

Barbaresco 2008 and riserva 2006



Highly recommended (continued) 16.5-18.49pts



Castello di Neive, Santo Stefano 2008 16.53

£37.85 *Wine & Spirits*

Attractive, sweet mouth feel, leather, spice, cherry and dried orange peel bouquet. Pronounced sweet, dried fruit notes with ripe tannins. A tactile palate, classical and restrained with fine concentration and intense acidity. Just delicious. Drink: 2013-2017. Alc: 14.5%



Pietro Biondi, San Cristoforo 2008 16.63

£18.50 *Wine & Spirits*

Wood spice, cherry, dried orange peel and earthy bouquet. Broad and robust with good extraction. A bit of a blockbuster with a super balance, delicacy and concentration. It has very fine tannins and a multi-layered finish. A wine to keep. Complex. Drink: 2013-2019. Alc: 14%



Villadoria 2008 16.63

£18.39 *Alfie Fiandaca*

Old fashioned aromas of balsamic notes, crushed berry, wild rose, wood spice and burnt orange. Super sweet plush fruit, sweet, rustic tannins and a smooth texture. Has a precise focus and a lot of finesse. This one's a keeper. Drink: 2013-2017. Alc: 14%



Abrigo Orlando, Rocche Marazzano 2008 16.58

N/A UK *www.abrigowines.it*

Lush aromas of smoke, raspberry and cranberry. Tannic and structured but it has good drinkability. A well-made wine with elegant, dried red cherry and cranberry fruit. Tannins need a little time. Complex and well balanced. Drink: From 2015. Alc: 14%

“A lot of the barrique-aged wines were very stylish with the oak very well-integrated”

Stephen Brook



Bruno Giacosa, Falletto, Asili 2008 16.56

£80-£107 *Asolo, Carnè & Barone, Fine & Rare, Juberle & Brooks, WoodWines*

Savoury aromas as well as mint, berry, cherry fruit and vanilla. Beautiful purity on the palate with a good structure, integrated acidity and good, rustic tannins. Fine vineyard character. Will develop well. Drink: 2012-2016. Alc: 14%



Cascina Morassina, Morassina 2008 16.5

£24.95 *Wine & Spirits*

Bright, dried aromas of red berry, boxwood and spice. Sleek and fresh entry with juicy, fine acidity and mineral tannins. Really delicious, fine and elegant with wonderful equilibrium and complexity. Drink: 2012-2017. Alc: 14.5%



Castello di Verduno, Rabak, Riserva 2008 16.5

£32.17 (2010) *Wine & Spirits*

Dark, brooding blend of tar, oak spice, caramelised cherry, rose and red baking apples. Suave, soft, accessible style with complex, ripe tannins. Super classy and sexy with very good origin. Drink: 2013-2019. Alc: 14.5%



Fratelli Grassano, Vallegrande 2008 16.5

N/A UK *www.grassano.it*

Open with aromas of mint, tar and spice. A compact palate with good concentration, earthy vineyard expression and tannins that blend in rather than dominate. Great structure. Needs time. Classic. Drink: 2012-2018. Alc: 14.5%



Icardi, Montubert 2008 16.5

£21.95 *Wine & Spirits*

Fresh crunchy red fruit, oak, herb, dried cranberry and rose bouquet. Rich, succulent and juicy with dried cherry and floral notes. A broad and fleshy wine that doesn't lack elegance. Has length and balance. Drink: From 2015. Alc: 14%



Rizzi, Pajore 2008 16.5

POA *Wine & Spirits*

Bright raspberry, dark cherry, blackcurrant leaf and blackberry aromas. Sweet, ripe and juicy dried and fresh black cherry fruit, blackcurrant leaf and spicy notes. Layered, long and interesting. Drink: From 2012. Alc: 14%



Sottimano, Fausoni 2008 16.5

£41.50 *Wine & Spirits*

Compact and still light nose with nice, lifted ripe red fruit, baking apples and spice. It has real energy – a vivid, serious wine with mineral, powdery tannins and a dry, chewy finish. Lovely extract and density. Drink: 2013-2019. Alc: 14.5%

