

# YEAR'S BEST BAROLO & BARBARESCO

Our blind panels tasted **95** new-release Barolo and Barbaresco over the past 12 months. **Joshua Greene**, our critic for Italy, rated **36** as exceptional (90+) and **12** as Best Buys.

Find a complete list of wines tasted and all reviews at [wineandspiritsmagazine.com](http://wineandspiritsmagazine.com).

## BARBARESCO

### 95 | Prinsi \$59

**2004 Barbaresco Gallina** Heady and fragrant, this wine tastes of the earth. It's more vinous than directly fruity, hinting at red berries, figs and porcini, the fruit component expanding into the structure without overflowing it. There's no obvious new oak influence; instead, the tannins carry the flavor of a black truffle and the dirt that surrounds it. Those tannins hum with tension, their elusive truffle scent lasting along with the luscious impression of the wine. Delicious now, this should age well over the next several years. *Enotec Imports, Denver, CO*

### 94 | Ceretto \$154

**2006 Barbaresco Bricco Asili** When nebbiolo captures the earthiness of Piedmont's soil, it delivers the scent of this classic Barbaresco, something close to porcini and cherry bark. There's also something floral in the wine, hinting at rose and jasmine. The tannic structure is fine, firm enough to keep the generous fruit in check. The structure is already integrated and the flavors are long though relatively closed, needing bottle age to become more expressive. For the cellar. *Wilson Daniels, St. Helena, CA*

### 94 | Gaja \$210

**2007 Barbaresco** From Angelo Gaja's estate, this Barbaresco is bold and beautiful in 2007. Sweet tannin, earth and mushroom flavors tumble out of its bosky cherry fruit, at moments voluptuous and heady, at others under tight control. There's a touch of greenness to this vintage, a fresh tobacco-like edge that's gracefully incorporated into the fruit. For now, depending on when you catch it, the tannin or the fruit may be dominant, the wine needing ten years or more to settle in. Already quite beautiful, this will reward aging. *Terlato Wines Int'l., Lake Bluff, IL*

### 93 | Gaja \$199

**2006 Barbaresco** Gaja's straight Barbaresco is consistently one of his most beautiful wines, and this 2006 hits the mark with its rich refinement. There's a mellow scent of

anise and cool, truffled earth. Then the finish is all youthful, brooding power; new oak may play a major role in rounding the tannin, but it doesn't get in the way of the wine's expression. This should be accessible with three to four years of cellar time, and will age gracefully for a decade or more. (*WC&S, 4/10*) *Terlato Wines Int'l., Lake Bluff, IL*

### 93 | Rizzi \$50

**2005 Barbaresco Nervo Fondetta (Best Buy)** Modern and clean, this wine's tannic edges have been polished by new oak, integrated into the wine so they define and lengthen the ripe cherry, anise and porcini flavors. The edges of earthy minerals riff on all that supple fruit, bringing the flavors to life. For duck roasted with cherries. *Opici Import Co., Glen Rock, NJ*



### 92 | Produttori del Barbaresco \$37

**2006 Barbaresco (Best Buy)** There's a wild berry flavor at the center of this wine, bringing to mind mulberries and tart raspberries as well as something darker, like spiced pomegranate. That fruit complexity lasts through the dark mineral tannin, driven on by acidity: After all the mouth-puckering grip, the essence of fruit is still there. This is a substantial wine with staying power, and a great buy. *Vias Imports, NY*

### 92 | Ca' Rome' di Romano Marengo \$95

**2006 Barbaresco Maria di Brun** A classical Barbaresco with fine rose and porcini scents, this is initially lean and spicy. As it takes on air, the structure fills out and scents of pipe tobacco add dimension to the finish. Firmly

built, this will benefit from several years of bottle age. For roast quail stuffed with wild mushrooms. *Empson USA, Alexandria, VA*

### 92 | Prinsi \$62

**2004 Barbaresco Reserva Fausone** This ambitious wine seems riper than Prinsi's Gallina, with peach, pomegranate and cherry scents to its fruit. The concentration and extract come across in flavors of coffee grounds and gravelly tar. It's complex and intense, needing time to unpack its structure and flavor elements. For the cellar. *Enotec Imports, Denver, CO*

### 92 | Rizzi \$50

**2005 Barbaresco Boito (Best Buy)** This leads with a spark of minerals and mint, followed up by very ripe fruit. That fruit flavor ranges from cherries to apricots, juicy and soft, girded by the firm tannin. It's a modern, ripe style presented with exceptional balance—and lasting complexity. Ready to decant for braised beef. *Opici Import Co., Glen Rock, NJ*

