

The world's best wine magazine

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Decanter

Chile & Argentina

Today's 25 star names
and the must-buy wines

ITALY'S FINEST

Barolo 2006: 75
5- and 4-star wines
from a highly rated year

Chianti Classico:
our best buys from
the new vintages

Tuscan discoveries



PLUS
your
guide to

Florence for wine lovers

Alsace's grands crus

Loire reds 2009

White Burgundy's
ageing problem





Highly Recommended (continued) 16.5–18.49pts



Schiavenza, Bricco Cerretta, Serralunga d'Alba 17.67
 N/A UK www.schiavenza.com
 Earth, spice, rose, prune and oak bouquet. Old-school style with excellent, deep, dried fruit flavours, real mineral feel and mouthcoating, astringent tannins. Needs time but fine potential. **Drink:** 2015–2023. **Alc:** 14.5%



Ferdinando Principiano, Boscareto, Serralunga d'Alba 17.6
 £60 Amps, Butlers, Define, Noel Young, Quaff, Reserve Wines, The Sampler, Secret Cellar, Vineking, WoodWinters, Worth Bros
 Redcurrant and leather aromas. Traditional style with sweet fruit and tannic grip but still linear. Juicy acidity underpins the savoury fruit. Complex and long. **Drink:** 2013–2022. **Alc:** 14%



Andrea Oberto, Rocche, La Morra 17.5
 £50 Astrum
 Lush, powerful cherry, spice, violet, ripe red berry, earth and coffee aroma. Lively, vibrant fruit with elegant tannins, good depth and complex layers. Lots of spice and vigour thanks to fine acidity. **Drink:** 2012–2019. **Alc:** 14.5%



Andrea Oberto, La Morra 17.5
 £33 Astrum
 Prominent vanilla oak, floral notes and red fruit aromas. Elegant palate with nice balance and harmony. Powerful and relatively open style with a sinewy structure, fine tannins and fresh acidity. **Drink:** 2012–2017. **Alc:** 14%



Ascheri, Sorano Coste & Bricco, Serralunga d'Alba 17.5
 £50 Swig
 Coffee, chocolate, spice, sage, cedar and cherry fruit bouquet. Bright and uplifting palate with chewy tannins. A seamless traditional style and lovely dark berry fruit quality. Elegant and inviting. **Drink:** 2011–2016. **Alc:** 14%



Attilio Ghisolfi, Bussia Bricco Visette, Monforte d'Alba 17.5
 £31 (2004) Marc Fine Wine
 Tar, earth, spice, red fruit, perfumed violets, redcurrants and baked apple aromas. Traditional style which is youthfully sturdy, with a lovely texture, real grip and deep dark fruit. Has potential. **Drink:** 2012–2022. **Alc:** 14.5%



Ceretto, Bricco Rocche Brunate, La Morra 17.5
 £50 Bibendum
 Classic nose of rose, violets, plums, bramble fruit, spice, integrated oak and vanilla. Carefully crafted on the palate – benchmark Barolo, with its perfumed fruit, silky tannins and good oak. Great balance. **Drink:** 2015–2022. **Alc:** 14%



Ciabot Berton, Roggeri, La Morra 17.5
 £26 The Wine Society
 Classic savoury, dark fruit, fennel, roses and violet perfume. Immediately accessible red with balanced ripe fruit, refreshing acidity, nice use of oak and well-judged tannins. Ripe and silky. **Drink:** 2014–2020. **Alc:** 14%



Erbaluna, La Morra 17.5
 £27 Swig, Vinceremos
 Hints of great complexity to come on the nose: porcini, black olives, cocoa and savoury notes. Engaging palate with savoury flavours, fabulous grip and intensity. Bodes well for the future. Well done. **Drink:** 2014–2020. **Alc:** 14%



Negretti, La Morra 17.5
 N/A UK www.negrettivini.com
 Attractive wild berry fruit aroma. Elegant style which is deep, vigorous and powerful with concentration and complexity. Still youthful but has an attractive palate that is serious, integrated and complete with velvety tannins. **Drink:** 2012–2018. **Alc:** 14%



