

# YEAR'S BEST BAROLO & BARBARESCO

Our blind panels tasted **174** new-release Barolo and Barbaresco over the past 12 months.

**Stephanie Johnson**, our critic for Italian wines, rated **61** as exceptional (90+) and **25** as Best Buys.

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

## BAROLO

### 97 | Sandrone \$170

**2013 Barolo Aleste** Aleste is the new identity for Luciano Sandrone's Cannubi Boschis Barolo, bottled since 1985 and renamed in 2013 for his grandchildren, Alessia and Stefano. The end of the 2013 growing season saw warm days and cool evenings that preserved freshness and heightened aromas; in fact, half the pleasure of Aleste derives from the wine's gorgeous scents of lavender, violet and anise. Strikingly pure flavors of ripe red berries and thick-skinned plums are dappled with notes of thyme, sage and fennel, the flavors woven seamlessly together in a velvety texture. Those intense flavors gain momentum as the wine sits in the glass, following a vertical trajectory toward a long, vibrant finish. *Vintus, Pleasantville, NY*

### 95 | Elvio Cogno \$122

**2012 Barolo Ravera Bricco Pernice** Bricco Pernice sits in the heart of the Ravera cru, its 30- and 50-year-old vines rooted in compact clay-and-limestone soils. In vintages with cool springs, like 2012, the vines benefit from a high hill that blocks the cold winds that sweep up from the south, helping to deliver a wine that feels ripe and balanced. The wine's firm Ravera tannins keep a tight grip on the flavors, gradually receding to reveal notes of licorice, sage and mint that freshen the wine's cherry and plum flavors. Lay this down for a decade if you can, to let those tannins relax. *Wilson Daniels, St. Helena, CA*

### 95 | Oddero \$170

**2006 Barolo Riserva Vigna Rionda** The limestone-rich soils of Vigna Rionda typically yield a wine that's long-lived yet slow to develop, so the Oddero family decided to extend its aging regimen beginning with the 2006 vintage. The wine rested in large Austrian casks for four and a half years and in bottle another five. It shows a delicate power and precision at 11 years of age, retaining some fresh fruit to balance the mature notes of truffles and dried red berries, with firm tannins that persist through a long, harmonious finish, suggesting the wine has yet to reach its peak. *Soilair Selection, NY*

### 95 | Sandrone \$155

**2013 Barolo Le Vigne** A blend of fruit from crus in Serralunga d'Alba, Castiglione Falletto, Barolo and Novello, the 2013 Le Vigne feels balanced and complete. The red fruit flavors are vibrant and fresh, shining through the wine's luxurious texture. Notes of vanilla and sweet spice lend richness, even as the wine's cool, mineral tannins keep the flavors taut and precise. *Vintus, Pleasantville, NY*

### 94 | Elvio Cogno \$82

**2013 Barolo Ravera** Flavors of black cherry and plum tinged with blood orange, licorice and mint feel plush at first, until the grippy tannins lock in and remind you this is Barolo. The wine offers mouthwatering acidity and spiced fruit flavors wrapped in powerful tannins that are firm yet fine, without any rough edges. *Wilson Daniels, St. Helena, CA*



### 94 | Conterno Fantino \$113

**2013 Barolo Sori Ginestra** Sori Ginestra leads off an impressive set of 2013 releases from Conterno Fantino, balancing Monforte's brawny tannins with fresh ripe cherry and plum fruit. Those flavors get a lift from notes of licorice, sage and anise, as well as a lively acidity that propels the flavors through a long, energetic finish. This should age well. *Empson USA, Alexandria, VA*

### 94 | Paolo Scavino \$95

**2013 Barolo Bric del Fiase** Scents of lavender and violet lead into flavors of strawberry and raspberry wrapped in a silky texture. Fine-grained tannins lend firmness without impeding the wine's juicy, saturated fruit flavors, while notes of tar and licorice lend them ballast. *Michael Skurnik Wines, NY*

### 94 | Vietti \$52

**2013 Barolo Castiglione (Best Buy)** Vietti's Castiglione feels electric in the 2013 vintage, its flavors of red cherry, mint and spice pulsating with energy. A blend of fruit from Castiglione Falletto, Monforte d'Alba, Barolo and Novello, it seems to draw the best aspects of each commune in its soaring aromas, lithe tannins and lingering mineral tones. Irresistible now, it will bring pleasure for many years to come. *Dalla Terra, Napa, CA*

### 93 | Gianfranco Alessandria \$40

**2013 Barolo (Best Buy)** Alessandria gives the grapes for his introductory Barolo a one-week maceration followed by two years in used barriques. The result is a wine that keeps its crunchy forest-berry and blood-orange flavors vibrant while allowing its firm Monforte tannins to show some curves. *T. Edward Wines, NY*

### 93 | Michele Chiarlo \$101

**2013 Barolo Cerequio** This is rich and spicy, its velvety texture refined by two years in 700-liter oak barrels (about ten percent new). Persistent acidity and minty notes freshen the dark berry and roasted mushroom flavors, as spice notes linger on the finish. *Kobrand, Purchase, NY*

### 93 | Elvio Cogno \$128

**2011 Barolo Riserva Ravera Vigna Elena** This 2011 offers plenty of immediate appeal, with rose-petal scents, lush fruit and rounded tannins. Notes of braised fennel and licorice layer through flavors of soft cherry and baked strawberry that reflect the warm growing season. Decant this to open up those floral tones. *Wilson Daniels, St. Helena, CA*

### 93 | Conterno Fantino \$105

**2013 Barolo Mosconi Vigna Ped** Dense, muscular tannins hem in this wine's vibrant red-berry flavors while notes of warm baking spice and cacao nib lend a dark and brooding character. A powerful wine, it needs at least five years in the cellar to reveal its brighter, more lifted side. *Empson USA, Alexandria, VA*