### 91 | Marchesi di Grésy \$85

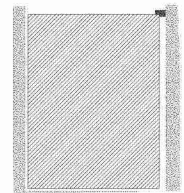
**2004 Barbaresco Martinenga Camp Gros** A black and concentrated Barbaresco, this is rich and generous in its textural weight. Its fullness is focused by acidity and deepened by the wood spice scents of chestnut husks. A wine of quiet confidence, this should age with grace. *Dalla Terra, Napa, CA*

### 90 | Ada Nada \$43

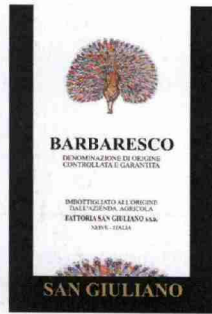
**2005 Barbaresco Elisa (Best Buy)** There's a savory floral and herbal character to balance this wine's superripe fruit, matured to fat, fleshy tannin and sweet dried cherry flavor. For rich cuts of beef. *Vignaioli Selection, NY*

### 90 | Ceretto \$81

**2006 Barbaresco Bricco Asili Bernardot** This wine's dark, sour cherry fruit seems to gain sweetness from new French oak. It feels soft and honeyed, with full-on ripeness that has gentled the tannin into smoke. Concentrated and rich, this is ready for prime rib. *Wilson Daniels, St. Helena, CA*



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**90 | Fattoria San Giuliano** \$41  
**2006 Barbaresco (Best Buy)** This carries dark, earthy truffle and bright strawberry scents until it hits a massive wall of spice. Dense, bold and juicy, there's enough acidity to keep it from feeling heavy. It's a lot of wine, powerful rather than fresh, suited to decanting for steak. *Vignaioli Selection, NY*

**88 | Pasquale Pelissero** \$36  
**2007 Barbaresco Brisso San Giuliano (Best Buy)** A light and funky nebbiolo, this wine's anise-scented tannin pulls aside to reveal a lot of earthy, barnyard character. The fruit is grapey and simple, with a rose scent that lasts. Decant it for flank steak. *Masanois Imports, Washington, DC*

## BAROLO

**95 | Sandrone** \$195  
**2005 Barolo Cannubi Boschis** Boschis is located at the northern reaches of Barolo's Cannubi hill, across the valley from Sandrone's winery. The vines, planted in 1978, face south-southeast on 4.7 acres of calcareous clay. Fermented with indigenous yeast and aged in 500-liter French oak casks for two years, this 2005 is massive: You can feel its huge tannic presence even before it hits the mouth. There isn't a lot of aroma up front—black and brooding, then extreme in its earthiness, with enough sweet cherry fruit to balance the tannic intensity. If you don't mind being grabbed by the collar, you might realize a moment later how much detail there is in the flavor and how the supple texture has cuddled up next to you. Or something like that—especially if you taste it a day or two after it's first opened. A monumental Barolo, this won't begin to reach peak drinking for 15 to 20 years. *Vintus, Pleasantville, NY*

**94 | Ceretto** \$252  
**2005 Barolo Bricco Rocche Bricco Rocche** The Cerettos regard this 4.3-acre site on a hilltop in Castiglione Falletto as their most

prized Barolo cru. They planted it in 1978 and produced the first cru bottling in 1982. Aged in French barriques, the wine delivers a lot of oak spice, with an equal or greater proportion of earthy distinction. The bold, sweet tannins coat the mouth in blackness, resonant with anise, porcini, truffle and chestnut flavors, and a juiciness that seems to emerge from that base layer of tannin. Air infuses the weight of the wine with dimension and motion; the longer you sit with it, the more expansive it becomes. This will reward patient cellaring—for a decade or more. *Wilson Daniels, St. Helena, CA*

**94 | Poderi Luigi Einaudi** \$100  
**2006 Barolo Nei Cannubi** Grown at the Einaudi's estate vineyard, this balances the perfumed, sweet oak spice of modern, barrique-aged wine with the stodgy, old-fashioned power of nebbiolo. In the first taste it's luscious and delicious; in the next, the cherry flavors constrict along with the tannin, lasting with the spicy dust of pollen on fruit. That fruit perseveres beyond the oak, though the wine is still engaged in a turf battle, needing years to mellow and build on its vineyard expression. *Empson USA, Alexandria, VA*

**93 | Giacomo Brezza** \$79  
**2005 Barolo Sarmassa** This grows on a south-southwest facing slope in the commune of Barolo, the vines planted in 1941 and 2000, the soils a mix of sand, silt and clay. The Brezza family produces a classical style of nebbiolo, this one softened by the site to gentle tannins that seem to prick the tongue like pepper. The wine's power builds in the end, the tannins melding with a tart cherry note, finishing savory and long. Since the Brezzas did not make Bricco Sarmassa in 2005, that selection went into this wine. *A.I. Selections, Astoria, NY*

