

# HOWARD RIPLEY WINES

BURGUNDY, GERMANY & PIEDMONT

## ITALY EN PRIMEUR | MARCH 2024



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# BUYER REPORT

## 2020 Piedmont

It's often the forgotten vintages that provide the most drinking pleasure: think 2000 or 2007 Burgundy, 2004 or 2016 German wines. Sandwiched between the 'great' Piedmont vintages of 2019 and 2021, 2020 risks being overlooked. And what a shame that would be – it has produced perfumed, seductive and resolved wines, perfectly in balance, with precision, energy and length.

Growing conditions were relatively easy. A mild winter and wet spring gave way to a hot summer punctuated by the occasional storm, with hail in Verduno on 15th June causing extensive damage. September was warm, but cool nights created perfect conditions for developing aromatic complexity. The grapes were ripe, though full of freshness and structure, and they were perfectly healthy. Vinification was simple, with less pumping over and more traditional use of a submerged cap, but growers were careful not to overdo it in order to preserve the delicate perfumed quality of the vintage. These are not supercharged, powerful wines; they are gorgeous and approachable, pure and seductive, and they will age very well.

**The wines of Fratelli Alessandria and both Mascarellos will be released later in the year.**

Please let us have your En Primeur requests by Monday 25th of March 2024 to be included in the allocation process. If your delivery address differs from your invoicing address, please let us know when placing your order.

Prices are in bond London. Wines may be ordered by the case only unless otherwise specified.



Emanuela Bolla & Federica Boffa

Located in the heart of Barolo, Borgogno has prime holdings in Cannubi, one of the region's most famous vineyards. Dating back to the end of the nineteenth century, the estate has remained small, in the past needing to buy in fruit to bulk up quantity. This practice has now largely been discontinued, with the focus kept squarely on their own vineyards. It is very much a family enterprise, with three generations involved in the business. Winemaking is traditional: fermentation is in large wooden vats, maturation in huge Slavonian oak botte holding as much as 5000 litres. The wines are finer and more precise with each passing year.

The vintage

After years of investment, experimentation and focus on quality, 2020 marks a big step up in quality. Emanuela Bolla, her father and the oenologist Luca Sarotto have produced their best set of wines ever – poised, balanced and pure.

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**2023 Dolcetto d'Alba – 12.5%**

£60 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*A zingy wine, with fresh scented strawberries, a rounded juicy middle and an elegant sweet finish. Dolcetto as it should be! Drink 2024 – 2030*

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**2023 Barbera d'Alba – 14.5% abv**

£66 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Made from fruit in Vergne, above Barolo, mostly fermented in stainless steel, with 20% of whole bunches. The result is a Barbera at the lighter, fresher end of the scale, full of dark blueberry fruit, pepper and liquorice, with a seductive velvety texture, smooth juicy tannins and a long finish. Drink 2024 – 2030*

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**2023 Langhe Nebbiolo – 13.5%**

£72 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Generally made from young vines in the Albarella vineyard at the foot of Cannubi, along with fruit from outside the Barolo commune, the emphasis here is on freshness, so fermentation takes place in stainless steel. The influence of whole bunches has been reduced this year, and the wine is forward, firm and very bright, with rounded red fruit and a lovely racy energy. Drink 2024 – 2032*

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**2020 Barolo – 14%**

£144 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*The fruit from this entry-level Barolo used to come entirely from Novello, typically showing alpine herbal flavours. This year there are also grapes from La Morra, lending perfume and coolness, and from Monforte, providing structure, tannins and a note of orange peel from the iron-rich soils. The result is a complex wine with fresh, delicate strawberry-scented fruit, but broader and deeper than in the past. It has power and length, and a long life ahead of it. Drink 2026 – 2035*

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**2020 Barolo Albarella – 14.5%**

£180 | Collectors Case of 4 – 75cl – all with different labels

*Young vines in the clay-rich soils at the foot of Cannubi are fermented in steel, with 20% whole bunches. A finely structured wine with fresh wild strawberry, floral notes and smooth fine tannins, leading to a long juicy lifted finish. Drink 2027 – 2035*

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**2020 Barolo Cannubi – 14%**

