

Kyle Phillips's Italian Wine Review (IWR)

The authoritative online consumer newsletter about the wines of Italy

The 2006 Barbaresco, Presented at Alba Wines - Nov 9, 2009

I much enjoyed the 2006 Barbaresco that was presented this year at Alba Wines. 2006 was a fine vintage, and though the wines are still very young they display a suppleness and power that I found quite invigorating, coupled with fairly rich, fairly tart (in many cases) fruit, and brisk acidities. In short, I think that the 2006 Barbaresco displays considerable aging potential, and while you will have to select a winemaker whose tastes match yours, you will find many fine wines to choose from.

We also tasted a few 2003 Barbaresco Riserva wines, which were a mixed lot. Some displayed the ravages brought by the heat of the summer, but a couple pleasantly surprised me, showing more fruit and depth than I expected to find. And finally, during the afternoon session producers poured their 1999 vintages for us. As was the case with the 1999 Barolo that was also poured in the afternoon sessions, I was quite favorably impressed by the wines, and though the sampling wasn't thorough -- given time constraints I had to pick and choose -- the quality was uniformly high, including wines that don't show particularly well fresh from release. In other words, Many Barbareschi, especially those in the more traditional style, need time to grow.

With respect to the 1999 Baroli, I found most (but not all) of the 1999 Barbareschi to be slightly more mature, and attribute this to differences in terroir. Mature, in this case, is a relative term. None were what one might call old.

Giacosa Fratelli Bazarin Barbaresco DOCG 2006

Deep almandine with black reflections and almandine rim. The bouquet is bright, with mentholated cherry fruit supported by greenish spice and some dusky dappled shade. On the palate it's ample and smooth, in a rich fruit driven key, with bright cherry fruit supported by brisk acidity and by tannins that are fairly smooth, though they do reveal a cedar-laced peppery burr that continues into the finish, which is fruit laced. It's very young, in a middle of the road key, and needs time, a couple of years at least, at which point it will work quite well with succulent red meats, and I think it will also age nicely for at least a decade. The palate is further along than the nose, though both need time.

2 stars

Giacosa Fratelli Bazarin Vigna Gian Matè Barbaresco DOCG 2006

Deep black almandine with black reflections and almandine rim. The bouquet is fairly rich, with deft rosa canina and sour cherry fruit supported by greenish spice and some nutmeg. Pleasant. On the palate it's ample, with bright sour cherry fruit supported by deft berry fruit acidity, and by tannins that are powerful, and have a youthful burr; it needs another couple of years to really come into its own, but will already drink now with succulent red meats. If you can bear infanticide, that is; it's a wine that is going places and it will be interesting to follow its journey. I would expect it to age quite well for 10-15 years.

2 stars

Giacosa Fratelli Rio Sordo Barbaresco 1999

Pale brownish almandine with almandine rim. The bouquet is fairly intense, with spice and nutmeg mingled with leaf tobacco and dried flowers, with some rosa canina as well. Nice balance, with considerable elegance and depth. On the palate it's full, with rich red berry fruit supported by deft, bright berry fruit acidity and by tannins that are rich and fairly smooth, flowing into a clean somewhat sour spicy finish with lasting warmth. Pleasant, and will drink quite well with succulent grilled meats or hearty stews, and also has the wherewithal to age well for another 5-10 years.

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