

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



## Barolo 2006

Comparisons with 1996 and 1999 – vintages that needed time to blossom – suggest fans of Piedmont's star wine will need patience with 2006 too, says Kerin O'Keefe

AFTER THE GORGEOUS 2004 vintage – with its enviable combination of approachability, structure and good cellaring potential – followed by the lesser-rated but still enjoyable 2005s, 2006 seems to hail back to Barolo's often misunderstood glory days when patience was a prerequisite for Barolophiles. The 2006s are big, powerful wines that display muscular, tannic structures and brooding fruit. The early suggestions were that they will require years to soften up and develop to their full potential, with the best promising to cellar well for two, even three decades.

A number of producers have compared the 2006s to the classically structured 1996 vintage, which was notoriously closed for years but then slowly evolved into a complex beauty. Others instead find similarities with the equally austere yet more graceful 1999s, which also needed time to come around.

The 2006 growing season was hallmarked by often extreme weather conditions that included little rainfall and scorching temperatures for much of the summer. The first substantial autumn rain occurred in mid-September, and for late-ripening Nebbiolo, the timing of this intense precipitation caused understandable concern among growers. However, those who waited before harvesting were rewarded with healthy, high-quality grapes.

### Site governing style

Notoriously temperamental, Nebbiolo is extremely site sensitive and its performance can vary greatly between Barolo's villages and vineyard areas, as is demonstrated with the 2006 vintage. Without taking into account stylistic differences among winemakers, the towns of Barolo and La Morra yield more elegant, feminine wines with intense bouquets, and the '06s from the two villages appear to be a bit more expressive at this stage – although they, too, will benefit from at least another decade in bottle. Serralunga and Monforte, famed for their muscular and tannic bottlings, unsurprisingly made the most austere and powerful Barolos in 2006, with the best boasting heroic structures that will allow them to age for 20 or 30 years, although it will be some time yet before they open up and reach their peak. Castiglione Falletto is known for its consistent balance between structure and elegance and this appears to be the case with 2006 as well.

Because site is crucial in defining Barolo, the grower's Consorzio recently mapped out every inch of the Barolo DOCG and officially delimited the boundaries of all the vineyards throughout the denomination. While these are strictly geographic mentions and not a quality classification, it is the first essential step in promoting the area's famed crus (vineyard areas), and these newly regulated names will begin appearing on labels starting with the 2010 vintage, released in 2014. Another crucial change sanctioned in the recent modification of Barolo's production code (authorised in September 2010) was a reduction in wood ageing, starting with the 2010 harvest, from two years to 18 months – although the overall ageing period remains unchanged.

*Kerin O'Keefe has lived in Italy since 1989. After studying in Milan, she became a sommelier and then a wine writer*



### Barolo: the facts

- Barolo is made exclusively with Nebbiolo
- Barolo's growing zone spreads across 11 communes
- The most famous Barolo communes are: Barolo, La Morra, Monforte d'Alba, Castiglione Falletto and Serralunga d'Alba, with La Morra boasting the most area under vine dedicated to Barolo production (479ha) and Castiglione Falletto the least (137ha)
- 1,827ha are registered to Barolo production; there are 325 producer/bottlers
- Barolo must be aged a minimum of 38 months before release, including at least 18 months in wood
- Riserva must be aged for at least 62 months before release including 18 months in wood

### Barolo: know your vintages

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| <p><b>2007</b> Early harvest. Ripe, round, warm and forward. Drink 2012-2017.</p> <p><b>2006</b> Tight, tannic. Expected to age well. Drink 2016-2030.</p> <p><b>2005</b> Friendly but rain compromised structure. Drink now-2015.</p> <p><b>2004</b> Superb, classic, structured, ageworthy. Drink now-2024.</p> <p><b>2003</b> Hot year. High alcohol, cooked fruit and low acidity. Drink now.</p> <p><b>2002</b> Cold; heavy rains and hail at harvest time. Diluted. Drink now.</p> | <p><b>2001</b> Excellent, with great structure and impeccable balance. Drink now-2021.</p> <p><b>2000</b> Over-rated. Hot weather led to fat wines with rich fruit but low acidity. Drink now.</p> <p><b>1999</b> Classic Barolos with great body and balance. Drink now-2019.</p> <p><b>1998</b> Medium weight and attractive. Drink now.</p> <p><b>1997</b> Forward fruit but not ageworthy. Drink now.</p> <p><b>1996</b> Magnificent and austere, needs time to develop. Now-2021.</p> |
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## The results

Contrary to expectations, 'approachable' was the buzzword of this tasting, says Adam Lechmere, who finds our experts charmed by the wines' structure and fruit but concerned by their potential longevity

### What was the general view of our experts on the 2006s?

The headline figures are very positive. Eight 5-star wines, and a whopping 67 4-stars – an impressive showing. But overall, it was a difficult vintage to call. And if a panel of professional critics finds it tough to decide just how good a vintage is, how on earth will the poor consumer be able to choose with confidence from such a vast array?

### Hang on – did they like the wines or not?

Yes and no. They praised many, but then they thought that the very attributes they liked mitigated against the vintage as a whole. Emily O'Hare, for example, found the wines 'beautiful, lifted and appealingly fresh, with wonderful floral fruit – they ticked all the boxes'. But, she asked, was prettiness enough? 'Where was the vigour, and energy I want to see in a really fine wine?'

### So can we say the wines are pretty but lacking structure?

Sort of. Peter McCombie MW praised their structure, as did Nick Adams MW, but others on the panel were doubtful. Stephen Brook said: 'On a lot of wines you had that lush attack – soft, quite opulent, lots of fruit – and then the tannins crept up on the mid-palate and didn't go away. They sort of grabbed you by the throat and you ended up with this rather dry finish.' He was not alone in his view: 'The wines are very approachable now, but how long will they last?' asked Annette Scarfe.

### But isn't Barolo supposed to last for ever?

It was always meant to, but times are changing. While O'Hare was delighted to be able to offer the 2006s on her restaurant list now, she worried about their staying power. Several other panellists also had concerns about the future of the '06s. 'They're probably not for long-term ageing', said Scarfe. 'More for the medium term,' agreed McCombie. Brook and Margaret Rand concurred, as did Jane Hunt MW: 'The one thing that came across clearly was the immediate drinkability of these wines, but I rather felt it was at the expense of any complexity.'

### Isn't this the way of all great wine regions? Bordeaux, for example, is approachable younger and younger...

True, but if that approachability is gained at the expense of depth, then that's a fault, said the panel, who still admitted being charmed by the accessibility of many of these wines.

## The scores

218 wines tasted

8

★★★★★

Decanter Award

67

★★★★★

Highly recommended

114

★★★★

Recommended

26

★★

Fair

3

★

Poor

0

Faulty

21

● Good value (under £25)

Hunt (who was the only one to mention colour – she was nonplussed by the 'significant lightness' of some of the wines) found 'very few poor wines' but she thought 'on the whole they lacked complexity' and there were a lot that were 'a bit light and insignificant'.

### These are expensive wines – with few cheaper than £20. Do they offer value for money?

The panel again refused to give a straight answer. Brook pointed out that Barolo is as complex as Burgundy, and there is a huge number of producers, with vastly differing levels of competence. 'We had 218 wines here today and there are probably another 800 we could have tasted... it's not surprising you have this diversity in style, character and quality.' He said with that sort of choice, it was impossible to say definitively whether Barolo offered value for money.

One thing the judges were clear about was that if you paid less than £15 (all were above that price in this tasting) you're likely to find poorer quality. 'You get what you pay for,' said McCombie. 'There are a few producers who make relatively affordable Barolo and do a good job of it but, generally speaking, cheap Barolos are not worth it.'

