

HOWARD RIPLEY WINES

BURGUNDY, GERMANY & PIEDMONT

2020 NORTHERN ITALY OFFER



NOVEMBER 2021

2017 RELEASE

Fratelli Alessandria | Borgogno Fratelli Serio e Battista | Diego Conterno
| Bruna Grimaldi | Guiseppe Mascarello et Figlio | La Sala

THE VINTAGE

Unlike the dream 2016 growing season, 2017 was no easy ride. It was incredibly hot and unbelievably dry, so dry in fact that it is referred to as the 'dust harvest'. Surely then, it was too hot and dry to produce a good, let alone a very good vintage? But it wasn't, and here's why:

FINESSE RATHER THAN POWER

Recent years have seen a stylistic change in approach across much of Barolo. Only a short time ago vineyard management was primarily focused on achieving ripeness, and winemakers employed long macerations to ensure concentration and structure. With recent changes in climate, and three successive warm vintages in 2015, 2016 and 2017, there has been a shift in mentality towards crafting wines of more finesse, energy and vitality. Some growers compare the vintage conditions of 2017 to those of 2015, but the wines are quite different. 2017 is indeed surprising for its energy and immediate appeal.

EARLY SPRING, EARLY HARVEST

Warm weather at the start of the growing season saw the vines' vegetative cycle advance quickly, but April frosts scuppered any chance of a generous harvest. The warmth continued through spring and into summer and despite the low yields, growers were beginning to allow thoughts of a possible third successful vintage in a row. By mid-summer a lack of water combined with the heat became a concern, and some sites risked the prospect of vines shutting down for self-preservation, which would have led to less phenolic ripeness and unbalanced wines. This is where the skill of the winemakers came into play, and the best growers put measures in place to protect the grapes, slow maturation and maintain freshness.

September was a decisive month; some rain came in the initial days, and cool nights were a welcome relief from the heat, helping support growers' earlier efforts to maintain freshness. The eventual harvest was early, but because of the efforts to slow ripeness in the summer, the grapes came in with a requisite brightness of fruit as well as richness.

In the wineries, great care was taken not to upset the delicate balance achieved in the vineyards. Barolo's traditional long macerations were cut back, and extraction from the skins was scaled down.

The result is a welcome surprise for such a warm vintage. The wines are ripe and rich but with lovely freshness and vitality as well. There are fewer big, structured wines for long ageing than we saw in 2016; instead, these offer the perfect counterpoint, a high-quality vintage that can be enjoyed over the short to medium term.

THE VINTAGE

FINAL THOUGHTS

2017 is a very good vintage, the third in a row for the region, but it is a year where we must thank both nature AND nurture, and a culture shift from wines of power to those of finesse.

In a period where Barolo is becoming more and more popular, we have been blessed with a trilogy of great years. James Suckling, who has lived in Italy since 1998, puts it thus:

'I don't think there has ever been a trilogy of vintages for the Langhe like this before. Sure, 1988, 1989 and 1990 were excellent years, but I don't think the 1988 was that great compared with 2015, 2016 and 2017. It's the same with 1996, 1997 and 1998. The new trilogy made much better crafted and transparent wines.' James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com

We hope you enjoy the elegance and beauty of these classic wines. In addition to the Nebbiolos we are delighted to offer a refreshing Nascetta, a couple of fine Chianti, and a new Barbera that the entire team was taken with.

All prices in bond per case.

Some wines are available for immediate delivery.

Please let us have your En Primeur requests by the 12th November 2021.

The En Primeur prices in this offer are valid until 31st December 2021.

Prices are in bond London.

Fratelli Alessandria - Verduno



La famiglia Alessandria

Verduno is the Chambolle of the Barolo region: the wines are soft, pure and accessible, and deceptively forward. The vines are looked after by Ale (left), and the wines made by Vittore (the tall bearded chap), who arrived in 2001, and under whose direction the estate is now one of the region's most sought-after. Their range is full of elegance and finesse, from the Langhe Nebbiolo right up to the excellent Barolo Monvigliero.