Barbaresco 2008 and Riserva 2006

3-STAR WINES Recommended (continued) 14.5-16.49pts

WINE	SCORE	TASTING NOTE	ALC	DRINK	PRICE	STOCKISTS
Cantina del Nebbiolo 2008	15.16	Fruit, earth, fat, dense berry fruit and savoury aromas. A rustic, young, tannic style with good extract, black pepper, spice and tarry notes. More to come.	14%	2012-2016	£15.50	www.cantinadelnebbiolo.com
Casale della Rosa, Rio Sordo 2008	15.1	Jammy nose of sweet plum, liquorice, aniseed, dried cranberry and raisins. Accessible but has some astringent tannins. It has a nice, long, rich finish.	14.5%	2012-2016	£18.50	www.bonin.it
Casale Monforte, Duella 2008	15.1	Graphite, wood spice, gun smoke, new oak, dried and autumnal fruit aroma. Broad style with grippy tannins and rich, spicy fruit. More Barolo than Barbaresco.	14.5%	2012-2016	£27	Mark Harris
Casetta, Riserva 2006	15.1	Sweet aromas of rose, meat, dates and intense fruit. Firm, tannic, dense and brooding palate - hard to find the fruit. Tannins take over and shorten the finish.	13.5%	From 2012	N/A UK	www.00-casetta.it
Rivetti, Ca' Varin 2008	15.1	Fruit cake, herb liquorice, smoke and woody bouquet. Powerful tannins need time to soften and reveal the cherry and floral notes behind. Should please the masses.	14.5%	2013-2016	£19 UK	www.rivetti.it
Rivetti Massimo, Serraboella, Riserva 2006	15.04	Earth, sweet, pumppicker and coconut aroma. Intense and brooding with broad fruit which is slightly oxidative. The acidity is good. An attractive, easy wine.	14%	2012-2017	£26	www.rivetti.com
Tenute Cava Asinari del Marchese di Gresy, Galun 2006	15.08	Iron, dried fruit, liquorice, fat, red cherry and savoury aroma. Good fruit palate with oak blended in. Slightly oxidative and has rustic tannins. Starting to dry out.	N/A	2012-2015	£62	Informatica, Redfox, Jorg, WoodWinters
Villadoria, Riserva 2006	15.38	Red berry, black fruit and mahogany spice aroma. Very ripe confit fruit palate with cool, sleek acidity and a wonderful tactile feel. Old-fashioned style.	13.5%	2012-2019	£22.99	Alfie Fiandaca
Albino Rocca, Ronchi 2008	15.11	Smoke, vanilla, herb, cherry, oak and floral bouquet. Rich, juicy and full-bodied, it has weight and substance. Tannins are drying. Accessible but not too forward.	14.5%	From 2013	N/A UK	www.albinorocca.com
Dante Rivetti, Brin' Mica 2008	15.11	Sweet bouquet of molasses, berry, oak, raisin and cranberry. Full, fleshy palate with leathery notes, freshened by good acidity. Exotic, oxidative style.	14%	2012-2014	N/A UK	www.danterivetti.com
Tenute Cava Asinari del Marchese di Gresy, Montevigo 2008	15.06	Herb, spice, vanilla, cough syrup and coffee nose. Oaky notes dominate the palate. Mature - fruit is drying out. Very low acidity and quite a bit of tannin.	14.5%	2012-2014	£45-£46	Informatica, Redfox, Jorg, WoodWinters
Punet, San Cristoforo, Campo Giovinetti 2008	15	Fruit, fat, smoke and animal aromas. Warm, autumnal fruit with depth and also quite a bit of tannin. Very young and lightly woven. A good wine with potential.	14%	2012-2016	N/A UK	www.punet.com
Ca' Berna' di Giuseppe Marone, Chiaravalle 2008	14.88	Lifted wood spice, cherry, baked apple, incense and sweet fruit cake. Simple, with good depth and oak. Dense, broad and soft, fleshy fruit with sweet tannins.	14%	2012-2017	N/A UK	www.casale.com
Scarpa, Tattoliva 2008	14.81	Fresh, charming nose of raspberry, herb and earth. Reasonably concentrated, it has a slightly earthy quality to the tannins. A bit rustic and already feels mature.	14%	From 2013	N/A UK	www.casale.com
Nada, Casot 2008	14.5	Liquorice, fat, farmyard, plum and sweet berry fruit bouquet. Moroccan leather on the palate to start. It shows some maturity and also some leanness.	14%	2012-2015	£26	Big Red Wine Co

2-STAR WINES Fair 12.5-14.49

■ Casetta, 2008 (14.17) ■ Fontanabianca, Serraboella 2008 (14.17) ■ Punset 2008 (14.13) ■ Ada Nada,

Valeirano 2008 (13.5) ■ Tenuta Carretta, Garassino 2008 (13.5) ■ Sorì' Paitin 2008 (13.25) ■ Sorì' Paitin, Vecchie Vigne 2006 (12.5)

For full UK stockist details, see p97

Expert summary: Kerin O'Keefe

While the 2008s dominated this tasting and so skewed the results in their favour, it did prove even a tricky vintage can improve over time - and these will continue to do so



Kerin O'Keefe is a wine writer and the author of *Brunello di Montalcino* (2012, University of California Press)

OVERALL, THE 2008 normale Barbarescos performed as expected, receiving the only Decanter Award and 31 of the 38 four stars. That the panel recommended 91% of the 2008s (there were only 16 2006 riservas entered) shows the high standard of winemaking that now prevails here, even during initially problematic vintages like 2008. A true Nebbiolo lover's vintage, boasting good fruit, generous tannins and often nervous acidity that will tame down after a few more years of bottle ageing, it is nonetheless no surprise that there was only one Award since the wines have yet to develop complexity. It is also no surprise that Barbarescos hailing from the denomination's iconic crus, known for their quality and consistency, make up most of the highly recommendeds, including celebrated names such as Santo Stefano, Gallina, Rabajà and Rio Sordo.

Perhaps the only surprise for the '08s was that the panel gave the sole Award to a little-known winery and relative newcomer, Col dei Venti - this bested leading lights Bruno Giacosa, Bruno Rocca, Albino Rocca and Castello di Neive. Aged for 24 months in barriques, the Tufo Blu shows the tasters' overall appreciation for a more international, oaky Barbaresco, boasting very dense fruit.

The four-star and three-star wines are evenly balanced between glossy, concentrated wines aged in new and

seasoned barriques, and more classically crafted Barbarescos, albeit many made with shorter fermentation times than in previous years and aged in medium-capacity Slavonian *botti* or large French oak casks. For individual performances, it was great to see the traditionally crafted, terroir-driven Gallina from Ugo Lequio, one of Neive's most consistent producers, come joint second. And impressive indeed that Produttori del Barbaresco scored 17 points.

The results for the 16 2006s show the disappointingly uneven performance many critics are noticing from what was a highly lauded vintage, and from what is supposed to be a lofty designation. Tasters obviously felt the three-star wines in particular don't have the balance, complexity or longevity that riservas promise. Vineyard location and producer reputation, always crucial in Barbaresco, are key to finding the best riservas from this vintage.

“That 91% of the 2008s were recommended shows the high standard of winemaking that prevails here”