**93 | Cascina Adelaide** \$95  
**2005 Barolo Preda** Adelaide's Preda cru grows at a 1,100-foot elevation on a south-west-facing hillside in Barolo. The 2005 is all potential for now, as black-purple as an eggplant, with heady scents of truffle, rose and anise bound into the tannins. It's a substantial wine, needing six to eight years in the cellar to begin to show itself. (*W&S*, 4/10) *Tesori Wines, Los Angeles, CA*

**93 | Elvio Cogno** \$115  
**2005 Barolo Bricco Pernice** Scents of raspberries and truffles combine in this sophisticated, formidable wine. The tannins feel cool and fruit driven, earthy and dark red, their structural strength more delicate than ex-

tracted. This grows on a five-acre parcel in the Ravera cru of Novello, where Cogno farms the Lampia clone of nebbiolo at an elevation of 1,250 feet. *Vias Imports, NY*

**93 | Poderi Colla** \$73  
**2006 Barolo Dardi le Rose Bussia** There's a cool savor to this wine, like the scent and feel of a handful of truffley earth. Layered over that cool earthiness is delicate red fruit, lacy and transparent, with an ethereal spiciness that lasts. This has the true power of nebbiolo, a mouthwatering delicacy that seems to last for minutes. Cellar it and the wine's power should only become more apparent. *Empson USA, Alexandria, VA*

**92 | Cascina Adelaide** \$99  
**2006 Barolo Preda** Seriously tannic, this wine explodes with earthiness, flint and graphite while a core of tart red fruit powers on through the finish. Herbal notes of raspberry leaf lend complexity. This is young and potent, a wine to check on ten years from the vintage. *Tesori Wines, San Francisco, CA*

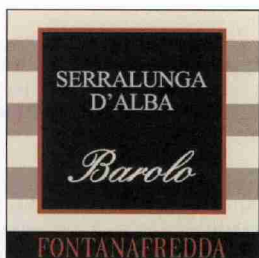
**92 | Ceretto** \$88  
**2005 Barolo Bricco Rocche Prapò** From Ceretto's vineyard in Serralunga d'Alba, six acres of iron-rich clay, silt and sand planted in 1972, this is the brightest of their Barolo crus in 2005, with freshness in the tannin, suppleness to the fruit and a dandelion-green ruff of acidity that soars above, pulling the wine up as the tannin keeps it earthbound. At its heart, the wine is refined and mouthwatering, suited to years of development in the cellar. *Wilson Daniels, St. Helena, CA*

**92 | Poderi Luigi Einaudi** \$99  
**2006 Barolo Costa Grimaldi** A selection from Einaudi's Vigna Terlo, planted in 1962 in the commune of Barolo, this wine aged in large oak casks for two years. It's tense and spicy as a young wine, with scents of cumin and persimmon adding to the redness of the fruit. Fine acidity makes this mouthwatering, balanced by a touch of sweetness in the finish. For the cellar. *Empson USA, Alexandria, VA*

**92 | Gagliasso** \$49  
**2005 Barolo Rocche dell'Annunziata (Best Buy)** At first this appears to be a bold, international style of wine, with sweet cherry flavors and the kind of generous texture that barrique aging can give. Air brings out more distinction—the character of the tannin develops and its power becomes clear, if not almost overwhelming. Built for the cellar, this needs six or six years to mellow and evolve. *A.I. Selections, Astoria, NY*

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**92 | Bruna Grimaldi** \$65  
**2006 Barolo Badarina** A bold and succulent style of Barolo from Grimaldi's estate vineyards in Serralunga d'Alba, this leads with dark spice and gains power and weight through the finish. The smooth delivery of flavor suggests it will develop well over the next five or six years. *A.I. Selections, Astoria, NY*



**92 | Tenimenti Fontanafredda** \$45  
**2006 Barolo Serralunga d'Alba** The tension in this wine builds from the initial aromas of rose and rose stems to meaty tannins packed with minerals. A powerful Serralunga wine, this is completely savory, more about umami character than fruit. It tastes like blood sausages, and after some time in the cellar, this will likely prove a good match. *Domaine Select Wine Estates, NY*

**91 | Marziano Abbona** \$50  
**2005 Barolo Terlo Ravera** Made with a short but active maceration then aged in 500-liter and 30-hectoliter casks, this wine has both a sweet intensity and brooding earthiness. There's roundness and softness to the black fruit, with anise and prune-plum scents. There's also a fine, persistent scent of truffles, a savory note that lasts. Firm and complete, this needs cellar time to integrate. *Frederick Wildman and Sons, NY*