Please note that due to expected demand Alessandria's top three Baroli will be on allocation only, and tied 1:1 with the regular Barolo del commune di Verduno.

2019 Langhe Nebbiolo 'Prinsiot'

£89 | Case of 6 - 75cl

A rainy spring, hot July and localised hailstorms in August made life difficult, but Prinsiot has turned out very well indeed. A great expression of Nebbiolo that is perfect as a regular drinking treat. Floral top notes, a bright red fruit core, gentle spice and finely crafted tannins. All the elegance that Fratelli Alessandria is known for, but without the patience needed for the Barolos. This wine went very quickly last year, and our allocation is small this year.

2017 Barolo del commune di Verduno

£183 | Case of 6 - 75cl

Last year 10% of the fruit came from Gramolere in Monforte d'Alba, but this year it is pure Verduno ensuring an elegant, perfumed Barolo. Raspberry freshness and a flowing palate combine with graceful depths and gentle grip. Deceptive for its focus on harmony and elegance, as there is definite staying power here too.

2017 Barolo San Lorenzo di Verduno

£262 | Case of 6 - 75cl

Allocation Only

Lying just below the great Monvigliero vineyard, but slightly warmer and with whiter sandier soils, this is a wine of texture, density and finesse; charmingly presented and faultless in its demeanour. Refined elegance on the nose, caressing and silky on the palate and assured on the finish.

Fratelli Alessandria - Verduno

2017 Barolo Gramolere

£281 | Case of 6 - 75cl

Allocation Only

This is classic Monforte d'Alba, with robust dark fruit that saturates the palate and leaves an impression of intensity and authority. Whilst muscular and mineral throughout, above those notes of black cherry, blackcurrant and blackstrap molasses is a palpable elegance, and the tannins on the finish are powerful but refined. Very impressive.

2017 Barolo Monvigliero

£341 | Case of 6 - 75cl

Allocation Only

From four plots in the heart of the vineyard, with 36-year-old vines, the Monvigliero has fossil-rich white soils which give the wines a lean, fine angular structure. However this is all within the context of Verduno's more velvety 'Chambolle-like' appeal. It is that softer, more voluptuous side of the commune that emerges right now. Heady, intense and captivating, this has an irresistible charm but needs time to reveal its layers. A wine to lose yourself in after a few more years in bottle.

Diego Conterno – Monforte d'Alba



Stefano Conterno

Diego Conterno has been making wine on his own in Monforte d'Alba since 2003. His estate comprises 7.5 hectares, 2 of which make up the 'grand cru' site Ginestra. He was joined in 2010 by his son Stefano, and that year they bottled the Ginestra separately for the first time. In 2014 they converted to organic viticulture and added a new wing to their winery. The winemaking here is very traditional: static fermenters and ever larger barrels (*botte grande*) for maturation.

Monforte is known for wines of depth, structure and length – we all know what that can mean – but the painstaking care in the vineyard and gentle winemaking bring out the elegance of the terroir.

Diego Conterno is an estate on the rise; the wines remain an enviable bargain for the quality level, and we anticipate that these wines will be much harder to get your hands on in future years.

2020 Langhe Nascetta

£61 | Case of 6 - 75cl

Nascetta is a local white variety almost extinct by the mid-nineties, but now undergoing something of a rebirth, with widespread planting. Nascetta is a joyful, refreshing wine, brimming with grapefruit, peach and pineapple. There is a touch of the exotic before it finishes on a clean, bright, juicy citrus note.

2019 Nebbiolo d'Alba 'Baluma'

£67 | Case of 6 - 75cl

Like their Barbera, this 100% Nebbiolo comes from their 'Ferrione' plot just below the cantina, high up and facing west towards the Alps. 'Baluma' means 'let's dance' in Piedmontese, a description that fits the wine nicely. Bright blackcurrant, juicy and rather pretty. A gentle touch gives this relative lightness and ease across the palate.