Anthony Rose was vehement: 'At the basic level, say £15 to £20 – there is a lot of rubbish, and rubbish isn't cheap at that price. It's disgraceful that such wines can hang on the coat-tails of a DOCG like Barolo.' But not all the panel were as downbeat: Scarfe felt confident enough to say: 'Overall it's a good vintage. I think it's value for money.'

### So which communes should consumers look for?

For earlier drinking, La Morra was mentioned several times as offering the most consistent quality. Scarfe called the wines 'elegant, perfumed and very approachable now'. Rand also felt La Morra showed the best as 'it had weight and flesh as well as tannin'. Serralunga d'Alba was also a favourite. Brook found it 'as always, the most rewarding of the communes... with the most complex wines'. Rand agreed they were wines 'delicious'. Rose commended Monforte d'Alba for having 'excellent' wines.

### So is this a vintage to recommend?

The panel was fair: taken as a whole, these are good wines, and the best are beautifully made, built to last for many years. The judges said the most interesting finding was the wines' drinkability – this is Barolo, after all – and the panel



*“We had 218 wines here... it's not surprising you have diversity in style and quality”*

Stephen Brook



*“They ticked all the boxes, but where was the energy I want to see in a really fine wine?”*

Emily O'Hare

## The tasters

**Emily O'Hare** has been a sommelier at London's River Café since 2007, following a stint at Fifteen, London

**Nick Adams MW** runs his own wine consultancy, First Glass Wine Services, and has worked with many top wineries

**Stephen Brook** is a *Decanter* contributing editor. He has been writing on wine for almost 30 years

**Jane Hunt MW** is the *Decanter* World Wine Awards Regional Chair for Tuscany



**Annette Scarfe** divides her time between the UK and Singapore, consulting for restaurants including Sake No Hana, Cha Cha Moon and Princi

**Anthony Rose** is a multi-award winning writer, and the wine correspondent for UK broadsheet *The Independent*

**Peter McCombie MW** is a restaurant wine consultant, writer, judge and educator, and an authority on the wines of Italy

**Margaret Rand** is a regular contributor to *Decanter* and the general editor of Hugh Johnson's *Pocket Wine Book*

**Also tasting: Andy Howard** is a wine buyer at UK supermarket Marks & Spencer, responsible for buying Italian wines, among many other regions

**Also tasting: Philippe Messy** is co-patron of Chabrot Bistrot d'Amis in Knightsbridge. He has opened several restaurants, including London's L'Etranger

as a whole was surprised by how accessible and enjoyable the wines were now, which isn't necessarily a bad thing. So even though some panel members – Rose and Brook in particular – had 'huge mixed feelings about the vintage', as Rose put it, the take-home message about Barolo 2006 is that if you use these results as a guide and stick with a reliable producer, you can buy with confidence. And if you can afford to buy a case or two, try a bottle once a year to determine at what age you like this Barolo vintage best. Just don't expect it to last until the middle of the century.



“The wines are very approachable now, but how long will they last?”

Annette Scarfe

\*While many Barolos do not list the commune on the label, we have done so here for information purposes. We have not included them in wines which are a blend of more than one commune.

**5** **Decanter Award**  
-star wines 18.5–20pts



**Podere Ruggeri Corsini, San Pietro, Monforte d'Alba\*** 19.125pts/20

POA Revino

Complex, aromatic, spicy, savoury and floral perfume. Lovely purity and very structured, with a fine-grained tannic entry, ripe tarry fruit and real intensity. Layered with fine backbone and a touch of minerality. Long.

**Drink:** 2013–2025. **Alcohol:** 14.5%



**Fratelli Revello, Rocche dell'Annunziata, La Morra** 18.83

£57.03 Goedhuis

Classic nose with hints of savoury, truffle, meat, good oak, prune, vanilla, blackberry and prune. Concentrated, full-bodied style with dry, firm tannins and high acidity framing dark, deep fruit. Needs time but all the elements are there. **Drink:** 2015–2025. **Alc:** 14.5%



**Andrea Oberto, Vigneto Albarella, Barolo** 18.7

£43 Astrum

Subtly aromatic potpourri nose with violets, dark fruit, tobacco and ripe plums. Traditional style with juicy acidity, quite sturdy tannins and well-integrated oak. Great potential – a benchmark, polished Barolo.

Complex. **Drink:** 2012–2020. **Alc:** 14.5%



**Cascina Ballarin, Bracco Rocca, La Morra** 18.7

N/A UK [www.cascinaballarin.it](http://www.cascinaballarin.it)

Relatively youthful aroma of oak, sweet spice, earth, orange peel, mocha and perfume. Suave, rounded and fleshy palate with generous, fresh and lively fruit and firm yet ripe tannins. Modern without being excessively oaky. Good potential. **Drink:** 2012–2023. **Alc:** 14.5%

# Decanter PANEL TASTING

## 5 Decanter Award 18.5-20pts

-star wines



### Crissante Alessandria, Roggeri, La Morra 18.67

N/A UK +39 33 33 67 14 99

Subdued aromas but all necessary elements are there: black cherry fruit, orange rind and cinnamon sticks. Very fresh, juicy fruit palate, dark, bitter chocolate flavours and ripe, firm tannins. Excellent use of oak on this full-bodied wine. Very good potential. **Drink:** 2014-2025. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Michele Chiarlo, Cerequio, La Morra 18.67

£54.99 Hallgarten Druitt, Slurp

Rich, elegant bouquet of tar, woodsmoke, flowers, spice, tobacco and cherry fruit. Delicate yet quite rich and powerful intensity, with fine concentration of fruit, very elegant tannins and some complexity. A few layers there. Fine potential. **Drink:** 2014-2024. **Alc:** 14%



### Poderi Aldo Conterno, Romirasco, Monforte d'Alba 18.63

£116-£154 Liberty Wines, Slurp, Swig

Good varietal character and typicity: cocoa, red cherry, vanilla oak, fennel, cassis and incense. Youthful, vivid and modern with dark berry fruit, spice and a sinewy structure. Lovely, lush, elegant. **Drink:** 2012-2016. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Le Strette, Bergera Pezzole, Novello 18.5

N/A UK [www.lestrette.com](http://www.lestrette.com)

Dominant oak, fresh and cooked black cherry, plum, cashew, aniseed and parma violet perfume. Very good concentration of red fruit and spice, excellent tannins and acidity. Very good potential - all the elements are there to be very fine. **Drink:** 2013-2025. **Alc:** 14%

## 4 Highly Recommended 16.5-18.49pts

star wines



### Bric Cenciurio & Pittatore Sacchetto, Fiorella, Coste di Rose, Barolo 17.83

N/A UK [www.briccenciurio.com](http://www.briccenciurio.com)

Very ripe cherry, Port, tar, smoke, sweet spice, minerals, earth and flowers on the nose. Grippy tannins and a liveliness from acidity. It grows on the palate to give a long, robust finish. Moreish and complex. **Drink:** 2013-2019. **Alc:** 14%



### Podere Ruggeri Corsini, Corsini, Monforte d'Alba 17.83

POA Revino

Subtle blackberry, blueberry, cinnamon, toast and floral perfume. Lovely concentrated and classy fruit which has been excellently put together. It has firm but not aggressive tannins. Classy and classic. **Drink:** 2012-2019. **Alc:** 14%



### Cascina Adelaide, Preda 17.75

N/A UK [www.cascinaadelaide.com](http://www.cascinaadelaide.com)

Very appealing aromas of truffle, mushroom, smoky oak, red fruit, thyme and herb characters. Already accessible and very attractive palate offering fresh fruit, well-worked acidity and tannins. Pure flavours; high class. **Drink:** 2013-2020. **Alc:** 14%



### Cascina Ballarin, Bussia, Monforte d'Alba 17.67

N/A UK [www.cascinaballarin.it](http://www.cascinaballarin.it)