£198 | Case of 6 – 75cl

£86 | Case of 1 – 150cl

£146 | Case of 1 – 300cl

*The estate's flagship wine, from three clay and sand vineyards around the winery, facing west, south and east. The most complete of the estate's Barolos, it shows the charm and elegance for which the vineyard is famous. Everything is in balance: there is bright strawberry fruit, juicy acidity, finely textured tannins and a long, soft, relaxed finish. No Riserva was made in 2020, so we are getting a big bang for our buck this year. Bottles | Drink 2029 – 2035, Magnums | Drink 2032 – 2045*

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Cassino Family

And now, a breath of fresh air: the wines of Monica and Elena Cassino. Just out-side the Barolo region, high in the hills above Serralunga, their tiny 4.5-hectare estate produces Dolcetto, Barbera, Nebbiolo and the indigenous Rossese Bianco. Twenty years ago, when their father started bottling his own wines, it was a struggle to ripen the grapes, but in recent years the warming climate has made their elevated vineyard an attractive prospect, producing wines that have a degree less alcohol than those made on traditionally more favoured sites lower down. The temperature difference was brought home starkly during our visit this year: as we made our way up the winding roads to their estate, the driving rain gave way to heavy snow by the time we arrived!

The elder sister Elena looks after the vines, while Monica, who took the unusual step of studying in Geisenheim in Germany, is responsible for the cellar. They began to work together in 2019, and have begun producing exciting, clear wines that benefit from the high altitude. They also source a Barolo from a relative in Monforte.

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## 2022 Langhe Rossese Bianco – 12%

£69 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Old vines – planted in 1961 – on an exposed site at the top of a hill give a wonderfully fresh, aromatic wine, full of white flowers and pithy lime peel notes. There is rounded richness from a little batonnage during maturation, which reduces the amount of sulphur required, and a gentle salinity emerges on the finish. A bright, digestible treat. Drink 2024 – 2029*

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## 2023 Dolcetto d'Alba – 14%

£54 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*The cool weather in 2023 gave a more 'old-style' Dolcetto, lower in alcohol and full of fresh primary fruit – exuberant raspberry and damson fruit is completed by herbal flavours as the wine bounds to a fresh finish. Drink 2024 – 2030*

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## 2022 Barbera d'Alba Superiore – 14%

£72 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Barbera can sometimes sink beneath heavy dark fruit and high alcohol: here's how to do it properly. There is delightful energy running through the wine, effortlessly lifting the powerful black fruit, dense smooth tannins towards a long salty finish. Drink 2024 – 2032*

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## 2022 Langhe Nebbiolo – 13.5%

£72 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Coming from a vineyard with 500m elevation, the 2022 is lighter and more playful than the almost brooding 2021. It is bright, rounded and smooth, with strawberry and rose fruit, and a serious dark core of fine tannins driving to the juicy finish. Drink 2024 – 2032*

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## BRUNA GRIMALDI | GRINZANE CAVOUR



Simone Grimaldi

The Grimaldis were farmers in Grinzane Cavour who, in the years after the war, increasingly focussed on grape-growing and the occasional bottling of their own wines. In 1989, 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. The estate was renamed after her in 1999.

Since 2014, the vines have been farmed organically, and in 2015 Bruna and Franco were joined full-time by their son Simone, who has now assumed responsibility for the estate with his sister Martina. Simone turns out to be brilliant. He has made many subtle changes in the vineyard and cantina, and there is now increasing accessibility, balance and terroir precision in the wines. He has reacted sensitively to the threats posed by climate change, delaying ripening as much as possible, for example by topping the vines much later in the season, and protecting the vineyards from drought with cover crops. He has invested in a new destemmer, which makes the wines clearer and purer by keeping the grapes whole, a notoriously difficult task with Nebbiolo as the stems are delicate and break easily. Tracking his progress is very exciting, and we expect ever greater things.

## ORGANIC

### The vintage

2020 was an easy vintage, with rain at the right time and plenty of sunshine. The grapes were never stressed, and ripened easily and evenly, growing larger and juicier than in 2019. Simone reported that the aromatics turned out beautifully, with lots of primary fruit and ripe tannins, so he extended skin contact post-fermentation to achieve maximum complexity without the danger of over-extracting harsh tannins.

