

[Wine News](#) Barolo and Barbaresco Set to Shine

## Barolo and Barbaresco Set to Shine



© Tom Hyland/Wine-Searcher | The latest releases have producers brimming with confidence. As producers prepare to launch the latest vintages of these Piedmont giants, **Tom Hyland** sneaks a peek. Posted Thursday, 18-Apr-2019

Over the next few months, the 2015 Barolos will be released, and given that this was not a year that resulted in powerful wines, many observers will pass these wines off as ordinary – if there is such a thing as an ordinary Barolo.

The truth is that 2015 is an average to above average vintage, with wines of very good varietal character and harmony; given that the wines can be appreciated at an earlier stage than usual should be a welcome opportunity for wine buyers looking for [Barolos](#) to consume over the next few years, while their bottles of 2010, 2012 and 2013 are aging in their cellars.

"We think 2015 is a very good vintage, with a lot of character. It was a good winter with a lot of snow, and then a lot of rain in the spring. But then it was very hot and dry in the summer," says Paolo Manzone, proprietor/winemaker at his [eponymous estate](#) in Serralunga d'Alba.

At [Poderi e Cantine Oddero](#) in La Morra, proprietor Cristina Oddero also noted the above average heat during that summer. "July was a warm month with very few rains, and low humidity, while the first part of August was also warm," she remarks. She recalls that the second half of August featured lower temperatures and more humidity, while "sunny days and fresher mornings" characterized September. "We had constant temperatures during October, with not much rain and harvest operations ended successfully."

These warm temperatures resulted in an early harvest; Oddero notes that picking of the single vineyards (such as Brunate, Villero and Rocche di Castiglione) was eight to 10 days before that of the 2016 vintage. Franco Massolino, proprietor/winemaker at the eponymous [family estate](#) in Serralunga notes that while the above average heat did produce ripe fruit, "there was still good acidity and correct pH".

These conditions produced wines with many positive attributes. "In general the idea of the 2015 harvest is very, very strong," says Manzone. "Strong, dry tannins, but after the aging of 24 months – in our case 26 months in oak – the wine has a softer character than you expect. You expect a strong character, but the wines are balanced and soft. This is very unusual for the expectations of the harvest, after a dry summer, we expected dry, strong tannins.

"Generally speaking, the 2015 Barolos are wines with an excellent concentration, and with a charming balance between power, tannins and elegance. These are wines with very good drinkability and with good longevity. I think the vintage 2015 is an enjoyable and pretty appreciable expression of Barolo."

Regarding comparisons with recent vintages, Massolino says: "While I think that every vintage is unique with its own style, I think 2015 could be comparable to the 2011 vintage." For Oddero, it is "hard to compare the 2015 harvest with others ... It was a warm and dry season, but the 2015 Barolos don't have the sensations of a very warm vintage like 2003 and 2007, as there is more balance."

There are many pretty offerings of 2015 Barolo that display attractive fruit and floral perfumes and notable varietal character; two notable examples are the [Marcarini Brunate](#) and the [Francesco Rinaldi Cannubi](#). Each offers impeccable balance and charm, are approachable now and should peak within a decade. Most 2015 Barolo are not structured for 25 years or more of cellaring, but then again, not every Barolo from every vintage is meant to be like that. So enjoy these two wines – and dozens more like them – with dinner tonight and over the next several years.



© Tom Hyland/Wine-Searcher | Winemaker Alessandro Ceretto gets to grips with a 2015 Barolo.

Note that there are some deeply concentrated Barolos from 2015 that will improve for 12-15 years or longer. Among the best are these wines:

[Giacomo Fennocchio Cannubi](#) Outstanding complexity, rich mid-palate and firm beautifully balanced tannins. Textbook Cannubi with its spicy characteristics; one of the wines of the vintage.

[Vietti Ravera](#) Another candidate for wine of the vintage, this is the most seductive and feminine of Vietti Barolos. Medium-full with graceful tannins, good acidity and lovely floral notes. Remarkable complexity.

[Paolo Scavino Prapò](#) Morel cherry, tobacco, black plum and licorice aromas. Offering excellent persistence and complexity, this had a distinct spiciness in the flavors and finish.

**[Marchesi di Barolo Cannubi](#) Classically styled Cannubi with orange peel, balsamic and sandalwood notes. Not as powerful as prior releases, but offering excellent persistence and lovely finesse.**

[Ceretto Brunate](#) Lovely aromas of pink peppercorn, oregano and red cherry, this is a spicy Barolo with big, but balanced tannins and a layered mid-palate. One of the most powerful of the 2015 Barolo.

[Massolino Margheria](#) Sage, tobacco and red cherry perfumes; rich mid-palate, velvety tannins, and a subtle hint of balsamic in the finish.

[Poderi Oddero Brunate](#) Morel cherry, strawberry jam and red poppy aromas. Medium-full, this is textbook Brunate with its lovely floral perfumes, supple tannins and superb balance. Ultra impressive!

[Conterno Fantino Ginestra Vigna Sori Ginestra](#) A more modern style of Barolo, with ample wood notes, but a beautifully balanced wine with excellent ripeness and persistence backed by good acidity.

[Michele Chiarlo Cannubi](#) Rich mid-palate, beautifully integrated wood notes, elegant tannins, outstanding varietal character and a superb sense of place, as always.

[Francesco Rinaldi Brunate](#) Red cherry, currant, thyme and tobacco aromas. Good acidity, appealing hints of cumin and thyme in the finish and beautifully integrated wood notes.

As for [Barbaresco](#), 2016 is the new vintage, and it is a striking one. "2016 is what we like – something cool, very late," comments Pietro Colla, of [Poderi Colla](#) in San Rocco Seno d'Elvio. "We were so lucky, because the quality is amazing, and the quantity was also amazing - this doesn't happen very often."

For Enrico Dellapiana, proprietor at Rizzi in Treiso, "we are very enthused about 2016, perhaps the most enthused in the last several years. When you taste a 2016 Barbaresco, you understand that it is good in its youth and it will also be good in the future."

"2016 is a really well-balanced vintage, where everything is perfect," says Alessandro Ceretto, winemaker at his [family estate](#) in Alba. "The wines have the right type of concentration and tannins that are well-balanced. Aromatically, it's really a lovely vintage."

With the release of the 2016 Barbarescos, perhaps now this wine will receive greater awareness from critics and consumers alike as being one of Italy's greatest reds and one that can compare favorably with Barolo.

Notes on a few of the finest 2016 Barbarescos

[Ceretto Asili](#) Orange peel, red cherry and nutmeg aromas. Supple mid-palate, superb ripeness and a wonderful sense of place. Lovely, lovely wine. Peak in 12-15 years.

[Fratelli Grasso Vallegrande](#) Sensual aromas of dried cherry, balsamic and dried rose petals. Rich, youthful tannins, very good acidity. Graceful entry on the palate; enjoyable now, peak in 10-12 years.

[Rizzi Pajoré](#) Fresh cherry, strawberry and cocoa powder aromas. Lovely varietal purity, excellent persistence and graceful tannins. 10-12 years.

[Poderi Colla Roncaqliè](#) Morel cherry, strawberry and carnation aromas. Ideal ripeness, very good acidity, this is sensual and supple. 10-12 years.

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