Coffee, raspberry, undergrowth, rose and vanilla oak bouquet. Pretty, delicate red fruit with poise, firm acidity and smooth but dry tannins. Solid, structured wine with a prune finish. Modern but delicious. **Drink:** 2012-2019. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Massolino, Margheira, Serralunga d'Alba 17.67

£64.95-£69.99 Liberty Wines, Slurp, Swig

Concentrated rich morello cherry, rose, tar, violet and mineral aromas. Classic big Barolo: vibrant and bright and has lots of complexity. It has chewy, dry tannins, good concentration and flavour. Needs food. **Drink:** 2012-2016. **Alc:** 14%



### Rocca Giovanni, Monforte d'Alba 17.67

£20 Continental & Overseas ●

Hugely complex and attractive nose of rosehip, red fruit, smoke, spice, leather, tobacco and herbs. Refreshing style with a lean structure, lively intense flavour and firm tannic backbone. Traditional style. **Drink:** 2012-2022. **Alc:** 14%



## Highly Recommended (continued) 16.5–18.49pts



### Schiavenza, Bricco Cerretta, Serralunga d'Alba 17.67

N/A UK [www.schiavenza.com](http://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](http://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%



## Highly Recommended (continued) 16.5–18.49pts



### Poderi Aldo Conterno, Cicala, Monforte d'Alba 17.33

£119.95 Liberty Wines

Opulent, rich and robust bouquet of cherry, violet, rose and spice. A substantial wine with a big finish. Serious, succulent and well-made Barolo packed with fruit, ripe tannins and excellent balance. Has swagger and drive.

**Drink:** From 2013. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Tenuta Rocca, Monforte d'Alba 17.33

£30–£50 Decorum, Grossi

Vanilla oak, strawberry, chocolate creams, violet and a floral fruit fragrance. Fine-flavoured, brambly Nebbiolo fruit with a firm, classic tannin structure, high acidity and modern accessible flavours. Needs food but has lots of appeal.

**Drink:** 2012–2018. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Col dei Venti, Tufo Blu 17.25

N/A UK [www.coldeiventi.com](http://www.coldeiventi.com)

Complex aromas of red and blackberry fruit, vanilla, orange rind, charcoal, tar, truffle and plum. Good concentration of ripe fruit and tannins which, although youthful, are still elegant and ripe. Should age very well.

**Drink:** 2013–2020. **Alc:** 14%



### Fratelli Revello, Vigna Gattera, La Morra 17.25

£29.53 Goedhuis

Very sweet nose of bright red cherry and spice. Juicy, ripe fruit, sweet tannins and good acidity. Has a nice lick of new oak and spice. Will be very good in about four years. Well balanced.

**Drink:** 2015–2020. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Renato Ratti, Marcenasco, La Morra 17.25

£29–£36 Fine & Rare, Marks & Spencer, RS Wines

Nose dominated by inky oak, tar, ripe dark fruit and vegetal notes. Full-bodied wine with juicy fruit on the palate, grippy tannins and lots of new oak dominating. Great extract and ripe fruit flavours which could be spectacular in time.

**Drink:** 2014–2025. **Alc:** 14%



### Fratelli Revello, Vigna Giachini, La Morra 17.17

£35.53 Goedhuis

Lush, ripe cherry and lovely floral evolution of tar and roses. Fairly rich and supple palate with ripe tannins and a big mouthful of fruit – solid and structured. Serious and weighty with a firm, fresh backbone. Power, finesse and promise.

**Drink:** 2013–2025. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Fratelli Revello, Vigna Conca, La Morra 17.17

£39.03 Goedhuis

Restrained rosehip, fine spice and pepper bouquet. Open and forward palate which is appealing, rich and seductive. Very good, intense dark berry fruit, nicely integrated, sinewy structure and very good overall balance.

**Drink:** 2013–2025. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Schiavenza, Prapò, Serralunga d'Alba 17.17

£33.95 Uncorked

Concentrated spice, chocolate, iron, meat, aniseed and savoury aromas. The palate matches the nose – elegant with savoury fruit, chewy tannins and a muscular frame. A very traditional style. Needs time.

**Drink:** 2012–2015. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Schiavenza, Broglio, Serralunga d'Alba 17.17

N/A UK [www.schiavenza.com](http://www.schiavenza.com)

Pure, lifted and intense raspberry, vanilla, spice and mineral aromas. An attractive wine with plenty of tannic grip – it is powerful but not overbearing. Sleek in texture with a spicy, energetic character. Long and perfumed.

**Drink:** From 2014. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Bosco Agostino, La Serra, La Morra 17

N/A UK [www.barolobosco.com](http://www.barolobosco.com)

Zesty berry fruit, sweet spice and a savoury balsamic bouquet. Rich and concentrated with firm tannins, structure and acidity. Bags of life in it yet – it is elegant, tight and vivacious. Stylish and long.

**Drink:** 2013–2021. **Alc:** 14%



### Claudio Alario, Riva, Verduno 17

£35 Wine Treasury

Traditional expressive aromas of violets, spice, meat, hazelnuts, walnuts and toasty oak. Open and ripe with a soft, generous palate but lots of tannins providing structure. Not a blockbuster, but elegant and shows potential to develop.

**Drink:** 2015–2022. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Elio Grasso, Gavarini Chiniera 17

£59–£69 Christopher Keiller, Fine & Rare

Open, complex aromas of red berry, orange peel, violet, sweet spice and mint. A rich and full style with smooth, polished tannins, weight, grip and persistence. Complex and elegant – quite an assertive style.

**Drink:** 2012–2019. **Alc:** 14%



## Highly Recommended (continued) 16.5–18.49pts



### Enzo Boglietti, Arione 17

£45 The Wine Society

Classic Barolo aromas of morello cherry, violets, liquorice and oak. Very enjoyable but traditional style with good weight, nice acidity and integrated oak, although the tannins are grippy now. Has enough fruit to develop well.

**Drink:** 2014–2020. **Alc:** 14%



### Franco Conterno, Bussia Munie, Monforte d'Alba 17

N/A UK [www.francoconterno.it](http://www.francoconterno.it)

Aromatic, ripe rose, smoke, cedar, tobacco and bramble fruit bouquet. Finely structured with delicacy and power – a blend of fine, firm tannins and lingering sweet fruit. A solid, muscular style; tannins need time to integrate.

**Drink:** 2013–2020. **Alc:** 14%



### Mauro Molino, Vigna Conca, La Morra 17

£46.50 Champagnes & Châteaux

Cedar oak, leather and complex floral perfume. A classic Barolo – even down to the powerful, slightly dry tannins. Very, very good. Dark fruit concentration that is sinewy, juicy and satisfying.

**Drink:** 2012–2017. **Alc:** 15%



### Negretti, Mirau, La Morra 17

N/A UK [www.negrettivini.com](http://www.negrettivini.com)

Creamy vanilla oak, strawberry, cherry and spice aromas. Showing some floral touches with high but rounded tannins and a juicy, cinnamon-laced fruit salad flavour.

**Drink:** 2012–2018. **Alc:** 14%



### Rivetto, Serralunga, Serralunga d'Alba 17

£30 Ellis of Richmond

Rich, forthright cherry fruit, open spice, earth and mineral perfume. Great texture, bright, savoury fruit and a nice lift on the palate.

Elegant and well-made with fine grip and structure. Has weight, power and persistence.

**Drink:** From 2015. **Alc:** 14%



### San Biagio, Rocchettevino, La Morra 17

£24 Natura Amore

Dark cherry, spice and wild strawberry on the nose. Modern style emphasising ripe cherry fruit, juicy acidity and a nice touch of vanilla oak.

A well-made, elegant, feminine style with rounded tannins.