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#### **2022 Barbera d'Alba Superiore 'Scassa' – 15%**

£81 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*As always, a complete, balanced wine, full of sweet cherry and strawberry fruit, some herbal notes, and a hint of firm tannin on the bright finish. Note that this is not a Langhe Nebbiolo, which is made from declassified fruit, but instead sourced from dedicated vineyards, so the quality is higher as a result. Drink 2024 – 2032*

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#### **2022 Nebbiolo D'Alba 'Bonurei' – 14.5%**

£90 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*A rounded, fleshy wine, with smooth dark spicy fruit, good concentration and a juicy fresh finish. Drink 2024 – 2032.*

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#### **2020 Barolo 'Camilla' – 14.5%**

£162 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Blended from vineyards across five communes. This year, fruit from the Raviolo vineyard in Grinzane is back in the mix after being lashed by hail in 2019, lending a more pronounced base note to this complex wine, full of pretty floral notes, powerful red-cherry fruit, fine tannins and a long juicy finish. Drink 2026 – 2035*

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#### **2020 Barolo Bricco Ambrogio – 14.5%**

£192 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*The Grimaldis own two plots in Ambrogio, but use only the prime piece in the middle of the slope with forty-year-old vines for this wine. The other, lesser parcel is used in the Camilla blend. The south-west-facing vineyard delivers a ripe wine, with scented silky floral rose notes, and pretty strawberry and dark cherry fruit, along with hints of liquorice. There is a lively energy, a lifted, ethereal quality framed by ripe, rich tannins, driving to a long, smooth finish with a saline tang. Drink 2029 – 2036*

## BRUNA GRIMALDI | GRINZANE CAVOUR

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### **2020 Barolo Badarina Serralunga d'Alba – 14.5% abv**

£222 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Badarina is an elevated vineyard in Serralunga, with limestone-rich soils. The Grimaldis' three plots bud early but they are east-facing, and develop much more slowly than the estate's other vineyards, harvested a clear four weeks after the Ambrogio. They produce a dense, complex wine, compact and reserved in youth, showing cool raspberry fruit, alpine herbs, a hint of balsamic, and structured, fine tannins that prolong the juicy saline finish. Drink 2029 – 2036*

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### **2020 Barolo Badarina 'Vigna Regnola', Serralunga d'Alba – 14.5%**

£174 | Case of 3 – 75cl

*The Vigna Regnola is the best parcel in Badarina, a steep, south-facing vineyard with old vines growing in very white soil. It is the purest, leanest and most ethereal wine in the line-up, with a dense knot of juicy raspberry fruit, gentle pure herbal flavours, notes of roses and spice, and beautifully fine, balanced tannins sweeping to a long salty finish. Drink 2028 – 2040*

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## 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 8 hectares, 2 of which make up the 'grand cru' site Ginestra. Last year 2 further hectares were acquired, and planted with Nebbiolo and Nascetta. Diego 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 painstaking care in the vineyard and gentle winemaking bring out the elegance of the terroir. Diego Conterno is an estate on the rise; given their quality, the wines are a serious bargain.

### The vintage

Stefano reported a more or less relaxed growing season. It began early and vigorously with warm conditions in February and March, then slowed as the weather cooled in May and June, which saw generous rainfall. This was crucial, as it enabled the wines to survive a warm dry summer. In September,

## ORGANIC

temperatures fell again, and the harvest was later than the 'new normal' average, beginning on 20 September with Dolcetto. The Nebbiolo harvest ran from 10–28 October, interrupted by a bout of rain, which delighted Stefano, as it refreshed the parched vines, and cleaned the grapes of accumulated dust.

The wines have similarities with the 2018s, but with more balance and body. In 2018, hail damage to the grapes prevented Stefano from submerging the cap during fermentation, but their impeccable condition in 2020 allowed him to do so, even prolonging the maceration period in some cases, balancing the ripe fruit and making the wines more complete. They are rounded and chocolatey, with supple tannins and great finesse.

