

CELLAR MASTER WINE CLUB

June 2020

2014 Vajra Albe Barolo Piedmont, Italy

Vajra is located at West side of Barolo Common, in Vergne locality. Here, the typical vines of Piedmont are cultivated with a great respect for the vocation of every plot of land. The history says that these lands have been formed millions of years ago, and geologically must be referred to as the Tortonian, the typical soil of Barolo and La Morra, with calcareous marl, white and blue, inserted into rocky residuals. Thanks to that, the wines are elegant, fragrant, fruity with a particular aging capacity.

The center of the production of the world's most exclusive and age-worthy red wines made from Nebbiolo, the Barolo region includes five core townships: La Morra, Monforte d'Alba, Serralunga d'Alba, Castiglione Falletto and the Barolo village itself, as well as a few outlying villages. The landscape of Barolo, characterized by prominent and castle-topped hills, is full of history and romance centered on the Nebbiolo grape. Its wines, with the signature "tar and roses" aromas, have a deceptively light garnet color but full presence on the palate and plenty of tannins and acidity. In a well-made Barolo, one can expect to find complexity and good evolution with notes of, for example, strawberry, cherry, plum, leather, truffle, anise, fresh and dried herbs, tobacco and violets.

There are two predominant soil types here, which distinguish Barolo from the lesser surrounding areas. Compact and fertile Tortonian sandy marls define the vineyards farthest west and at higher elevations. Typically the Barolo wines coming from this side, from La Morra and Barolo, can be approachable relatively early on in their evolution and represent the "feminine" side of Barolo, often closer in style to Barbaresco with elegant perfume and fresh fruit.

On the eastern side of the region, Helvetian soils of compressed sandstone and chalks are less fertile, producing wines with intense body, power and structured tannins. This more "masculine" style comes from Monforte d'Alba and Serralunga d'Alba. The township of Castiglione Falletto covers a spine with both soils types.

The best Barolo wines need 10-15 years before they are ready to drink, and can further age for several decades.

Notes from www.wine.com

"A tribute to local tradition, the 2014 Barolo Albe represents an assembly of fruit from various vineyard plots throughout the area. Winemaking is classic in approach with a 25-day maceration period and aging in large Slavonian oak casks. This vintage shows silky, fine lines and a more accessible approach for near and medium-term drinking. I would recommend a few more years of bottle aging, however, to allow the wine the time to grow in texture and mouthfeel. Drink now-2035." **Wine Advocate 91 points.**



\$49.99/btl

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2016 Produttori Barbaresco Piedmont, Italy

Founded in 1958, the priest of the village of Barbaresco, recognizing that the only way small properties could survive was by joining their efforts, gathered together nineteen small growers and founded the Produttori del Barbaresco. From its humble beginnings making the first three vintages in the church basement, Produttori del Barbaresco has grown to a 52 member co-operative with 250 acres of Nebbiolo vineyards in the Barbaresco appellation and an annual production of over 500,000 bottles. Its vineyards amount to almost 1/6 of the vineyards of the area. Each member is in full control of their land, growing Nebbiolo grapes with the skill and dedication they have honed over generations.

Playing a key role in elevating the quality level of Barbaresco over the years, Produttori del Barbaresco produces a simpler Nebbiolo Langhe, a Barbaresco blend and nine single vineyard wines produced in premier vineyards: Asili, Rabaja, Pora, Montestefano, Ovello, Paje, Montefico, Muncagota and Rio Sordo.

A wine that most perfectly conveys the spirit and essence of its place, Barbaresco is true reflection of terroir. Its star grape, like that in the neighboring Barolo region, is Nebbiolo. Four townships within the Barbaresco zone can produce Barbaresco: the actual village of Barbaresco, as well as Neive, Treiso and San Rocco Seno d'Elvio.

Broadly speaking there are more similarities in the soils of Barbaresco and Barolo than there are differences. Barbaresco's soils are approximately of the same two major soil types as Barolo: blue-grey marl of the Tortonion epoch, producing more fragile and aromatic characteristics, and Helvetian white yellow marl, which produces wines with more structure and tannins.

Nebbiolo ripens earlier in Barbaresco than in Barolo, primarily due to the vineyards' proximity to the Tanaro River and lower elevations. While the wines here are still powerful, Barbaresco expresses a more feminine side of Nebbiolo, often with softer tannins, delicate fruit and an elegant perfume. Typical in a well-made Barbaresco are expressions of rose petal, cherry, strawberry, violets, smoke and spice. These wines need a few years before they reach their peak, the best of which need over a decade or longer. Bottle aging adds more savory characteristics, such as earth, iron and dried fruit.

Notes from www.wine.com

"The 2016 Barbaresco is a tight and beautiful wine that will require more time to unwind and soften. This beautifully balanced vintage is characterized by a tight inner core of fruit that underlines the graceful aging capacity of these wines. The 2016 is shaping up to be one destined for long cellar aging. Now in its youth, the wine offers wild berry, rose and licorice aromas. Drink 2022-2040." **Wine Advocate 95 points.**



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