**Drink:** 2011–2018. **Alc:** 14%



### Berutti Pietro, La Spinona, Sori Gopin 16.92

N/A UK [www.laspinonabarbaresco.it](http://www.laspinonabarbaresco.it)

Restrained yet attractive Nebbiolo complexity on the nose: red and black fruit, spice, tobacco and perfume. Juicy strawberry fruit on the palate with refreshing acidity. Elegant style with high but integrated tannins and richness of flavour.

**Drink:** 2011–2018. **Alc:** 14%



### Bersano, Badarina, Serralunga d'Alba 16.9

£45 Alivini

Spice, aniseed, sweet nuts, vanilla pod and ripe forest fruit bouquet. Juicy and vibrant palate with lively acidity and supple tannins. A classic structure and a nicely aromatic expression of Nebbiolo. Has great finesse.

**Drink:** 2012–2016. **Alc:** 14%



### Cascina Cucco, Cerrati, Vigna Cucco, Serralunga d'Alba 16.83

£41 Gauthier

Perfectly ripe bramble fruit, cream, chocolate and eucalyptus aromas. Intensely concentrated, traditional style wine with bright, fresh cherry, berry and tar flavours. Muscular and intense, ripe and rich.

**Drink:** 2012–2015. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Ferdinando Principiano, Serralunga, Serralunga d'Alba 16.83

£29.95 Amps, Butlers, Define, Noel Young, Quaff, Reserve Wines, The Sampler, Secret Cellar, Vineking, WoodWinters, Worth Bros

Fresh fruit, subtle tannins and defined structure which is elegant and feminine. It improves as it aerates. Classic.

**Drink:** 2012–2013. **Alc:** 14%



### Fontanafredda, Vigna La Rosa, Serralunga d'Alba 16.83

£51 Slurp

Lovely ripeness on the nose of porcini, black olives, ripe plums and baked apples. Rich, smooth and ripe dark berry palate showing lovely definition and balance. A vivid, fruit-driven style.

**Drink:** 2012–2020. **Alc:** 14%



### Oddero, Brunate, La Morra 16.83

N/A UK [www.oddero.it](http://www.oddero.it)

Fragrant red fruit, tar, flowers, shoe polish, volatile acidity and a whiff of bramble and spicy minerals. Old-school style which is very serious. Quite evolved flavours on a firm and dry palate. Has a fine backbone and good depth.

**Drink:** 2014–2025. **Alc:** 14%



# Decanter PANEL TASTING



## Highly Recommended (continued) 16.5–18.49pts



### Sandrone Luciano, Le Vigne, Barolo 16.83

£123 Berry Bros & Rudd

Muted but juicy, sweet cherry fruit on the nose. Strawberry jam flavours on the palate surrounded by good acidity and ripe, silky tannins. Needs time but should develop well.

**Drink:** 2015–2025. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Vladimiro Rambaldi, Il Lauro, La Morra 16.83

N/A UK [www.ibastionivini.com](http://www.ibastionivini.com)

Oak, red berry, lush black cherry, earth and spice nose with herb and floral notes. Ambitiously structured with grip and concentrated red fruit.

Potentially great wine with moderate tannins and accessible fruit. **Drink:** 2012–2023. **Alc:** 14%



### Poderi Aldo Conterno, Colonnello, Monforte d'Alba 16.8

£119.95 Liberty Wines

Blunt aroma of rosehip, cough mixture and compote. Traditional-style with savoury and herbal notes underpinning juicy, redcurrant fruit. Structured with firm acidity, minerals and grip. Has potential. **Drink:** 2012–2020. **Alc:** 14.5%



### E Pira & Figli, Chiara Boschis, Via Nuova 16.75

£41–£52 Berry Bros & Rudd, Fine & Rare

Hints of smoke, meat, sweet cherry menthol, red apple and nutmeg on the nose. Feminine palate: lifted red fruit, high acidity and chunky tannins.

Balanced and long. **Drink:** 2013–2018. **Alc:** 14%

*“What came across was the immediate drinkability of these wines, but sometimes at the expense of complexity”*

Jane Hunt MW



### Eraldo Viberti, Rocchettevino 16.75

N/A UK [www.eraldoviberti.com](http://www.eraldoviberti.com)

Intense, complex, inviting spice and vegetal aromas. Elegant, full-bodied wine with good concentration and balance of red fruit, new oak, spice and tannins. Has good potential. High class. **Drink:** 2014–2022. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Fratelli Alessandria, Monvigliero, Verduno 16.75

£40.85 Berry Bros & Rudd

Classic nose of spice, dark fruit, violets, redcurrant, cranberry and pastry crust. Firm, austere and elegant palate with crunchy tannins and well-balanced oak. It is fresh and just ripe – a food wine. **Drink:** 2012–2017. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Silvano Bolmida, Vigne dei Fantini, Monforte d'Alba 16.75

N/A UK [www.silvanobolmida.com](http://www.silvanobolmida.com)

Stewed rasins, animal notes and bright fruit aromas. Attractive palate of juicy red fruit and fresh acidity with slightly drying tannins. Oak dominates at present but it is smooth, round and forward. **Drink:** 2012–2016 **Alc:** 14%



### Rocche dei Manzoni, Vigna d'la Roul, Monforte d'Alba 16.7

POA Decorum Vintners

Oxidative style: medicine and tea nose. A big, complex wine with fine dark glycerol fruit, tobacco notes and big, austere tannins. Textural, mineral and authentic with fine potential. Long and mouthcoating. **Drink:** 2015–2028 **Alc:** 14.5%



### Cascina Bongiovanni, Castiglione Falletto 16.67

£45 Colasanti

Shy aromas of vanilla, caramel, plum, brine and cinnamon. Youthful palate showing fresh apple, raspberry, and liquorice with firm oak tannins. Approachable but with Barolo's classic, muscular finish. **Drink:** 2011–2014 **Alc:** 14.5%



### Castello di Verduno, Massara, Verduno 16.67

£35 Lay & Wheeler

Rich tar, smoke, vegetal, earth and spice nose. A powerful but not extracted wine with excellent fruit and drive, firm but ripe tannins and a long, spicy finish. Rich, full-bodied and concentrated; it needs time. **Drink:** 2014–2019 **Alc:** 14%



### Costa di Bussia, Monforte d'Alba 16.67

£29.99 Hallgarten Druitt

Ripe spice and tobacco nose that is shy now. Structured palate with a firm tannic grip, youthful, mineral-laden red and black fruit and bright acidity in support. Ripe, long and poised but not ready yet. **Drink:** 2014–2026 **Alc:** 14%



## Highly Recommended (continued) 16.5–18.49pts



### Deltetto, Sistaglia, Monforte d'Alba 16.67

POA Liberty Wines

Vibrant bouquet of minerals, spice, lifted red and black fruit and savoury notes. Lovely ripe, uplifting, lush fruit with excellent balance and integration of oak. Classic in style, albeit chunky and chewy tannins. **Drink:** 2012–2019 **Alc:** 14.5%



### Manzone Giovanni, Bricat, Monforte d'Alba 16.67

£28 Lay & Wheeler

Quite complex bouquet of oak, spice, rose, red berry, earth and jam. Sleek with firm, stylish tannins balanced by good acidity. Multilayered wine with good depth, concentration and definition. Needs time. **Drink:** From 2012. **Alc:** 14.5%



### Pecchenino, San Giuseppe, Monforte d'Alba 16.67

£36 Winetraders

Firm tar nose with classic dark berry, cherry, coconut, black pepper and nutmeg notes. Fresh, uplifting and beautifully balanced with pristine ripe fruit and classic mouthfilling tannins. Taut and elegant. **Drink:** 2012–2018 **Alc:** 14%



### Sandrone Luciano, Cannubi Boschis, Barolo 16.67

£123 Berry Bros & Rudd

Attractively spicy and aromatic nose of creamy vanilla oak. A chunky aromatic style with stewed fruit flavours, juicy acidity and integrated tannins. With an attractive veneer of vanilla oak, it is a well-crafted and balanced wine.

