

Wine Spectator Insider

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INSIDER SPECIAL REPORT: PIEDMONT

The 2006 vintage for Barbaresco may turn out to be slightly overrated for potential quality, but it's still a very good vintage if you keep to the top names in the region, wineries such as Sottimano, La Spinetta, Moccagatta, Bruno Rocca, Ca' Romé di Romano Marengo and Gaja. One top name missing though is the legendary Bruno Giacosa, who has decided not to bottle his 2006 Barbaresco, citing that he didn't like the quality of the wines.

The top 2006 Barbarescos are perfumed, fruity and racy. They are only going to need three or four years of bottle age to really show the finesse and structure they have. Wine producers in Piedmont admit that 2006 was not an easy vintage, with everything from hail to rain thrown at them over the growing season, but there was enough sunshine and warmth to ripen the grapes. Results are nothing like the dismal 2002 vintage, but 2006 is certainly not in the league of 2005, 2004 or 2003, either.

A selection of 2005 Barolos is included here too, as well as the Langhe-designated wines from Angelo Gaja. You'll find three classic-rated Barolos among the Hot Wines, on page 4. For more notes and ratings on recently released 2005 Barolos, see the May 27 issue of the *Insider*.

—James Suckling

Italy Piedmont / Barbaresco

SOTTIMANO

Barbaresco Currà 2006

94 points | \$70 | 280 cases imported | Red

There's plenty of ripe plum character on the nose, with hints of spices. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and generous fruit. Very powerful for the vintage. Sottimano made very serious wines in 2006. Best after 2012.—J.S.

LA SPINETTA

Barbaresco Vigneto Gallina 2006

93 points | \$125 | 450 cases imported | Red

Wonderful nose of Christmas pudding, plum and lemongrass follow through to a full body, with soft, silky tannins and beautiful fruit. Best after 2012.—J.S.

LA SPINETTA

Barbaresco Vigneto Staderi 2006

93 points | \$125 | 540 cases imported | Red

Wonderfully floral, with cream and berry aromas. Full-bodied, with round, chewy tannins and lots of fruit. Generous and rich for the vintage. Best after 2012.—J.S.

PIO CESARE

Barbaresco 2005

92 points | \$61 | 800 cases imported | Red

Rose petal and berry aromas follow through to a full body, with chewy yet velvety tannins and a long finish. Offers a serious depth of fruit. Best after 2011.—J.S.

MICHELE CHIARLO

Barbaresco Asili 2006

92 points | \$85 | 80 cases imported | Red

Shows plum and raisin aromas, with hints of black licorice. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and a long finish. Powerful for the vintage. Best after 2012.—J.S.

MOCCAGATTA

Barbaresco Bric Balin 2006

92 points | \$55 | 900 cases imported | Red

Fascinating aromas of raspberry and Christmas pudding, with dried dark fruits. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and a rich palate, showing vanilla, chocolate and berry, with hints of meat. Juicy and beautiful. Best after 2012.—J.S.

PRUNOTTO

Barbaresco Bric Turot 2005

92 points | \$80 | 100 cases imported | Red

Very pretty blackberry and floral aromas follow through to a full body, with fine tannins, lovely fruit and a silky finish. Tight and focused. A solid wine. Best after 2011.—J.S.

SOTTIMANO

Barbaresco Fausoni 2006

92 points | \$70 | 160 cases imported | Red

Offers dried flowers, with hints of oak, plum skin and citrus fruit. Full-bodied, with velvety tannins and a chewy finish. Best after 2011.—J.S.

SOTTIMANO

Barbaresco Pajoré 2006

92 points | \$70 | 180 cases imported | Red

Strawberry and spice aromas lead to a full body, with sweet, soft tannins and a long, pretty finish. Balanced, subtle and refined. Best after 2011.—J.S.

ORLANDO ABRIGO

Barbaresco Vigna Montersino 2006

91 points | \$55 | 250 cases imported | Red

Sweet strawberry and cherry aromas, with hints of vanilla cream. Full-bodied, with ripe, soft, round tannins and outstanding depth of fruit. Best after 2012.—J.S.

CA' ROMÉ DI ROMANO MARENGO

Barbaresco Maria di Brun 2006

91 points | \$95 | 150 cases imported | Red

Plum and prune aromas, with hints of very ripe strawberry. Full-bodied, with velvety tannins and a long, caressing finish. There's excellent depth of fruit for the vintage. Best after 2011.—J.S.

CA' ROMÉ DI ROMANO MARENGO

Barbaresco Sòri Rio Sordo 2006

91 points | \$87 | 200 cases imported | Red

Rose and berries on the nose follow through to a full body, with lovely sweet fruit, plum and berry flavors, soft, round tannins and a long finish. Delicious already. Best after 2010.—J.S.