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### **2023 Langhe Nascetta – 12.5%**

£72 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*'Nascetta is a crazy grape,' says Stefano, 'in a warm year, it shows the characteristics of a cool vintage; in a cool one, it tastes as if the summer was hot.' Here we have a fresh, highly aromatic wine, with a broad rich middle, a hint of tannin from the brief skin contact before fermentation, and a bright slightly saline finish. Drink 2024 – 2029*

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### **2022 Barbera d'Alba 'Ferrione' – 14.5%**

£72 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*The 'Ferrione' plot lies on a steep slope looking west towards the Alps, and there is a fresh streak running through this powerful wine, full of dark ripe fruit and smooth chocolatey tannins. Drink 2024 – 2030*

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### **2022 Nebbiolo d'Alba 'Baluma' – 14%**

£78 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Fresh, scented strawberry fruit is backed by fine but firm tannins in this rounded, energetic wine, and there is a hint of liquorice on the firm finish. Drink 2024 – 2032*

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### **2020 Barolo – 14.5%**

£162 | Case of 6 – 75cl

£66 | Case of 1 – 150cl (OWC)

*Blended from three vineyards: Bricco San Pietro, Perno, and Le Coste. It sings Monforte – cool, fresh raspberry fruit, bright acidity and firm tannins. In 2020 those tannins are silky and fine; the fruit, while dense, is flowing and relaxed, and the finish is supple, long and delicate.*

*Bottles | Drink 2029 – 2040*

*Magnums | Drink 2032 – 2045*

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## DIEGO CONTERNO | MONFORTE D'ALBA

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### **2020 Barolo Monforte d'Alba – 14.5% abv**

£186 | Case of 6 – 75cl

£80 | Case of 1 – 150cl

*From young vines, principally in Ginestra, but with 15% coming from Le Coste. Exuberant dark ripe raspberry fruit is balanced by fine gentle tannins, and there is a strong saline streak on the fresh finish.*

*Bottles | Drink 2029 – 2034*

*Magnums | Drink 2032 – 2045*

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### **2020 Barolo Le Coste di Monforte d'Alba – 14.5% abv**

£228 | Case of 6 – 75cl

£94 | Case of 1 – 150cl

*Most of Le Coste faces south-east, an increasing advantage as temperatures increase. The fruit is cool – wild strawberry and raspberry with herbal notes, densely woven elegant tannins, and a hint of chocolate on the finish.*

*Bottles | Drink 2029 – 2036*

*Magnums | Drink 2032 – 2045*

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### **2019 Barolo Ginestra – 14.5%**

£270 | Case of 6 – 75cl

£118 | Case of 1 – 150cl (OWC)

*A powerful, plummy wine, full of ripe strawberry and rose-petal fruit, some balsamic and very present but very smooth fine tannins. It is mouth-filling and rich, and there is chocolate, liquorice and spice on the long salty finish.*

*Bottles | Drink 2027 – 2040*

*Magnums | Drink 2030 – 2045*

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Susanna Bianco

In the heart of the village of Barbaresco at the top of the hill lies one of its oldest estates, the tiny three-hectare Gigi Bianco. Susanna Bianco is the fifth generation to run it with her close family, and makes intense, precise wines from two vineyards, Ovello and Pora. It is an estate known only to insiders: everything is very traditional, and modern marketing – indeed any marketing – is anathema to her, so most sales happen at the cellar door. It is our second year distributing the wines, and the tasting this year was as exciting as the last. These are world-class wines. We also persuaded Susanna to offer us a limited number of magnums from back vintages.

The approach here is deeply non-interventionist. The focus is on work in the vineyard, using mainly biodynamic methods, and work in the cellar is traditional. It's obvious that tremendous care is taken at every stage to allow the terroir of the vineyards to shine through. A big change last year was to abandon the Slavonian oak barrels used traditionally in favour of new ones made from French oak, but in Italy. The wood is aged for five years in the fresh air high in the Dolomites, and the barrels are untoasted.

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**2021 Dolcetto d'Alba Superiore – 14%**

£120 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Dolcetto used to be more in demand than Nebbiolo, but has fallen out of fashion – often planted in favoured sites, it has now been mostly grubbed up and replaced with Nebbiolo. But not here. Old vines planted at the top of the Pora vineyard by Susanna's grandfather remain firmly in production – the only ones in this prized vineyard – and are used to make that rare thing these days, a Dolcetto Superiore, aged an additional year before release. 2021 produced fewer grapes than usual, and the wine is concentrated as a result, with rich dark fruit, a very fresh middle and a smooth chocolatey finish. Who knew Dolcetto could be so good! Drink 2025 – 2035.*

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**2012 Barbera d'Alba Superiore – 14.5%**