**Drink:** 2012–2016 **Alc:** 14.5%

*“You had that lush attack – soft, opulent, lots of fruit – and then the tannins crept up on the mid-palate”*

Peter McCombie MW



### Cordero di Montezemolo, Monfalletto, La Morra 16.6

£41 Eurowines, Everywine

Creamy vanilla and carrot notes on the nose. A mouthful of juicy, savoury, vegetal fruit and rosehips with nicely integrated tight tannins and fresh acidity. A sleek, successful wine with a big, sweet finish. **Drink:** 2011–2013 **Alc:** 14.5%



### Casetta, Vigna Case Nere, La Morra 16.5

N/A UK [www.flli-casetta.it](http://www.flli-casetta.it)

Good complexity on the nose: fine oak and stalky, ripe fruit. Ripe fruit palate with concentration, lovely tannins and texture. Oak is evident now and it needs time, but it will be very good. **Drink:** 2013–2020 **Alc:** 14%



### Dezzani 16.5

£27 Eurowines

Ripe, discreet raspberry fruit, sweet spice, violet, earth and herbal aromas. Fairly rich and juicy with some weight and concentration. It has plenty of tannic grip and drive. Quite moreish with a long length. **Drink:** 2013–2020 **Alc:** 14%



### Fratelli Revello, La Morra 16.5

£23.03 Goedhuis

Lean, precise red and black fruit, oak, coffee, spice, orange, smoke and mineral bouquet. Rich, plump, soft attack with hefty, ripe tannins on the mid-palate. A powerful style but not clumsy. Nice depth. **Drink:** 2014–2020 **Alc:** 14.5%



### Gianni Gagliardo, Serre 16.5

N/A UK [www.gagliardo.it](http://www.gagliardo.it)

Very typical and beguiling aromas of truffle, spice, violets, cinnamon, red fruit and strawberry. Youthful palate of grippy tannins, high acidity, prevalent oak and integrated black fruit flavours. Excellent ageing potential.

**Drink:** 2012–2018 **Alc:** 14%



### Monti, Bussia, Monforte d'Alba 16.5

N/A UK [www.paolomonti.com](http://www.paolomonti.com)

Vegetal notes with new oak, savoury, earth and jammy fruit aromas. Good, concentrated savoury and sweet fruit palate with a hint of integrated vanilla oak. Subtle and restrained in style with very attractive freshness, balance and finesse. **Drink:** 2012–2018 **Alc:** 14.5%



### Pio Cesare, Ornato, Serralunga d'Alba 16.5

£60–£65 Handford, Irvine Robertson, Mondial, Partridges, Portland Wine, Slurp

Savoury, exotic nose of rose and oak. A classic, big Barolo that is very sleek, confident and well made. Rich, suave, tight and concentrated with a big finish. **Drink:** From 2015 **Alc:** 14.5%

# Decanter PANEL TASTING



## 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](http://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	<a href="http://www.eliofilippino.com">www.eliofilippino.com</a>
Azelia, San Rocco, Serralunga d'Alba	16.33	Evolved aroma of spice, rose, minerals, vanilla, lots of oak and confectioned 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	<a href="http://www.carome.com">www.carome.com</a>
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	<a href="http://www.francoconterno.it">www.francoconterno.it</a>
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	<a href="http://www.oddero.it">www.oddero.it</a>
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	<a href="http://www.diegoconterno.it">www.diegoconterno.it</a>
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	<a href="http://www.laquerciola.com">www.laquerciola.com</a>
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	<a href="http://www.alessandroveglio.com">www.alessandroveglio.com</a>
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	Hallgarten 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	<a href="http://www.grimaldivini.com">www.grimaldivini.com</a>
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	<a href="http://www.bussiasoprana.it">www.bussiasoprana.it</a>
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	<a href="http://www.cagliero.com">www.cagliero.com</a>
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	<a href="http://www.cascinaadelaide.com">www.cascinaadelaide.com</a>