CERETTO

Barbaresco Bricco Asili 2006

91 points | \$NA | 50 cases imported | Red

Perfumed, with flowers, berries and light lemon peel. Full-bodied, with a solid core of fruit and tannins, but a little subdued. Tight, yet shows a good core and structure. Best after 2011.—J.S.

FONTANABIANCA

Barbaresco Serraboella 2006

91 points | \$46 | 100 cases imported | Red

Perfumed and very pretty, with lovely rose and berries. Full-bodied, with a solid core of fruit and ultrafine tannins. There's a lovely refined texture to this red. Best after 2011.—J.S.

GAJA

Barbaresco 2006

91 points | \$199 | 800 cases imported | Red

Offers plum and prune on the nose and palate, with hints of cappuccino. Full-bodied, with velvety, chewy tannins and a long finish. A solid wine for the vintage. Best after 2011.—J.S.

PIETRO RINALDI

Barbaresco San Cristoforo 2006

91 points | \$49 | 300 cases imported | Red

Delivers blackberry and spice notes, with cinnamon and milk chocolate. Full-bodied, with a solid core of ripe, round tannins and lovely sweet fruit on the finish. Very pretty. Best after 2010.—J.S.

BRUNO ROCCA

Barbaresco Rabajà 2006

91 points | \$95 | 240 cases imported | Red

Aromatic, with ripe strawberry and flowers on the nose. Full-bodied, with soft tannins and a fruit and milk chocolate aftertaste. Fruity and attractive. Best from 2011 through 2014.—J.S.

SOTTIMANO

Barbaresco Cottà 2006

91 points | \$70 | 350 cases imported | Red

Strawberry and cherry aromas follow through to a full body, with velvety tannins and a chewy finish. There's lots of fruit and tannins on the finish. Best after 2011.—J.S.

PIERO BUSSO

Barbaresco Mondino 2005

90 points | \$51 | 250 cases made | Red

Shows beautiful pure blackberry and cherry aromas, with hints of lilac. Full-bodied, with soft, silky tannins. Fresh and very clean, with lots of fruit on the finish. A little more time will make this even better, but it's hard to wait. Best from 2010 through 2015.—J.S.

CERETTO

Barbaresco Asij 2006

90 points | \$NA | 700 cases imported | Red

Mixed berry jam on the nose, with hints of citrus fruit. Full-bodied, soft and fruity, with jammy character, round tannins and a delicious finish. Straightforward, fruity and generous. Best after 2010.—J.S.

CERETTO

Barbaresco Bernardot 2006

90 points | \$NA | 150 cases imported | Red

Offers dried berries and orange peel on the nose. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and lots of pretty fruit. Long and delicious, with lovely, subtle sweet fruit at the back of the palate. Best after 2011.—J.S.

STEFANO FARINA

Barbaresco 2006

90 points | \$37 | 700 cases imported | Red

Ripe berry and plum aromas, with hints of spices. Full-bodied, with sweet fruit and hints of vanilla, cinnamon and honey. Long and flavorful. Delicious already. Best from 2014 through 2016.—J.S.

MARCHESI DI GRÉSY

Barbaresco Martinenga 2006

90 points | \$55 | 600 cases imported | Red

Delicate and balanced, with subtle strawberry and berry character on the nose and palate. Medium-bodied, with bright acidity, fine tannins and a fresh finish. Best after 2011.—J.S.

CASTELLO DI NEIVE

Barbaresco Santo Stefano 2006

90 points | \$42 | 500 cases imported | Red

Fresh rose aromas, with plum and citrus fruit, follow through to a medium body, with fine tannins and a fresh finish. Refined and pretty, with excellent length. Best after 2011.—J.S.

BRUNO ROCCA

Barbaresco Coparossa 2006

90 points | \$91 | 110 cases imported | Red

Plum and earth, with hints of spices on the nose. Full-bodied, with slightly austere tannins and good fruit, but turns a tad austere and hollow center palate. Needs time to soften. Best after 2012.—J.S.

Italy

Piedmont / Barolo & Langhe

SILVIO GRASSO

Barolo Pi Vigne 2005

94 points | \$50 | 400 cases imported | Red

Aromas of plums, prunes and bark that turns to raisins. Full-bodied, very chewy and powerful, with big tannins and lots of concentration. Best after 2012.—J.S.

BOROLI

Barolo Villero 2005

93 points | \$71 | 235 cases imported | Red

Wonderful aromas of ripe strawberries and plums follow through to a full body, with a solid core of chewy tannins and an excellent finish. Best after 2012.—J.S.

PIO CESARE

Barolo 2005

93 points | \$61 | 2,000 cases imported | Red

Very ripe fruit aromas, with sultanas and prunes. Dried flowers too. Full-bodied, with seamless, yet chewy tannins and a long finish. Lasts a long time. Always great. Best after 2012.—J.S.