£170 | Case of 1 – 150cl

*Not tasted.*

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**2019 Barbera d'Alba Superiore – 14%**

£162 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Vines planted in 1977 in the Ovello vineyard, lying just 200m from the estate, give a very fine, elegant wine, with smooth redcurrant fruit, lively acidity and elegant tannins on the dark salty finish. Drink 2024 – 2033*

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**2013 Langhe Nebbiolo – 14%**

£170 | Case of 1 – 150cl

*Not tasted.*

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**2014 Barbaresco Ovello – 14.5%**

£162 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Ovello has sandy soil, and the wines have an easy charm, but old vines planted in 1968 take this up a notch, giving length and intensity. The 2014 was kept back from sale as it was too tannic. It has now blossomed into a delightfully smooth, accessible wine, balanced and perfumed, with notes of balsamic, roses and liquorice. Drink 2024 – 2032*

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**2013 Barbaresco Ovello – 14%**

£180 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Over ten years on, and this excellent vintage is developing nicely. It is smooth and soft, the firm tannins now fully integrated, perfectly balancing the fresh perfumed red fruit, and there is very long fine finish. Drink 2024 – 2033*

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## GIGI BIANCO | BARBARESCO

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### **2016 Barbaresco Pora – 15% abv**

£252 | Case of 1 – 150cl

*Pora has more limestone than Ovello, and the wines are more angular and precise as a result. This is kept in wood a little longer to temper the tannins, and is fresh and juicy, packed with perfumed red fruits, with a vibrant, nervy edge to the elegant tannins coming through on the persistent stony finish. Drink 2030 – 2040*

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### **2017 Barbaresco Pora Riserva – 15.5% abv**

£318 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*The vines for the Riserva are from a rare Nebbiolo clone planted in the late sixties. 2017 was a ripe year, and the vines were harvested early. It is hugely intense, with a dark mass of fine raspberry fruit, fresh acidity, and in the engine room, rounded rich tannins propel it to a long satisfying finish. Drink 2030 – 2036*

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Gabriele and Enrico Buondonno

In 1988, the price of a nice two-bedroom holiday flat on the Amalfi Coast got you a whole estate in Chianti Classico. For Gabriele Buondonno, looking for exciting places to make wine, it was a logical decision: he sold up. Starting with a large house and a modest four hectares of vines, he began producing wine in 1989, in 1990 becoming one of only three organic growers in the Classico region. Over the years he began to acquire more vineyards, finally achieving his current size of 15 hectares. They are planted in a river valley running roughly north south, with cool breezes making them several degrees colder than other vineyards nearby, and a large proportion – 6 hectares – face directly north, shielding them from too much sun. These two factors are major contributions to the freshness in the wines, particularly important in times of climate change, and Gabriele maintains that the big day/night temperature differences increase the presence of polyphenols (responsible for complexity and flavour) in the wines.

2022 Vintage

Healthy amounts of rain in the spring helped the vines to survive the long dry summer. Just as they were beginning to suffer, precipitation in August refreshed them, though by mid September things began to get

critical again. In the middle of the harvest the fine weather turned, it rained a little, but more importantly temperatures dropped, and the grapes picked after 20 September were much fresher. Production was larger in 2022, and alcohol levels are correspondingly lower.

2021 vintage

A more challenging vintage than 2022. The winter was cold – a good thing for the vines – spring was dry, with a frost in April causing some damage. The summer was hot and dry, and the wines are nervy and concentrated, and will require a little ageing to integrate.

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**2022 Rosso di Toscana – 13.5% abv**

£54 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Vibrant, smooth red-cherry fruit is backed by rounded tannins and lively acidity. Very appealing and moreish. Drink 2024 – 2030*

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**2022 Chianti Classico – 14%**

£78 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Made from south-east and north-facing vineyards, this is a gentle, flowing wine, beautifully fresh and bursting with energy, full of red-cherry fruit, melting tannins and a long spicy finish. Drink 2024 – 2032*

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**2021 Chianti Classico Riserva – 15%**

£114 | Case of 6 – 75cl

£123 | Case of 3 – 150cl

*A much more serious proposition than the regular Chianti. It is made out of the best grapes from low-yielding, stony vineyards planted in the 1970s; the fruit is dark and dense, the tannins fine and chocolatey. It has balance and energy, and a little new wood adds to the complex spice notes on the very long finish.*