## 3-STAR WINES Recommended (continued)

14.5-16.49pts

WINE	SCORE	TASTING NOTE	ALC	DRINK	PRICE	STOCKISTS
Cascina del Monastero, Annunziata, La Morra	16	Evolved aromas of sweet spice, oak, ripe red and black fruit. Rich and supple with decent concentration. Has tannic grip and some nice fruit with a good structure.	14.5%	2012-2019	N/A UK	www.cascinadelmonastero.it
Enzo Boglietti, Fossati, La Morra	16	Baked aroma of strawberry jam, dark fruit, spice, earth and smoke. Balanced with sweet tannins and several layers. It is rich, supple and a bit soupy now.	14%	2011-2016	£45	The Wine Society
Fontanafredda, Serralunga d'Alba	16	Fresh, crushed berry, smoke, oak and violet perfume. Evolved, plummy and full palate with spice, drive and concentration, and a long perfumed length. Elegant.	14%	From 2014	£24.99	Slurp
Fratelli Alessandria, Gramolere, Monforte d'Alba	16	Earthy, funky, fruit compote nose. Delicious soft red plum fruit with hints of cinnamon. Approachable now but has quite hard tannins.	14%	2012-2018	£40.35	Berry Bros & Rudd
Gianni Gagliardo, Cannubi, Barolo	16	Rose, violet, spice, red berry and cheese nose. Ripe, rich, concentrated fruit showing good integration and a few layers. Nice classic tannin structure.	14%	2012-2018	N/A UK	www.gagliardo.it
Luigi Baudana, Cerretta, Serralunga d'Alba	16	Open chocolate, spice, red berry, cherry, earth, tar and coffee nose. Powerful, complex and chunky wine with plenty of fruit and super-silky tannins.	15%	From 2013	£49	Christopher Piper
Manzone Giovanni, Le Gramolere, Monforte d'Alba	16	Lifted violet, spice, redcurrant and rosehip bouquet. Lively redcurrant fruit with medicinal notes. Modern, youthful with firm, round tannins. Quite long.	14%	2012-2018	£24	Lay & Wheeler
Mario Giribaldi, La Morra	16	Marmite, beef, and light summer fruit nose. Soft, slightly jammy palate - atypical character with good acidity and ripe tannins. Unusual style but nice!	14%	2012-2018	£25.99	Arth Wines, Last Drop, Mumbles Fine Wines, Wellswold Wines
Mauro Veglio, Rocche dell'Annunziata, La Morra	16	Sweet, ripe cherry, spice and violet perfume. Elegant and classy wine with a sleek, silky texture and graceful style. Fine acidity gives it finesse and poise.	14.5%	From 2012	£59.99	The Winery
Parusso, Bussia	16	Citrus, strawberry, sweet spice, clove and coffee bean aromas. Soft palate with plump fruit flavours. Commercially attractive, although not traditional.	14%	2012-2018	£50	The Wine Society
Rocca Giovanni, Bricco Ravera, Monforte d'Alba	16	Spice, aniseed, fruitcake, caramelised nuts and toasty oak. Spicy, almost juicy and elegant in this vintage. Enjoyably fruity and approachably robust palate.	14%	2012-2015	£30	Continental & Overseas
Tenimenti Ca' Bianca, La Morra	16	Hints of spice, violet, red fruit and white pepper aromas. Decent palate with some bright, fresh fruit, great balance of oak and extract of acidity. Attractive style.	14%	2013-2020	£19.99	C&T Licata
Asda, Extra Special	15.83	Open sweet spice, tobacco, coffee and light red fruit nose. Intense, rich and rounded red fruit with floral spice, very grippy tannins and lingering sweet fruit.	14%	2012-2022	£15.98	Asda
Azelia, Bricco Fiasco, Castiglione Falletto	15.83	Robust cherry, berry, sweet oak and spice aroma. Lush, broad, modern and fleshy style with sweet fruit and toasty, mocha tones adding complexity. Round tannins.	14.5%	From 2013	£44.03	Justerini & Brooks
Cavallotto, Bricco Boschis, Castiglione Falletto	15.83	Ripe cherry, roasted coffee and dried sage aroma. Juicy and approachable in the context of the vintage with zesty acidity, high, savoury tannins and a long finish.	14.5%	2012-2014	£35-£45	Goedhuis, Lay & Wheeler
Ceste, Monforte d'Alba	15.83	Tar, berry fruit, toast, vegetal and herbal nose. Balanced with intense, ripe dark fruit, vivid fresh acidity, grippy tannins and complexity of flavour.	14.5%	2012-2018	N/A UK	www.cestevini.com
Elio Grasso, Ginestra, Casa Maté	15.83	Creamy vanilla oak and brooding Nebbiolo fragrance. Modern style showing good dark berry fruit, polished vanilla oak and accessible tannins. Powerful.	14%	2012-2015	£61-£66	Christopher Keller, Fine & Rare
Eraldo Viberti, La Morra	15.83	Restrained leather and spice nose. Traditional style with stewed fruit and leather notes. Still juicy acidity with rounded tannins and lovely seductive fruit.	14.5%	2012-2014	N/A UK	www.eraldoviberti.com
Michele Chiaro, Tortoniano, La Morra	15.83	Youthful aromas of tobacco and cedar oak. Strawberries-and-cream palate surrounded by fresh acidity and chewy tannins. A serious wine that will improve.	13.5%	2012-2014	£31.99-£34.95	Everywine, Fintry Wines, Slurp, Strictly Wine, WineDirect, Wine Poole
Oddero	15.83	Juicy dark berry Nebbiolo fruit and medicinal cherry aroma. Approachable style with delicate use of oak, baked fruit flavours and sufficient acidity to last.	14%	2012-2014	£22.79	Ocado, Waitrose
Pietro Rinaldi, Monvigliero, Verduno	15.83	Spice, earth, flowers, red berry and herbal aromas. Rich, solid wine with elegant chunky tannins. Nicely balanced and weighty; made in an old-fashioned style.	14%	2014-2019	N/A UK	www.pietrorinaldi.com
Tenuta Carretta, Cascina Ferrero, Barolo	15.83	Herb, floral spice, stewed fruit, cherry, raspberry and mint nose. With sweet fruit and sweet tannins, it is broad, plump and generous. Acidity gives some zest.	13.5%	2012-2015	£18	Vinissimo
Tenuta Rocca, San Pietro, Monforte d'Alba	15.83	Delicate, lifted, charming raspberry aromas. Supple attack, forward, sleek texture and juicy acidity. Elegant rather than profound, evolved and agreeable wine.	14.5%	From 2013	£40-£60	Decorum, Grossi
Vietti, Castiglione, Castiglione Falletto	15.83	Pronounced ripe black cherry, dark chocolate, espresso and savoury aromas. Shy, foursquare fruit with fresh berries and noticeable tannins. Very traditional.	14%	From 2012	£35	Vinum
Marcarini, La Serra, La Morra	15.75	Bright eucalyptus and fresh cooked cherry bouquet. Meaty traditional flavours with chunky tannins and good acidity. Good balance and should evolve well.	14%	2012-2018	£37.80	Berry Bros & Rudd
Terre da Vino, Essenze	15.75	Roasted chestnut, powerful oak, morello cherry and spice bouquet. Closed on the palate but lots of oak flavour and grippy tannins. Modern; fruit is dense and rich.	14%	2013-2018	£24	Everywine, Imbros, Vinum
Batasiolo, La Corda della Briccolina, Serralunga d'Alba	15.67	Full, rich, spicy, vegetal and earth aromas. Youthful sweet plum and dark berry fruit palate with firm tannin and incisive acidity. Fruit and complexity balance.	14.5%	2012-2015	£53	Mondial
Boroli, Villero	15.67	Nice spice and oak perfume. Full-body, good spicy fruit flavours and dense concentration. All harmonious and well balanced.	14%	2012-2016	£44.95	Profumo di Vino
Bruna Grimaldi, Camilla, Grinzane Cavour	15.67	Coffee, dark fruit, sweet spice, wood, oak, herb and floral bouquet. Very smooth with balanced tannins and good acidity. Good substance and great depth.	14.5%	Now-2015	N/A UK	www.grimaldiBruna.it
Bruna Grimaldi, Badarina, Serralunga d'Alba	15.67	Grass, herbal, vegetal, wild berry and spice aromas. Floral palate with fresh damson fruit and Bovril notes, soft rounded tannins and juicy acidity. Rustic style.	14.5%	2013-2017	N/A UK	www.grimaldiBruna.it
Cascina Cucco, Cerrati, Serralunga d'Alba	15.67	Shoe polish, earth, rose, vanilla, cedar and oak aromas. Oxidative style with chewy, grainy tannins and well-crafted purity. Fine structure, poise and vinosity.	14%	2012-2020	N/A UK	www.cascinacucco.com
Casetta, La Morra	15.67	Oxidative and floral perfume. Pleasant, approachable style which is very tannic. Savoury leathery notes combine with spicy, medicinal fruit. Needs time.	13.5%	From 2012	£20	Belloni, Le Bon Vin
Crissante Alessandria, Capalot, La Morra	15.67	Ripe cherry fruit, burnt rubber, spice, mint and woodsmoke bouquet. Sweet tannins and a grippy mid-palate. Seems to lack a bit of fruit.	14.5%	From 2014	N/A UK	+39 33 33 67 14 99
Josetta Saffirio, Persiera, Monforte d'Alba	15.67	Youthful dark fruit, spice, leather, lees and cedar oak bouquet. Attractive but not so typical although rustic. Spicy raspberry fruit surrounded by firm tannins.	13.5%	2013-2019	N/A UK	www.josettasaffirio.com
Le Strette, Bergeisa, Barolo	15.67	Stylish nose of stewed strawberry, minerals and robust cherry fruit. Sleek and characterful with dry tannins. Austere with good acidity and delicious fruit.	14%	From 2012	N/A UK	www.lestrette.com
Monchiero, Rocche	15.67	Subtle, elegant perfume of cherry, spice, oak and flowers. Good, clean and bright red fruit and a subtle gaminess. Well structured with high tannins and acidity.	14%	2012-2016	N/A UK	www.monchierovini.it
Rocche del Manzoni, Big 'd Big, Monforte d'Alba	15.67	Minerals, rose, violet, oak and confectioned aromas. Rich, broad and juicy palate with lift and drive. Lightweight except for the tannins. Long and solid finish.	14%	From 2013	POA	Decorum

