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2015 Vietti Barolo Castiglione

The 2015 Barolo Castiglione is a soft and elegant expression with marked freshness and delineated fruit. Indeed, Luca Currado maintains that 2015 was not a hot vintage per se, and any jammy notes that might appear in the vintage may have to do with an overzealous approach to leaf pulling during the summer season. Old habits die hard, he says, and leaving the leaves intact contributes to the color stabilization of the wine and the successful management of its acidity. From an analytical point of view, this wine does flaunt that much-needed inner crispness. It adds focus and sharpness to the layers of dark, succulent fruit that appear on first nose.



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2015 Vietti Barbaresco Masseria

The 2015 Barbaresco Masseria shows nice, delicate fiber and a silkiness that marks this rendition as one of the most subtle and refined in recent memory. It's a much more elegant approach than 2010, for example, another hot July and August growing season that produced very different results, perhaps with more rigidity at the back. Serve this softer wine from 2015 with some blue cheese or Gorgonzola. The team at Vietti has gained access to more fruit in Barbaresco, including acquisitions in 2018 of 2.5 hectares in Roncaglie and 8,000 square meters of vines in Rabajà. Masseria is a fantasy name, but it technically is the informal name of part of the Cottà cru in Neive.



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2015 Vietti Barolo Ravera

Starting off a bit shy and closed at first, the 2015 Barolo Ravera showed noticeably better in the sample that had been opened a few hours prior to my arrival at the winery for my annual visit. This makes perfect sense as Vietti's wines are intentionally slow at first but are built to endure the long haul. From the Novello township, this vineyard site is recognized for its power, structure and the uniquely broad approach it shows to the palate. There is a larger span of black fruit at its core. The positioning of the Ravera cru means it is open to the elements and the cold air from the Alps, and the wines result in freshness and mineral character as well. Luca Currado describes a salty, anchovy-like aroma that does indeed appear. Otherwise, this wine shows tightly polished and glossy tannins.



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2015 Vietti Barolo Lazzarito

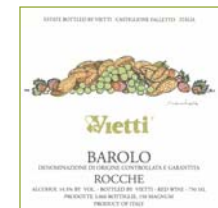
Opening to a beautifully floral bouquet, the 2015 Barolo Lazzarito delivers fragrant tones of violets, wild rose and a touch of orange blossom. As is the norm at Vietti, I tasted this wine and then wrote this review based on impressions gained from two samples—one opened several hours before my tasting and one opened at the moment of my review. Those floral notes came forth with increased intensity and clarity in the bottle that had been opened longer. The bouquet continues to surprise with touches of black fruit and freshly milled white pepper. However, like many wines from Serralunga d'Alba, this expression from Lazzarito reveals a pretty inner paradox. Those ethereal and balsamic aromas cede to a dense and rich mouthfeel, characterized by structure and power. Those two sides of the wine reach beautiful parity and lasting harmony.



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2015 Vietti Barolo Brunate

The Barolo Brunate was not made in 2014 because of hail damage. Instead, all the fruit was diverted to the Langhe Nebbiolo Perbacco instead. This newest release, the 2015 Barolo Brunate, definitely makes up for the lost ground. This is an explosive and absolutely exuberant expression of Nebbiolo from a vineyard site in La Morra near M. Marengo's property. Vietti farms two parcels here, a higher side of the vineyard and a lower one (near Damilano and Ceretto). These lower parts of Brunate perform very nicely in the cooler vintages. Instead, this warm vintage expression puts a lot of its fruit depth and personality upfront in a confident and no-fuss manner. You absolutely know what you are getting here, even at the first sniff of the bouquet. The wine proceeds to open and blossom before your nose, offering dark fruit, rose, spice and a very linear mineral tone at the back. That linear flinty note is just terrific. Some 3,600 were produced.



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2015 Vietti Barolo Rocche di Castiglione

Along with the Ravera, the 2015 Barolo Rocche di Castiglione has a very fresh feeling (they are both grown with less direct sunlight). Indeed, there are many similarities between these two prestigious Barolos from Vietti, but the differences start with the vinification methods. While the Ravera sees malolactic fermentation in stainless steel, the Rocche di Castiglione completes that phase in botte. To continue the comparison, these two wines are certainly more closed than the other Barolo crus from this producer, the Lazzarito and the Brunate, which blossom and open more quickly. Even though it is a bit shy, the defining characteristics of herbaceous rosemary and balsamic notes show up well in this vintage of the Rocche di Castiglione, a vineyard site that prizes elegance above all else.

"I tasted these wines just before lunch hour. Luca Currado always prepares two bottles of each sample for my tasting. One was opened at 10 a.m. (so about three hours earlier), and the second was opened just prior to being poured into the glass. The notes published here represent an edited version with reflections and comments from both bottles. Vietti likes to release his wines when they are in a more reductive state, so this two-bottle approach is much appreciated by critics like me because you gain a much better understanding of the possible evolution of each wine poured."