Diego Conterno – Monforte d'Alba

2017 Barolo

£145 | Case of 6 - 75cl

£60 | Case of 1 - 150cl

Conterno's Barolo blends fruit from three areas within Monforte d'Alba. This classic approach enables a balanced profile to the wine of softness, freshness and backbone. Everything you would want in a Barolo is here; lifted rose petal aromas, sapid cherry fruit, autumnal warmth cleansed by subtle eucalyptus, ripe tannins and a mineral spine that holds it all together. An exemplar of accessible yet age worthy Barolo.

2017 Barolo Monforte D'Alba

£172 | Case of 6 - 75cl

£79 | Case of 1 - 150cl

£202 | Case of 1 - 300cl

From two vineyards within Monforte d'Alba, one on an eastern escarpment facing Serralunga d'Alba with sandier soils, the other on the border with Serralunga, possessing more clay and with older vines. Powerful and polished with wafts of potpourri that merge with blackcurrant and soft strawberry on the palate. Refined and poised with tension and freshness in the length.

2016 Barolo Ginestra

£109 | Case of 1 - 150cl

Another immaculate 2016. Lots of rich dark fruit, ripe tannins and a sinewy, mineral undertow. With an intense core and firm structure, everything is in place for this to age gracefully. Perfumed, harmonious and long, this delivers in bucket loads and will continue to evolve for many years.

As expected, this sold out in short order last year, but we were lucky enough to receive a small second allocation of magnums of this excellent wine.

2017 Barolo Ginestra

£224 | Case of 6 - 75cl

Like the 2016, this has a glorious sinewy, mineral nature. Inviting aromas of rose petal, dark plum, warm spice and liquorice rise tentatively from the glass, and the power of the ripe fruit hits you on the palate. Pure, strong and meaty, the dark fruits are not quite so compact and closed as '16, but this is a rich, broad wine that will require time.

2019 Barbera d'Alba 'Ferrione'

£58 | Case of 6 - 75cl

A delightfully uplifting wine. Ferrione is packed with smooth, dark plum fruit that flows gracefully across the palate. Lovely integration and balance, with a juicy, fruity length. A real crowd-pleaser you can pop the cork on, confident of an enjoyable glass.

Bruna Grimaldi – Grinzane Cavour



Simone, Bruna & Martina

The Grimaldis were farmers in Grinzane Cavour who increasingly focussed on grape-growing and the occasional bottling of their own wines in the years after the war. In 1999, the estate took off properly, when Bruna Grimaldi and her husband Franco Fiorni started regular bottling. She inherited vines in Serralunga, notably the Badarina vineyard, and the family have purchased other parcels to complement their holdings. They were joined in 2015 by their son Simone, who is assuming ever more responsibility, and his sister Martina began working here in 2019. The vines have been farmed organically since 2014.

Starting in 2016 there has been a trend towards more traditional methods. Not only has the bottle shape and the labels changed, but there is less use of new oak, allowing the *terroirs* to shine through.

2018 Nebbiolo d'Alba 'Bonurai'

£66 | Case of 6 - 75cl

Crafted from grapes grown on the border of the Barolo area, this is a winter warmer. Christmas spices such as clove and cinnamon interact with tobacco, liquorice, chocolate and dark cherry. Those leafy Nebbiolo tannins combine with a spicy rich finish that is open and immediately appealing.

New Addition

Borgogno Fratelli Serio e Battista – Barolo



The Borgogno Family

A new estate for us, located in the heart of Barolo, with prime holdings in the Cannubi vineyard. Dating back to the end of the nineteenth century, the estate has remained small, and has needed to buy in fruit to bulk up quantity. This has now been largely discontinued, with the focus squarely on their own vineyards. It is very much a family enterprise, with three generations involved in the business.

Wine-making is traditional: fermentation is in large wooden vats, maturation in huge Slavonian oak botte as large as 5000 litres.

2017 Barolo Novello

£126 | Case of 6 - 75cl

An old vineyard on clay-rich soils high up in the village of Novello is the source of the estate's classic wine. Crunchy red cherry, woody herbs and a Chartreuse-like lift. Rounded red and dark fruits, juicy hedgerow notes, and energetic drive. This is a charming expression of Novello with a long cleansing finish.