*Bottles | Drink 2026 – 2033*

*Magnums | Drink 2028 – 2036*

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Stefano Di Blasi and Ovidio Mugnaini

La Sala is an historic winery purchased by a successful local boy, Francesco Rossi Ferini, whose family have long owned vines in Chianti. The estate is divided between two nearby locations – Il Torriano and La Sala, also the site of the cantina. There are now over 33 hectares under vine in 40 separate parcels, as well as over 3,000 olive trees covering 13 hectares (and yielding quite magical grassy oil). Half the fruit is sold off in bulk, leaving the best grapes to be vinified and bottled at the estate. Since 2014 there has been significant investment in the vineyards and cantina, and the quality is outstanding, ranging from the regular Chianti Classico through to more ambitious cuvées.

The wines are made by Ovidio Mugnaini in a fruitful partnership with consultant Stefano Di Blasi, for many years head of R&D at Antinori. They produce remarkably pure, polished wines, showing all the finesse for which Chianti Classico is famous.

2021 Vintage

A cool spring meant that vegetative growth only began properly in May. Although winter rain had been plentiful, it was dry for the rest of the growing season, which prevented the onset of disease, but caused some drought stress to the vines. Fortunately, rain on 28 August and 23 September refreshed the vines sufficiently for them to complete ripening, producing intense, concentrated wines with great capacity for ageing.

2020 Vintage

A lovely, stress-free year, with sunshine and rain at the right time, giving relaxed, balanced wines that are a joy.

2019 Vintage

2019 was an excellent vintage. After a cold winter, which killed many pests, it rained plentifully in the spring, setting up the vines to cope with a hot dry summer, which was punctuated by enough precipitation to avoid any drought stress. A heat wave in June delayed the maturation process, setting the harvest back by ten days, and although it remained warm, temperatures at night were low, ideal conditions to promote complexity of flavours in the grapes. The skins were thick, and the juice had wonderful concentration. The wines are powerful, sinewy and fresh.

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**2021 Chianti Classico – 14%**

£72 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Predominantly Sangiovese with a splash (5%) of Merlot. A lean, very pure wine, full of dark raspberry, cherry and spice flavours, with fine, angular tannins and a brisk, elongated finish. Will reward cellaring.*

*Drink 2025 – 2032*

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**2019 Chianti Classico Riserva – 14%**

£114 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Fresh cherry fruit is tinged with blackcurrant from the 10% Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend. This is a powerful, dense wine, with some new oak evident at this stage of its life, rich supple tannins and a long fresh fruity finish. Drink 2024 – 2034*

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**2019 Chianti Classico Gran Selezione – 14%**

£168 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*100% Sangiovese, from a single vineyard in Il Torriano. It is rich, ripe and round, with soft fine tannins, spicy cherry and wild strawberry fruit and a long intense chocolatey finish. Drink 2026 – 2035*

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**2020 Campo All'Albero Igt Toscana – 14.5%**

£156 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*A 'Super Tuscan' made from 70% Merlot and, 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, aged for 18 months in barriques (some new). This is a powerful, deep-coloured and rich wine, with elegant smooth ripe black fruit, a refreshing edge of blackcurrant leaf, spiced plum and warming tannins. Drink 2026 – 2035*



Alberto Tanzino

Roccapesta is a monument to the vision of one determined man. At the turn of the century, while looking for a holiday home, Alberto Tanzino fell in love with the Maremma region, at the southern end of Tuscany, closer to Rome than Florence. Tiring of his career in the financial industry, he decided he would make great wine. He began purchasing old vineyards, some planted in the 1970s, built a cantina and almost single-handedly began to create the reputation of this unsung area. His 30 hectares produce serious Sangiovese which provides excellent value, and more recently he has begun an ambitious experiment of planting vineyards at different elevations to establish which will produce the best wine, with the goal of super-premium bottles to rival the best Chianti Classicos.

2022 Vintage

A very rainy spring, with 50% more precipitation than average, set the wines up perfectly to survive the hot dry summer, and cool nights preserved acidity in the grapes. The lack of water slowed maturation, preventing over ripeness, with the result that alcohol levels are considerably lower than last year. Rain in mid-August and September refreshed the vines, and grapes were picked with perfect balance and ripeness. It is an excellent vintage here.

