromas linger in the empty glass. The Gramolere was aged predominantly in 500 liter barrels with 15-20% of the juice seeing larger 20-hectoliter barrels. It is one of the finest wines I have tasted from this small, artisanal producer. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2024. *94 pts, Wine Advocate, December 2007*

2004 Piero Busso Barbaresco Santo Stefanetto (Barbaresco) \$85

The 2004 Barbaresco S. Stefanetto (from vines in Treiso) is a firm, yet generous wine endowed with notable purity and depth in its dark, sensual fruit. Truffles, worn-in leather, spices and menthol round out this harmonious, beautifully balanced Barbaresco. Though undeniably attractive today, the wine will benefit from another year or two in bottle to help soften the tannins, but it is already delicious. Anticipated maturity: 2011-2022. *92 pts. Wine Advocate, October 2009*