



1996 Barolos - Another Great Vintage

Tuesday, October 19, 2010

Reception Wine: 6:00 PM, Formal Tasting: 6:20 PM

Faculty Club, Univ of Toronto, 41 Willcocks Street, Toronto

Members' Fee: \$64; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$89

Barolo has been called the "*king of wines*," and the "*wine of kings*." Barolo (*Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita* (DOCG)), one of the world's best wines, is produced in a section of Piedmont, Italy, southwest of Alba. Interestingly, it's a relatively recent wine, only coming into fruition in the 1800s when the Marchesa Giulietta Colbert Falletti started making wine out of Nebbiolo grapes. Did you know that prior to the mid 19th century, Barolo was a sweet wine? Nowadays, there are 3,000 acres of Nebbiolo producers in the towns of Barolo, Castiglione Falletto, Cherasco, Diano d'Alba, Grinzane Cavour, La Morra, Monforte d'Alba, Novello, Roddi, and Serralunga d'Alba. Wines from La Morra and Barolo which are naturally more forward, are usually better suited to shorter ageing than those from Serralunga where the greater intensity usually leads to a longer period of barrel aging prior to bottling. According to Janis Robinson's *Encyclopedia of Wine*, "Two developments have marked contemporary, post DOC Barolo: the move towards estate bottling and single-vineyard bottling (principally by small producers), and an attempt to find a fruitier, less austere style of Barolo more in tune with modern palates."

The final product is a robust red, full bodied, very dry and high in acidity, alcohol and tannin. The aroma is similar to ripe strawberries, tar, roses, violets and truffles and referred to as a "chewy" wine. Barolo is best with additional aging and is often left to mature for between ten and twenty years after the vintage year. The best vineyards are often indicated on the labels with the dialect words *sori* (meaning a steep sheltered slope) or *bricco* (meaning a ridge). La Morra makes the earliest developing wines while Monforte and Serralunga the slowest. Barolo alcoholic content is set at 13% but some surpasses 14% while 15% or higher is not unheard of in superior vintages. There are two grades of Barolo: Standard Barolo, aged two years in the barrel, one in the bottle. Riserva Barolo is aged three years in the barrel, one in the bottle.

The majority of producers count 1982, 1989, 1990, 1996 and 1997 as the five greatest vintages of the past 20 years. Thanks to a fabulous run of excellent vintages from 1995 through 2000, Italy's noblest red wine - and one of the world's finest drinks - is enjoying unprecedented prestige. Many of Italy's revered wine makers never believed they would witness six great vintages in a row. But they have! Some think it was due to some climate change - hotter, drier weather that allowed grapes to ripen earlier, making the prolonged summers a godsend for vinifying from the Nebbiolo grape which is what makes up Barolo wines.

Toronto Vintners Club is fortunate to taste the 1996 vintage. "1996: A fine year that yielded wines of classic Barolo structure. Some growers - Ceretto for instance - rank 1996 with their very best vintages. An idyllic growing season resulted in grapes that were deeply colored and intensely perfumed, and produced wines with generous levels of alcohol, acid and tannins, as well as rich fruit flavors. In short, a vintage to cellar and enjoy for years." <http://www.thewinenews.com/octnov02/cover.html> See page 2 for a full list of wines and tasting notes.

What's more fitting than to enjoy another great vintage of the "king of wines" during Toronto Vintners' 35th anniversary year? Appetizers will be served along with the wines.

REGISTER/ BUY TICKETS

Register/buy tickets online at <http://www.onlineregistrations.ca/tvcevent8>. You must register online and then can pay by credit card or by cheque. **ALL ticket sales/reservations are final.** Cheques must be received by Friday, Oct 15. The cheque-payment option will be disabled at midnight Tues, Oct. 12 after which only credit card sales will be accepted until midnight Sunday Oct. 17 or earlier if the event sells out. You will be sent an email confirmation after completing your registration. If you tried to register but did not receive your confirmation, please contact torontovintners@onlineregistrations.ca before trying to register again.



Tasting Notes and Information

1996 Andrea Oberto Vigneto Rocche Barolo

(La Morra) "The black/purple colored 1996 Vigneto Rocche is immensely impressive. Muscular and massive, this full-bodied, highly extracted wine displays an intense nose of licorice, black fruits and roasted herbs. Powerful, with high extraction and tannin, this wine offers mouth-filling levels of extract and considerable structure. Anticipated maturity: 2005-2020. 90-92 pt." E. Robert Parker

1996 Fratelli Revello Barolo (La Morra)

". . . offers a tangy, black cherry-scented nose with hints of smoke, earth, and leather. Spicy, medium-bodied, and moderately tannic, it is more structured and muscular than its more evolved 1995 sibling. Anticipated maturity: 2002 - 2008. 88 pt." E. Robert Parker

1996 Michele Chiarlo Barolo Cerequio

Cerequio, situated in the communes of La Morra and Barolo, is consistently and universally considered to be one of the greatest and most prestigious crus of the Langhe, sharing this status only with the great Cannubi vineyard, situated entirely in the commune of Barolo. Winery notes: Particularly elegant, olfactory complexity with predominant balsamic sensations, of mint, fruit jams; its taste matches the bouquet; its structure is rich, ample and of great character, with a notable presence of delicate tannins; surprising is the delicacy with which it caresses the palate. 90/100 (Degustato nel 2007). 90+ Stephen Tanzer's *International Wine Cellar*. 90/100 *Wine Spectator*.

1996 Mauro Veglio Barolo Gattera (La Morra)

". . . is a more interesting example than the 1995. Medium-bodied and soft, with an elegant, kirsch-scented and flavoured personality, it is ideal for consuming over the next 7-8 years. Full bodied and powerful . . . , possesses copious quantities of cherry liqueur intermixed with leafy tobacco, roasted nuts, smoke and spice. This full-bodied moderately tannic, classic Barolo should be at its finest between 2002-2014. 87-89 pt." E. Robert Parker

1996 Armando Parusso Barolo Piccole Vigne

(Monforte d'Alba) "Good deep red. Pungent aromas of cherry, red berries, marzipan, mint and spice; fresh, perfumed and precise. Dense, sweet, seamless and deep; conveys an almost salty impression of extract. Finishes very long, with nicely buffered tannins." (Nov/Dec '00) 92 pts. Stephen Tanzer's *International Wine Cellar*.

1996 Marchesi di Barolo Barolo (La Morra)

This is one of the estate's top level vineyard selections. "Garnet-red in color with ruby reflections. An intense odor with clean scents of roses, vanilla, licorice and spices. The flavor is full and elegant with a good body and recurring olfactory sensations. The perfectly blended goudron and hints of wood are extremely appealing. " General Notes from the Winery. "This is big, powerful dry Barolo, from a powerful but very tannic vintage. Expect maturing dried cherry fruit, wood, iron, and slightly volatile flavours. Very dry and always will be, an imbalance reflected in the rating, despite other attributes. Excellent length. 85/100" Review by Wine Access. 90 pt *Wine Spectator*

1996 Giacomo Ascheri Barolo Podere di Sorano

(Serralunga d'Alba) "The more tannic, structured, muscular 1996 Barolo Sorano offers an intriguing nose as well as flavors of melted asphalt, tomato skin, and jammy strawberry and cherry fruit. It exhibits some tannin, more muscle than the 1995, an understated, restrained style and a longer finish than its older siblings. Give it 203 years and drink it over the following decade. 87 + / 100." E. Robert Parker

1996 Elio Grasso Barolo (Monforte d'Alba)

No tasting notes available.

Next Event: November 16 - Meritage