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**2022 Ribeo – 14%**

£66 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*A seamless, flowing wine, floral and bright with soft, rounded cherry fruit and melting tannins on the smooth finish. Very moreish. Drink 2024 – 2030*

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**2022 Roccapesta – 14%**

£90 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*A seductive, perfumed wine full of bright cherry fruit and supple fine tannins that darken as it approaches the smooth saline finish. This is very relaxed and complete and has a lively energy, but there is power lurking underneath, and it will develop over many years into a graceful old age. Drink 2026 – 2033*

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## CACCIA AL PIANO | BOLGHERI

ORGANIC



Ziliani Family

Bolgheri has become a legend in the last fifty years as the home of Sassicaia, the first Super Tuscan. Before World War II it was an undistinguished commune on the coast producing a little Sangiovese and lots of vegetables, known more for its hunting than anything else. That is, until Mario Incisa Della Rocchetta married into the local landowning family of della Gheradesca. Hankering after Bordeaux, and identifying similar soils to the left bank, he decided to try his luck on site, and in 1944 planted Cabernet Sauvignon on a wooded slope in the hills overlooking the sea. The wine was good, and after the 1968 vintage outclassed some first growth clarets in a 1972 blind tasting, it became a legend. Others piled in, all planting Bordeaux varieties, and now Antinori's Ornellaia, and Gaja's Ca'Marcanda are producing wines in a similar style.

Caccia al Piano is a more recent arrival. Purchased in 2003 by Franco Ziliani, the inventor of sparkling Franciacorta, things properly got going in 2013, with serious investment in new vineyards and a cantina. It has rapidly become one of the leading estates in the region, with critics' scores to prove it!

### The vintage

2020 was a relatively easy year. A mild, rainy winter was followed by a dry spring and summer, but there was enough precipitation to prevent drought. August and September saw hot weather, but crucially, nights were cool, preserving acidity and increasing phenolic complexity. The Cabernet Franc grapes were harvested first, beginning 15 September, followed by the Cabernet Sauvignon on 23 September.

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#### **2023 Grottaia Vermentino – 12.5%**

£78 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Fresh grassy fruit is balanced by lean stony flavours lending a powerful bass note, and the finish is lemony and brisk. Drink 2024 – 2028*

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#### **2023 Grottaia Rosato – 13%**

£78 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Gentle whole-bunch pressing of Merlot and destemmed Syrah yields a seductive floral and strawberry-scented wine with leafy blackcurrant, and there is a long fresh finish of some richness. Drink 2024 – 2027*

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#### **2022 Grottaia Rosso – 13.5%**

£78 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Half Cabernet Sauvignon, half Merlot, made from young vines. Fermented and matured in stainless steel, it is pure fruit and pure pleasure – plums, blackcurrants and a note of spice are underpinned by soft ripe tannins, and there is an appealing soft chocolate edge on the finish. Drink 2024 – 2028*

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#### **2022 Lungacosta Bolgheri Bianco – 13%**

£144 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*A surprisingly happy combination of 70% Vermentino with 30% Sauvignon Blanc produces a beautifully balanced and complex wine: the Sauvignon gives a bright floral quality to the rich quince and apple notes of the Vermentino, and there is a long clean fresh finish. Drink 2024 – 2028*

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#### **2021 Ruit Hora Bolgheri Rosso – 14.5% abv**

£132 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*A slightly higher proportion of Merlot (around 60%) makes for a sweet, black-fruited wine – think blackberries and blackcurrant with pronounced floral and spice notes. The tannins are soft and yielding, but broaden with the fruit like a fan on the finish. Drink 2025 – 2032*

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## CACCIA AL PIANO | BOLGHERI

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**2020 Caccia al Piano Bolgheri Superiore – 14.5% abv**

£312 | Case of 6 – 75cl

*Made entirely from fruit from the San Biagio vineyard, high in the hills above the sea. There is a constant breeze from offshore, combining with cold nights to preserve acidity, as well as stony limestone-rich soils which give a cooling minerality and balance to the Cabernet Sauvignon/Cabernet Franc mix. The wine is relaxed and complete, with every element clearly delineated and in its place: dense black fruit, bright acidity, a distinct herbal note, floral elements, powerful rounded tannins and a long spicy finish. Drink 2025 – 2040*

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