

## Vietti Barolo Castiglione DOCG 2013, Italy



### wine time

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**COST:** \$50-\$54

**WHAT:** By now, you have made your choices for wine to go with the Thanksgiving turkey or ham, so I thought I would give you something to think about for next week. A nice dry riesling or a zinfandel (the all-American wine) will be perfect for those Thanksgiving leftovers, by the way.

But in a few days, you will get tired of turkey or ham and look for a change of pace. Pasta with meat sauce would be a great change, so I looked for a wine that would go with that. If you don't eat meat, this will work equally well with a marinara and pasta dish.

The Vietti barolo is a rich, full-bodied wine that is as versatile as it is complex. I loved drinking it as I was cooking, but the wine really came alive when paired with food.

It is a beautiful deep ruby in the glass with earthy aromas. Vibrant red fruit flavors fill the palate. The fruit is balanced by good acidity. Powerful tannins hold the promise that this wine will age for many years, getting better as the tannins fade.

The wine is made from nebbiolo grapes grown in small vineyards in Castiglione Falletto, Monforte, Barolo, Novello, in the foothills of the Alps.

The vines are from 7 to 40 years old, giving variety to the fruit in the blend. Each lot is fermented separately with slightly different processes depending on the characteristics of the grapes.

Barolo is one of the most famous red wines of Italy, grown in the northern Italian region of Piedmont. It has had to change its style somewhat to meet modern tastes. In the past, the wine had to age in the bottle for 10 years before it was ready to drink. Now it is ready to pour when it is released.

The nebbiolo grape is loaded with harsh tannins that took time to mellow. In response to changing tastes, Barolo producers have changed their techniques, bringing out the fruit and tamping down the tannins. By law, Barolo must be aged a total of three years in barrel and bottle. To be labeled a riserva, it must be aged five years. It is grown almost exclusively in Italy.

**WINERY:** Vietti is a true family success story. The family traces its roots back to the 19th century, but the Vietti name didn't appear on a bottle until 1919 when patriarch Mario Vietti made the first wines to carry the family name. He took the family farm and turned it into a grape-growing and wine-producing business.

Alfredo Currado (married to a Vietti) pushed Vietti to the forefront in the 1950s as a pioneer of single-vineyard Barolo and Barbera in Piedmont's

famous Langhe region. The Vietti winery was one of the first to begin exporting its wine to the United States. Today the tradition is carried on by fifth-generation winemaker Luca Currado.

He is building on the family's legacy for high-quality production through thoughtful cultivation and organic farming of the vineyards, combining history with innovation. Before returning to the family business, Luca honed his craft at California wineries Simi Winery, Opus One and Long Vineyards. He also worked at Bordeaux's famed Mouton-Rothschild.

Vietti wines are imported through [Dalla Terra Winery Direct](#), which forgoes the traditional three-tiered distribution system. Distributors purchase and ship wine direct from the wineries, saving an average of 25 percent in mark-ups.

**GOES WITH:** We had this wonderful wine with pasta and meat sauce one night when friends were coming over. We had a project to finish for a charitable group, and I didn't want to have to cook after we finished. So I made the sauce early in the day and let it simmer on the stove for several hours. It is rich, hearty and flavorful and needs a bold wine to match it.

Everyone who stayed for dinner seemed to love the sauce and the wine.

This was a recipe I used often in my single days when I needed a dish for company that was



homemade and edible. It came from Edie Low, the food editor at the *Charlotte News*, 35 years ago. I tinker with the recipe, but it is essentially hers.

This wine also would pair well with hearty stew, wild game, roasted red meats, rich risottos and hearty cheeses.

**Spaghetti Sauce, Edie Low's Way**

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| 3 pounds ground beef                      | 8 peppercorns crushed                                       |
| 10 links of sweet Italian sausage         | 1 tablespoon celery seed                                    |
| 2 onions coarsely chopped                 | 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning                               |
| 2 garlic cloves minced                    | 2 teaspoons oregano   |
| 1 large bell pepper, seeded and chopped   | Half cup of chopped basil (or one frozen ice cube of basil) |
| 2 cans (12 ounce each) tomato paste       | 2 bay leaves  |
| 1 can (28 ounces) diced or whole tomatoes | 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce                           |
| Water                                     | 1 pound angel hair pasta for each four persons              |
| Dash of cayenne pepper                    |   |



DENNIS SODOMKA/SPECIAL

The Vietti Barolo Castiglione DOCG 2013 is a rich, full-bodied wine that is as versatile as it is complex.

In a large Dutch oven or heavy pot brown beef, stirring to break up. Add onions, garlic and bell pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is tender but not brown.

Add tomatoes to pot. Add tomato paste, stirring to mix well. Use about a cup of water to rinse out any paste left in cans and pour it all into the sauce.

Add all the seasonings, stirring well. Cover and simmer sauce for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. If it boils down too much, add hot water. Taste and adjust seasonings, adding more of whatever suits your tastes.

Continue cooking over low heat for at least another 90 minutes until the sauce reaches the desired consistency. Skim off all grease that rises to the top.

Meanwhile, boil and then broil the Italian sausages, making sure they cook through to cook out all the grease. Add the sausages to the sauce. Make the pasta while the sauce simmers. Serve sauce over the pasta.

This should yield about six quarts of sauce, or enough to feed 16 to 18 people.