Andrea Oberto, Brunate, La Morra 17.33
 £55 Astrum
 Modern nose of dark berry fruit and vanilla oak. Deliciously juicy and concentrated dark berry fruit, velvety tannins and a fine polished veneer of vanilla oak. A crowd-pleasing international style with finesse. **Drink:** 2012–2018. **Alc:** 14.5%



Gianfranco Alessandria, San Giovanni, Monforte d'Alba 17.33
 £47.99 The Winery
 Vigorous dark berry fruit, oak, candied peel, orange zest and ginger. Intense, concentrated and full-flavoured wine with sweet, juicy fruit, refreshing acidity and muscular tannins. Well crafted. **Drink:** 2012–2018. **Alc:** 14.5%

4
-star wines

Highly Recommended (continued) 16.5-18.49pts



Silvano Bolmida, Bussia, Monforte d'Alba 16.5

£32.45 Bancroft

Pronounced, concentrated nose of fresh cherry and blackberry fruit with savoury notes. Ripe, full palate with good, firm, balancing tannins and acidity. Lovely. **Drink:** From 2012. **Alc:** 14%



Tenute Costa, Duecorti, Monforte d'Alba 16.5

N/A UK www.tenutecosta.it

Spicy, vigorous, oaky nose with red fruit, toast and rose notes. Savoury, elegant palate backed by firm tannins, power and intensity. A pretty, charming wine. **Drink:** From 2014. **Alc:** 14.5%



Villadoria, Sori Lazzarito, Serralunga d'Alba 16.5

£24.95 Alfie Fiandaca, Vagabond

Ripe, smoky red fruit, oak and violet perfume. Balanced palate with dense tannins creeping up. Quite perfumed, well integrated and very pretty wine. **Drink:** From 2015. **Alc:** 14%