2017 Barolo Cannubi

£164 | Case of 6 - 75cl

A famous vineyard and a scintillating wine. Bright and compelling on the attack, morello cherry, kirsch liqueur and velvety red fruits. This has subtlety and generosity up front with a warm herbal lift surrounding a succulent, molten core. Big tannic structure amply fleshed out by the fruit. Gracious and balanced with a long, seductive finish.

Giuseppi Mascarello e Figlio – Castiglione Falletto



La famiglia Mascarello

One of the grand old estates of the region, going back to the late nineteenth century, and renowned since the 1950s for its production of fine long-lived wine. The estate has been run since 1968 by Mauro Mascarello and his wife Maria-Teresa, assisted by his children Giuseppi and Elena. The flagship is the Monprivato, but the other wines are equally well made and very exciting in their own right. The winemaking here is traditional – fermentation is in cement and stainless steel cuves, maturation in large oak *botte* – with the goal of bringing out the characteristics of each vineyard. There has been a step-change in quality here since 2014, when a new vineyard team came in. The wines have been finer and more precise ever since.

2019 Langhe Nebbiolo

£307 | Case of 12 - 75cl

A soft appeal on the nose, offering up aromas of violets and warm spice. Light but quite languid on the palate, with a fresh line of attack driving through the middle and ending with tea leaf hints to the finish.

2017 Barolo Monprivato

£796 | Case of 6 - 75cl

Consistently among the greatest of all Barolo wines. Giuseppe has a magical touch that adds a sublime texture to this powerful, dense and multi-layered masterpiece. Seamless, velvety, and oozing authority. The opaque heart of the wine is closely guarded at present, but this certainly isn't heavy or monolithic. The dark mulberry fruit hides a fine line of acidity, and the finish just keeps on going.

2013 Cà d'Marissio

£2,262 | Case of 6 - 75cl

Even with all the velvety charms that Giuseppe Mascarello's wines possess, this is almost painfully backward. Meaty, solid and impenetrable at the moment, this is clearly a standout wine, but it shouldn't be touched for at least 5 years, and will last decades.

La Sala—San Casciano



Francesco & Susanna Rossi Ferini

La Sala is an historic winery purchased by a successful local boy, Francesco Rossi Ferini, whose family have long owned vines in Chianti. There are now over 27 hectares under vine in the Chianti Classico appellation, as well as 4000 olive trees (yielding quite magical grassy oil). Since 2014 there has been significant investment in the vineyards and cuverie, and the quality is outstanding, ranging from the regular Chianti through to more ambitious cuvées.

2018 Chianti Classico

£57 | Case of 6 - 75cl

Predominantly Sangiovese with a splash (5%) of Merlot to soften the edges. This has a lovely floral note to it, plenty of ripe red fruit, gentle spice, harmonious tannins and a bright finish. A charming and very quaffable style that keeps you wanting more.

2016 Chianti Classico Riserva

£102 | Case of 6 - 75cl

Replace the Merlot of the Classico with 10% Cabernet Sauvignon and you have the more structured and robust Riserva. A chocolatey framework surrounds notions of sour cherry, forest floor and a fresh spice. The warmth of the vintage provides rich tannic structure and smooth appeal.

Terms and Conditions

The prices in our offer are valid until 31st December 2021. Please let us know your requests by the 12th November 2021.

Prices are in bond London.

Unless otherwise marked, wines are packed in:

6-BOTTLE CASES (750ml)

12-BOTTLE CASES (375ml)

3-BOTTLE CASES (1500ml)

Unless otherwise marked, wines are offered by the case only, but some single bottles are available.

If your shipping address differs from your invoicing address, please let us know when placing your order.



How to buy

Phone

Please give us a call on 020 8748 2608 to place an order or for any advice.

Email

Orders can be emailed to info@howardripley.com.

Website

The wines are available on www.howardripley.com. Please note that all website orders are not final until the allocation process has been finalised.