# Decanter PANEL TASTING

## 3-STAR WINES Recommended (continued)

WINE	SCORE	TASTING NOTE	14.5-16.49pts		PRICE	STOCKISTS
			ALC	DRINK		
San Biagio, Sori del Rovere, La Morra	15.67	Fragrant blackberry, currants, toasted hazelnuts and cloves. Traditional floral and fruity palate with complexity, smooth tannins and uplifting acidity.	14%	2012-2015	£24	Natura Amore
San Biagio, Pria-Capalot, La Morra	15.67	Balsamic, earth, spice, cigar box, red berries, oak and rose perfume. Dried and medicinal sweet fruit flavours - and a firm, dry finish. Has some persistence.	14%	2014-2021	£24	Natura Amore
Scarzello, Vigna Merenda, Barolo	15.58	Inviting red and black fruit aroma. Has very attractive, subtle, tangy fruit, supple tannins, well balanced acidity and a lively fruit character. Delicious.	14%	2011-2015	POA	Phoenix Wine Agencies
Ascheri, Sorano, Serralunga d'Alba	15.5	Concentrated spice, black fruit and floral aromas. Approachable, old-fashioned style with juicy, dark berry fruit and a foursquare tannic frame. Needs time.	14%	From 2012	£34.99	Enotria
Le Cecche, Serralunga d'Alba	15.5	Fresh aromas of vanilla oak, raspberry and bright red cherry fruit. Good, traditional style with fragrant and juicy Nebbiolo fruit. Grows on you slowly.	14%	2012-2015	N/A UK	www.leceche.com
Olivero, La Morra	15.5	Savoury nose with spice, dark fruit and liquorice which is traditional in style. Dry tannins but it has good concentration. Needs time to develop complexity.	14%	2015-2022	N/A UK	www.oliveromario.com
Tenuta Montanello	15.5	Restrained strawberry, spiced plum and dark cherry aromas. Ripe plum and cherry fruitiness with creamy tannins and fresh acidity. Will integrate further.	14.5%	2011-2013	N/A UK	www.tenutamontanello.it
Virna, Preda Sarmassa, Barolo	15.5	Toasty, dark fruit, cedar, lavender and raspberry bouquet. Ripe but earthy style with grippy tannins. Traditional, with tart acidity and a firm finish.	14%	2011-2015	£29.30	Colombier
Bric Cenciurio & Pittatore Sacchetto Fiorella, Barolo	15.33	Medicinal nose. Baked spicy fruit, flowers and herbs on the palate surrounded by brisk tannins. Relatively open style with warm alcohol weight.	14%	2012-2013	N/A UK	www.briccenciurio.com
Enzo Boglietti, Casa Nere, La Morra	15.33	Traditional aromas of cedar oak, sweet fruit and spice. Leather and wild red berry flavours with juicy acidity on the chewy yet sleek palate. Good depth.	14%	2012-2013	£45	The Wine Society
La Querciola, Donna Bianca, Barolo	15.33	Open aroma of spice, flowers, red fruit, tar, tea and smoke. Firm, concentrated and very tannic old-fashioned style. Not knit yet, but it should come together.	14%	2014-2019	N/A UK	www.laquerciola.com
Marchesi di Barolo, Cannubi, Barolo	15.33	Dark chocolate, cocoa, kirsch, spicy dark berries and floral aromatics. Vivid, fresh and delicate with seductively ripe cherry and berry fruit and tangy acidity.	14%	2011-2016	£32	Try Wines
Monti, Monforte d'Alba	15.33	Fennel, Asian spice and rosehip aromas. Lean, with fresh acidity, attractively flavoured strawberry fruit, grippy tannins and a spicy finish.	14%	2013-2018	N/A UK	www.paolomonti.com
Paolo Scavino, Bric del Fiasc, Castiglione Falletto	15.33	Redcurrants, rose and jam on the nose. Ripe, structured entry with bold dark fruit, tar, rustic tannins and juicy acidity. Structured, youthful and elegant style.	14.5%	2012-2017	£62.03	Justerini & Brooks
Pio Cesare	15.33	Shy nose showing oak, sweet spice and dark fruit. Balanced and very smooth with some dry and dusty tannins. Good fruit depth and ample acidity. Pleasant.	14.5%	2013-2021	£40-£45	City Beverage Co, DK Vintners, Drinkshop, Goedhuis, Handford, Henderson, Mondial, Partridges, Planet of the Grapes, Slurp
Simone Scaletta, Chirlet, Monforte d'Alba	15.33	Fragrant, fresh cherry and berry fruit, spice, minerals, savoury and straw aromas. Fresh currant fruit on the palate with a zesty acidity and firm tannins.	14.5%	2011-2013	£29.95	Profumo di Vino
Terre da Vino, Paesi Tuoi	15.33	Wild red cherry bouquet. Sweet and evolved, juicy cherry palate with integrated Nebbiolo tannins and refreshing acidity. Relatively approachable.	13.5%	2011-2014	£19	Everywine, Harrods, Vinum
Villadoria, Sori Paradiso, Serralunga d'Alba	15.33	Roasted coffee, marzipan and synthetic aromas. Rich palate with carefully picked ripe fruit which is currently overwhelmed by oak. Very dry and extracted style.	14%	2012-2014	N/A UK	www.villadoria.it
Ca' Rome, Rapet, Serralunga d'Alba	15.17	Baked pastry case, red berry fruit, leaf, chocolate and chestnut bouquet. Totally old-school style, mellow, classy and classic with rustic, dry tannins.	14%	2012-2013	N/A UK	www.carome.com
Massolino, Serralunga d'Alba	15.17	Shy raspberry and vegetal aromas. Supple, juicy and evolved palate with minty fruit, nice structure and fine acidity with discreet tannins. Slightly subdued.	14%	From 2012	£41.99	Liberty Wines
Mauro Veglio, Castelletto, Monforte d'Alba	15.17	Open and pleasant aromas of tar, cherry pie and vanilla. Masculine style with a soft texture, ample sweet fruit and big, ripe tannins. Spicy and vigorous.	14.5%	From 2013	£42.99	The Winery
Monchiero, Roere	15.17	Tight aromas of spice, tobacco and red berries. Balanced, straightforward palate balanced by supple tannins and fair acidity. Stylish, rich and svelte.	14%	2013-2018	N/A UK	www.monchierovini.it
Negretti, Bricco Ambrogio, Roddi	15.17	Smoky oak, leather and spice bouquet. A subdued wine that is slightly vegetal with confected oak. Open with big tannins and is savoury and confident.	14.5%	2012-2013	N/A UK	www.negrettivini.com
Paolo Scavino, Carobric	15.17	Cinnamon, spice, strawberry, smoke and vanilla oak aroma. Youthful dark berry fruit with a polished, international veneer of vanilla oak and balancing tannins.	14%	2011-2015	£49.53	Justerini & Brooks
Sobrero Francesco, Ciabot Tanasio, Castiglione Falletto	15.17	Tar, cooked fruit, spice and floral perfume. Supple attack, attractive acidity and moderate tannins. Forward style with concentration if not depth.	14%	From 2012	N/A UK	www.sobrerofrancesco.it
Terre del Barolo, Vinum Vitae Est	15.17	Primary fruit, cold tea, spice, red and dark berry aromas. Pleasant wine with classy, firm tannins. Touch of oak which is starting to integrate.	14%	2012-2017	£15	Guy Anderson
Virna, Cannubi Boschis, Barolo	15.17	Open spice, cedar, stewed fruit, cherry bouquet. Rich, suave and concentrated with a big frame. Has flesh and grip, energy and length but isn't too extracted.	14%	From 2012	£30	Colombier
Brovia, Rocche, Castiglione Falletto	15	Confectured aroma of rosehip. Ripe redcurrant fruit which is linear and simple on the palate. Elegant style with fresh acidity and good structure.	14%	2012-2015	£45-£55	Bat & Bottle, Dudley-Jones, FortyFive10
Cascina del Monastero, Bricco Luciani, La Morra	15	Stewed fruit on the nose. Tight and a little raw at the moment although it will improve. A serious wine with integrated tannins and stewed fruit flavours.	14.5%	2011-2013	N/A UK	www.cascinadelmonastero.it
Cascina del Monastero, Bricco Riundo, La Morra	15	Minerals and fresh, red fruit aromas. Extremely dry and has some fruit but isn't classic in character. High, dry tannins and a medium finish.	14.5%	2012-2018	N/A UK	www.cascinadelmonastero.it
Comm GB Burlotto, Verduno	15	Restrained wild black cherry nose. Rather foursquare fruit quality, juicy acidity and rounded tannins. Pleasantly approachable and drinking now.	14%	2011-2013	£28.99	Cambridge Wine Merchants
Costa di Bussia, Campo dei Buoi, Monforte d'Alba	15	Rich smoke, cherry tar and burnt rubber aroma. Rich, juicy and concentrated with a decent length, but austere tannins. Has power and drive, needs time.	14%	From 2013	£34.99	Hallgarten Druitt
Costa di Bussia, Luigi Arnulfo, Monforte d'Alba	15	Burnt rubber, spice, stewed strawberry, raspberry and cherry bouquet. Rich, firm and concentrated with chewy tannins although not too austere. Has intensity.	14%	From 2014	£35.99	Hallgarten Druitt
Diego Conterno, Le Coste	15	Oak, dark cherry, currant and medicinal aroma. Pleasantly fruity, traditional style with chunky, rather abrasive tannins. Rustic style showing some vigour.	14.5%	2012-2014	N/A UK	www.diegoconterno.it
Germano Angelo	15	Cherry wood, incense and slightly vinegary aromas. Good, firm yet silky tannins framing ripe plum fruit. Good oak but a bit one dimensional.	14.5%	2012-2018	£20-£22	Adams, Barrica, The Smokehouse, Wine Buffs, The Vineyard
Gigi Rosso, Arlone	15	Attractive wild berry, carrot and tomato bouquet. Spicy fruit compote palate with juicy acidity, chewy tannins and a creamy texture that finishes dry.	14.5%	2012-2013	POA	Montorte
Oddero, Villero	15	Game, fresh meat, violets and rosemary nose. Lifted palate which is bright and lively, although in a firm traditional style of dry tannins and high acidity.	14%	2012-2016	N/A UK	www.oddero.it