3-STAR WINES Recommended 14.5-16.49pts

WINE	SCORE	TASTING NOTE	ALC	DRINK	PRICE	STOCKISTS
Elio Filippino, Castiglione Falletto	16.42	Fresh fragrant cherry, menthol, rose, nutmeg, spearmint, coffee and spice. Firm, solid, classic and astringent palate with firm tannins. Promises a good future.	14%	2012-2013	N/A UK	www.eliofilippino.com
Azella, San Rocco, Serralunga d'Alba	16.33	Evolved aroma of spice, rose, minerals, vanilla, lots of oak and confected fruit. Enjoyable, integrated and assertive with fine-grained tannins and good acidity.	14.5%	From 2014	£45.03	Justerini & Brooks
Ca' Rome, Vigna Cerretta, Serralunga d'Alba	16.33	Lean oak, berries and cherries, vanilla, burnt rubber, rose and violet perfume. Silky with grippy tannins, freshness and flair. Seems complete and stylish.	14%	From 2015	N/A UK	www.caerome.com
Ciabot Berton, La Morra	16.33	Poised, delicate and fragrant spice, minerals and fresh, flowers. Youthful, spicy, peppery palate with smooth tannins. Simple but does what it says on the tin.	14%	2013-2018	£24-£26 (2005)	Gerard Seel, Jeroboams, Laytons, Milroy's of Soho
Franco Conterno, Vigna Pugnane, Castiglione Falletto	16.33	Spice, ripe berry fruit and vanilla perfume. Good depth and silky texture with well-judged tannins that add structure and grip. Dense, fleshy, modern style.	14%	From 2012	N/A UK	www.francoconterno.it
GD Vajra, Bricco delle Viole, Barolo	16.33	Dark red fruit, spice, orange and coffee bean aroma. Subtle, smokey palate, supportive tannin, good acidity and ripe, juicy fruit. Classic, robust and firm.	14.5%	2012-2017	£50-£59.99	Liberty Wines, Slurp, The Wine Society
I Bastioni, La Morra	16.33	Restrained leather and smoke aroma. Modern style with emphasis on rich, floral, sweet dark berry fruit. It is juicy, harmonious, nicely balanced and seductive.	14.5%	2012-2015	£18 (2004)	Corking Wines
Massolino, Parafada, Serralunga d'Alba	16.33	Earth, iron, rose, lavender oil and medicinal nose. Traditional style rich, unctuous, chewy palate with plenty of deep, stewed fruit and grippy, textural feel.	14%	2014-2020	£52.50-£69.99	Liberty Wines, Slurp
Oddero, Rocche de Castiglione	16.33	Evolved nose of sweet spice, ripe red berries, violets, smoke, oak and flowers. Balanced and attractive with ripe tannins. Forward style with dried fruit flavours.	14%	2012-2022	N/A UK	www.oddero.it
Diego Conterno	16.25	Tar, violet, red berry, dark fruit, spice and oak aroma. Rich, suave and round palate with tight-knit tannins. Not yet in balance but the fruit should emerge with time.	14.5%	2013-2020	N/A UK	www.diegocconterno.it
La Querciola, Costa di Rose, Barolo	16.25	Traditional aroma of violet and sage. Dry, fresh flavours with clean red fruit and a chunky, foursquare character which is typical of Nebbiolo.	14%	2012-2017	N/A UK	www.laquerciola.com
Batasiolo, Bofani, Monforte d'Alba	16.2	Tobacco, rubber, redcurrant, earth and Bovril aromas. Structured and intense with smokey red berry flavours, juicy acidity and rounded tannins. Rustic style.	14.5%	2012-2020	£48	Mondial
Alessandro Veglio, La Morra	16.17	Classic perfume of sweet red and black cherry fruit. Beautifully ripe fruit palate in a modern style with firm, high tannins and elegant floral characters.	14.5%	2012-2017	N/A UK	www.alessandroveglio.com
Cantine San Silvestro, Patres, Novello	16.17	Pleasantly spicy aromas with a tomato and stewed fruit note. Savoury palate which is approachably juicy. Fine, elegant wine with a long, expressive finish.	13.5%	2012-2014	£23.50	Halgarten Druitt, Slurp
Cordero di Montezemolo, Bricco Gattera, La Morra	16.17	Cough syrup, pepper and oak bouquet. Quasi-modern and atypical wine with some sweet cherry fruit and chunky, extracted tannins. Elegant feminine style.	14.5%	2011-2013	POA	Eurowines
GD Vajra, Le Albe, Barolo	16.17	Spice, rose, violet and firm but jammy red fruit nose. Rich, juicy, savoury fruit with very nicely textured tannins and good concentration. Has some austerity.	13.5%	From 2013	£34.99	Liberty Wines
Giacomo Fenocchio, Cannubi, Monforte d'Alba	16.17	Dark red cherry and berry fruit, spice, new leather and subtle creamy nose. Fresh, juicy red with ample fruit, tangy acidity with firm, muscular tannins.	14%	2012-2016	POA	Armit
Gianfranco Alessandria, Monforte d'Alba	16.17	Rich, generous oaky nose with rose, crushed cherry and berry notes. Rich and surprisingly soft in texture but doesn't lack tannins. Modern style.	14%	From 2013	£34.99	The Winery
Giovanni Rosso, Serralunga, Serralunga d'Alba	16.17	Fresh, vivid, attractive nose of sweet cherry fruit and cashews. Approachable dark fruit with a light spiciness, high acidity and grippy tannins. Foursquare.	14%	2012-2014	£32.45	Berry Bros & Rudd
Grimaldi Luigino, Vigna San Biagio, La Morra	16.17	Evolved rose, violet, sweet spice, red berry, earth, rubber and stewed tea aroma. Medicinal with nice fruit sweetness, firm tannins and light acidity. Fine backbone.	14%	2013-2019	N/A UK	www.grimaldivini.com
Mauro Molino, Gallinotto, La Morra	16.17	Smoke, vanilla oak, tar, sweet spice, violet, red berry and mocha bouquet. Rich and soft attack but the mid-palate is very tannic. Classy with a long aftertaste.	15%	2014-2017	£31.65	Champagnes & Châteaux
Renato Ratti, Rocche, La Morra	16.17	Slightly oxidative aroma of liquorice and spice. Creamy, rich, elegant and powerful wine which is full of promise. The leathery length has a lot of finesse.	14.5%	2012-2013	£53-£56 (2005)	Bordeaux Index, En Primeur
Vietti, Rocche, Castiglione Falletto	16.17	Delicate, smoke, red fruit, sweet spice, earth, minerals and coffee bouquet. Light, evolved, creamy, savoury and herbal flavours with firm tannins giving some grip.	14%	From 2013	£85	Vinum
Boroli	16	Caramel, aniseed, ripe berry fruit, spice and oak nose. Powerful, concentrated, and dry on the palate. Engaging tannins are to the fore - will be very good.	13.5%	2013-2020	£34.95	Profumo di Vino
Bussia Soprana, Mosconi	16	Delicate smoke, red fruit, sweet spice and vanilla nose. Masculine palate with succulent fruit, robust tannins and acidity. Tangy finish. Quite a skeletal style.	14%	2013-2017	N/A UK	www.bussiasoprana.it
Cagliero, Ravera	16	Developed tertiary aromas with flowers, spice, raspberry and cranberry. Soft palate with sweet fruit and moderate tannins. Balanced, elegant and feminine.	14%	2012-2020	N/A UK	www.cagliero.com
Cascina Adelaide, Cannubi, Barolo	16	Spice, sweet toasty oak, dark fruit, burnt rubber and floral perfume. Ripe, supple palate of sweet fruit, soft tannins and a nice balance. An appealing wine.	14%	From 2012	N/A UK	www.cascinaadelaide.com