GAJA

Langhe Sori San Lorenzo 2006

93 points | \$420 | 200 cases imported | Red

Ripe and decadent, with prune, spice and blackberry aromas. Full-bodied, with velvety tannins and beautiful concentration. This shows structure, power and class. Best after 2012.—J.S.

ETTORE GERMANO

Barolo Cerretta 2005

93 points | \$62 | 400 cases imported | Red

Intense aromas of plums and berries, with hints of rose petals and sandalwood. Full-bodied, with big, chewy tannins and a long finish. Very layered. Structured. Best after 2012.—J.S.

ETTORE GERMANO

Barolo Lazzarito Riserva 2003

93 points | \$100 | 60 cases imported | Red

Very ripe strawberries and cherries on the nose, with flowers. Then turns slightly jammy, but in a good way. Full-bodied, with velvety and rich tannins and loads of fruit. Long and beautiful. Very yummy. Tempting now, but wait. Best from 2010 through 2015.—J.S.

VIRNA

Barolo Riserva 2003

93 points | \$65 | 200 cases imported | Red

This is very decadent, with strawberry jam and rose water aromas. Full-bodied and very, very soft, with pretty, rich fruit and a long, creamy finish. Almost ready to drink. Fruit forward style. Best from 2011 through 2015.—J.S.

BOROLI

Barolo 2005

92 points | \$47 | 1,065 cases imported | Red

Very aromatic, with roses, tar, and dark ripe fruits. Full-bodied, with big, round and chewy tannins and lovely sweet fruit. Long and delicious, with excellent depth. Best after 2011.—J.S.

GAJA

Langhe Costa Russi 2006

92 points | \$420 | 200 cases imported | Red

Wonderful aromas of roses and berries, with hints of cream. Full-bodied, with a beautiful core of ripe fruit and velvety tannins. Balanced and very pretty. Long and friendly. Best after 2012.—J.S.

GAJA

Langhe Sori Tildin 2006

92 points | \$420 | 200 cases imported | Red

Pretty ripe plum and berry aromas, with hints of fresh flowers, like roses. Full-bodied, with beautiful, clean fruit and a mineral, berry and cherry aftertaste. Balanced and very pretty. Almost drinkable now. Best after 2010.—J.S.

HOT WINES

These are the most exciting discoveries from our editors' most recent tastings, published exclusively in *Wine Spectator* Insider. They are high-scoring, low-production wines from around the world that may be difficult to find, but are worth seeking out.

SILVIO GRASSO

Barolo Ciabot Manzoni 2005

96 points | \$90 | 150 cases imported | Red

Wow. Wonderful plums and blackberries, with Indian spices. Full-bodied, with powerful, chewy tannins and a dense, rich fruit depth. Long and rich. A solid, powerful and beautiful wine. Best after 2013. *From Italy.*—J.S.

PIO CESARE

Barolo Ornato 2005

95 points | \$109 | 200 cases imported | Red

Very pretty sweet strawberry pie aromas here, with hints of plums and flowers. Full-bodied, with very polished, yet chewy tannins. Bright acidity too. Big and juicy wine. Give it time. A Barolo for the cellar. Best after 2013. *From Italy.*—J.S.

PIO CESARE

Barbaresco Il Bricco 2005

95 points | \$109 | 100 cases imported | Red

Shows pure plum on the nose, with a combination of violet and smoke. Full-bodied, with layers of ultrafine tannins and a very long finish. Caresses the palate. A wine of strength and elegance. Best after 2012. *From Italy.*—J.S.

VILLAE LANATA

Barolo Lo Zoccolaio Ravera 2005

95 points | \$60 | 100 cases imported | Red

Intense raisin and sultana aromas, with lots of chocolate, vanilla and coffee as well. Full-bodied, with ultra-soft tannins and a long, very ripe fruit finish. Almost Amarone-like. But I like the style and richness. Blockbuster late harvest style. Best after 2012. *From Italy.*—J.S.

WINE SPECTATOR'S TASTERS

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Wine Spectator's tasting staff includes 14 people in three offices. They work together to review more than 18,000 wines each year, more than any other publication. Together, our seven senior tasters count more than 140 years of tasting experience.

We always taste wine blind in our offices in Napa, New York and Tuscany. This is your guarantee that our reviews are fair and objective, and that a wine's reputation or price does not influence its score. Each editor specializes in the wines of specific regions; their initials identify the taster of each wine reviewed. We score wines using the 100-point scale, explained below.

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Wine Spectator's 100-Point Scale

95–100	Classic
90–94	Outstanding
85–89	Very good
80–84	Good
75–79	Mediocre
50–74	Not recommended