**91 | Cascina Adelaide** \$64  
**2005 Barolo 4 Vigne** This is a blend of estate-grown fruit from Barolo, La Morra and Castiglione Falletto. Its spicy raspberry and rose scents are substantial enough to mask the hard edges of the nebbiolo tannins, giving an impression of generous fruit over the tarry, intense structure. The flavors should lengthen out with a few years of age. (W&S, 4/10) *Tesori Wines, Los Angeles, CA*

**91 | Ceretto** \$88  
**2005 Barolo Bricco Rocche Brunate** The Cerettos describe Brunate's soil as rich in magnesium; they planted 13.8 acres in this cru in 1974. The wine has La Morra's trade-

mark softness of tannin, the texture of those tannins both fine grained and plush. They hold the fruit with elegance, hinting at scents of forest floor, fall mushrooms and rich earth. Decant this if you open it now to serve with a porterhouse steak. It should also age with grace. *Wilson Daniels, St. Helena, CA*

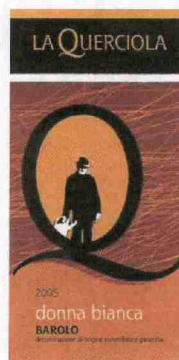
**91 | Pio Cesare** \$61  
**2006 Barolo** Heady French oak makes the first impression, showing the sweet vanilla scents of a red wine aged in barrique and larger casks for three years. Air brings out the juicy burl of the wine itself, a ripe Barolo with sleek, dark fruit. It's substantial in a generous, modern style. Decant it now for steak, or cellar five years or more. *Maisons Marques & Domaines USA, Oakland, CA*

**91 | Vietti** \$48  
**2006 Barolo Castiglione** Blended from estate-grown fruit, this wine is aged in cask for 24 months, its texture lighter than many contemporary Barolos aged in barrique. Already expressive, with scents of fresh porcini and aniseed that last, this is easy to enjoy as a bright, simple Barolo. There's some added dimension to the finish—a touch of mystery that suggests aging the wine a year or two. For pasta *Bolognese*. *Dalla Terra, Napa, CA*

**90 | Michele Chiarlo** \$100  
**2006 Barolo Cerequio** Full ripeness, dense extract and new oak all contribute to this wine's modern profile. Its cherry plum flavors broaden and sweeten in the finish. This is ready now, and suited to drinking over the next several years, particularly with a thick-cut steak. *Kobrand, Purchase, NY*

**90 | Conterno Fantino** \$112  
**2006 Barolo Sori Ginestra** Oak aging combines with the calcareous soil character of this site to yield a nebbiolo with remarkable spice—it tastes like chewing on star anise. Black and dense, this shows little of itself beyond that oak and spice for now, but it clearly has the quality and drive to benefit from cellar time. *Empson USA, Alexandria, VA*

**90 | Massolino** \$80  
**2006 Barolo Parafada** From 47-year-old vines on a south-facing slope in Serralunga d'Alba, Parafada ages for 24 months in barrique. While oak has mellowed the wine's tarry tannin, that tannin is still the dominant aspect, a black smokiness that hides fruit behind the scent of braised meat. This is earthy and rooty, needing time for the fruit to evolve. Cellar it six to eight years. *Domaine Select Wine Estates, NY*



**90 | La Querciola** \$52  
**2005 Barolo Donna Bianca (Best Buy)** A supple, modern style of Barolo, this offers chocolate and honey smoothness in its dark fruit, without a lot of detail. It has the woody flavor of a fat porcini, and an easy balance to its full extract. For steak. *Vignaioli Selection, NY*



**90 | Tenimenti Fontanafredda** \$120  
**2006 Barolo Vigna La Rosa** Air brings out the cedar and cigar box notes in this wine's cool black fruit. The tannins completely restrict the fruit for now, forming a dense and powerful structure that yields little flavor at this stage. There are, however, hints of the fineness that should grow more apparent with age. *Domaine Select Wine Estates, NY*

**88 | Marziano Abbona** \$55  
**2005 Barolo Pressenda (Best Buy)** The scent of anise liqueur introduces this simple, full-bodied Barolo. It's floral and clean, with meaty tannins that last. Age may bring more complexity, though it would be pleasing now with *pappardelle* and wild boar ragù. *Frederick Wildman and Sons, NY*

**87 | Boroli** \$45  
**2005 Barolo (Best Buy)** Candied licorice scents fill this sweet, spicy nebbiolo, its tannins a little brickish in their brown, earthen edge. For brisket. *Dalla Terra, Napa, CA* ■