Expert summary: Ian d'Agata

No great turn-ups, with the leading lights shining as expected, although modern wines were favoured over the big oak and long macerations of the traditional styles



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YES, THERE WERE eight Decanter Awards and 67 four-star wines, but there are still many unimpressive Barolos being made (low three-star wines or worse). Insiders know that, as in Burgundy, the name of the producer is all-important when it comes to successfully translating Nebbiolo's classic rose and cherry perfume into the glass. With few exceptions (Parusso, Rocche dei Manzoni, Prunotto), the wines that scored two stars or below are not from the leading lights of the area. Many are entry-level wines.

Equally, all valid single vineyards, including Brunate, Romirasco, Rocche dell'Annunziata, Cerequio and Rocche (many of which would be grands or premiers crus in a classification devoid of commercial and political pressure) are well represented. And it is great to see two wines from the Rocchettevino vineyard – a premier cru site for Dolcetto but hardly for Nebbiolo – getting four stars.

Unsurprisingly, wines from La Morra did well. This cru, the Musigny of Barolo, boasting charming, early maturing wines and the most gifted producers, is the easiest to taste young. Serralunga showed well too, perhaps surprisingly, as these tannic wines are hard to judge young. Most communes, from Monforte to Novello and Verduno, should be pleased, with many earning at least four stars.

Wines made via later picking, shortened macerations and new small barrels fared best, though traditional wines (big oak barrels, long macerations) such as Oddero's Brunate did well too. Some traditional classics: Cavallotto's Bricco Boschis and Vajra's Bricco delle Viole – scored less well than I imagined, though still got respectable three stars.

Overall, there were no big surprises or disappointments, which is always a possibility when blind-tasting wines of a famous region. The great names – Aldo Conterno, Luciano Sandrone, Ceretto, Renato Ratti – showed well, as did many lesser-known but equally high-quality estates, such as Ciabot Berton, Ruggeri Corsin and Bric Cenciurio.

Provided that wine lovers have the foresight to buy, and the patience to let these 2006 Barolos age in their cellars, they will have plenty to smile about come corkscrew time.

“Serralunga showed well, perhaps surprisingly, as these tannic wines are hard to judge young”