## 3-STAR WINES Recommended (continued)

WINE	SCORE	TASTING NOTE	ALC	DRINK	PRICE	STOCKISTS
Pecchenino, Le Coste, Monforte d'Alba	15	Ripe cherry, dried spice, rose and violet fragrance. Balanced palate with nice tannin structure. Layered, dry tannins - rich and rustic. Needs food.	14%	From 2013	£36	Winetraders
Sainsbury's, Taste the Difference	15	Evolved nose of subtle, spice, liquorice, jammy red fruit and earth. Sweet upfront palate with dried fruit flavour, high acidity and firm, ripe tannins.	14%	2011-2016	£15.99	Sainsbury's
Tenuta Carretta, Vigneti in Cannubi, Barolo	15	Vanilla oak and leather nose. Aromatic, baked and stewed fruit palate with a muscular frame, fresh acidity and chewy yet rounded tannins.	13.5%	2012-2013	£33	Vinissimo
Attilio Ghisolfi, Bussia, Monforte d'Alba	14.83	Very feminine aromas of flowers, stewed fruit, spice and raspberry. Balanced and perfumed with super-elegant, pronounced tannins. Layered, with a dry finish.	14%	2012-2025	N/A UK	www.ghisolfi.com
Batasiolo, Cerequio, La Morra	14.67	Baked fruit and cedar oak on the nose. Stewed fruit compote flavours with cedar and tobacco on the palate. Perfumed style which isn't trying to be a heavyweight.	14.5%	2012-2013	£48	Mondial
Batasiolo, Boscareto, Serralunga d'Alba	14.67	Rose, cold tea, farmyard and stewed fruit on the nose. Rustic, leathery palate with baked fruit flavours and big chewy tannins. A sturdy, structured mouthful of wine.	14.5%	2014-2022	£48	Mondial
Bosco Agostino, Neirane, Verduno	14.67	Oak and tea leaves on the nose. Firm structure with chewy tannins which are overwhelming the fruit at present. It has a savoury finish and the fruit is pretty.	14%	2012-2013	N/A UK	www.barolobosco.com
Cordero di Montezemolo, Enrico VI, Castiglione Falletto	14.67	Lifted bouquet of spice, earth, prominent oak and volatile acidity. Juicy damson fruit palate with traditional rustic tannins. Needs time to integrate but complex.	14.5%	From 2013	£60	Christopher Keller, Everywine, Eurowines, Good Wine Online
Giacomo Fenocchio, Bussia, Monforte d'Alba	14.67	Open, complex aroma of dried spice, rose, orange peel, earth, minerals and redcurrant. Simple, accessible and straightforward with light tannins.	14%	From 2012	POA	Armit
Josetta Saffirio, Monforte d'Alba	14.67	Juicy cherry, spice, rose, earth, oak and jam aromas. Balanced, smooth tannins are backed up by oak, ample fruit, nice texture and fairly rich and supple. Low acidity.	13.4%	From 2012	£33.69	Corney & Barrow
San Biagio, Sorano, Serralunga d'Alba	14.67	Spice, burnt rubber and raspberry aromas. Supple, juicy and ripe fruit palate with concentration, lift, drive and freshness. Well balanced, with a spicy finish.	14.5%	From 2013	£30	Natura Amore
Scarzello, Barolo	14.67	Evolved, baked plum, floral, spicy and herb aromas. Juicy, elegant but structured tannins with balancing acidity and dried fruit flavours. Almost ready. Well crafted.	14%	2012-2017	POA	Phoenix Wine Agencies
Virna, Il Merli, Novello	14.67	Raspberry, minerals, flowers and spice bouquet. Juicy with smooth tannins, modest acidity and a medium length. Slightly awkward now but will improve.	14%	From 2013	£18.10	Colombier
Aurelio Settimo, La Morra	14.5	Sweet, ripe berry fruit and sweet spice aromas. Balanced and simple palate with concentrated, firm yet ripe tannins underpinning the fruit. Rich and rounded.	14%	From 2014	£20	Plowden Fine Wines

### 2-STAR WINES Fair 12.5-14.49pts

■ Boroli, Cerequio, Barolo (14.33) ■ Ferdinando Principiano, Ravera, Serralunga d'Alba (14.33) ■ Marcarini, Brunate (14.33) ■ Parusso, Marioldino, Castiglione Falletto (14.33) ■ Rocche dei Manzoni, Vigna Cappella di S Stefano, Monforte d'Alba (14.33) ■ Nada Giuseppe, Barolo (14.17) ■ Aurelio Settimo, Rocche, La Morra (14) ■ Bussia Soprana, Gabutti della Bussia (14) ■ Cascina Fontana, Castiglione Falletto (14) ■ Ceretto, Zonchera, Barolo (14) ■ Pelassa,

Castiglione Falletto (14) ■ Rivetto, Leon (14) ■ Parusso, Le Coste-Mosconi, Monforte d'Alba (13.83) ■ Anselma, Vigna Rionda (sample), Serralunga d'Alba (13.67) ■ Gabutti Boasso Franco, Margheira, Serralunga d'Alba (13.67) ■ Parusso (13.67) ■ Prunotto (13.67) ■ Villadoria, Serralunga d'Alba (13.67) ■ Bersano, Nirvasco, Serralunga d'Alba (13.5) ■ Renzo Seghesio (13.5) ■ Erbaluna, Vigna Rocche, La Morra (13.33) ■ Gabutti Boasso Franco, Gabutti, Serralunga d'Alba (13.33) ■ Luigi Oddero & Figli, La Morra (13.33) ■

Poderi Colla, Dardi Le Rose, Bussia (13.17) ■ Luigi Baudana, Baudana, Serralunga d'Alba (13) ■ Nicoletto, La Morra (13)

### 1-STAR WINES Poor 10.5-12.49pts

■ Claudio Alario, Sorano, Serralunga d'Alba (12.33) ■ Famiglia Cavallero, Cantine Sant' Agata, La Fenice, Castiglione Falletto (10.5) ■ Viberti, Buon Padre (10.5)

For full UK stockist details, see p106

## 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



Ian d'Agata is the Decanter World Wine Awards Regional Chair for Piedmont and Southern Italy. He is also the author of *The Ecco Guide to the Best Wines of Italy* and co-author of the annual *D'Agata and Camparini Italy's Best Wines* guide

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”*