

## The Barolo Blind Tasting 2017



Date : Wednesday, Nov 15, 2017

Time : 7:00pm to 11:00pm

Venue : 12/F, Hong Kong Wine Vault – Wong Chuk Hang

No. of Attendees : 10

Wines Tasted : Champagne J. de Telmont Grand Rose Brut NV (Reception)

Bruno Giacosa, Barolo Falletto 1995

Luciano Sandrone, Barolo Cannubi Boschis 1993

Domenico Clerico, Barolo Ciabot Mentin 1996

Paolo Scavino, Barolo Carobric 1996

Gaja, Barolo Conteisa 1997 (Mystery Bottle)

Conterno Fantino, Barolo Sori Ginestra 2001

Casanova di Neri, Brunello di Montalcino 1997 (Surprise Bottle 1)

Sassetti Livio, Brunello di Montalcino 1997 (Surprise Bottle 2)

Gaja, Brunello di Montalcino Rennina 1997 (Surprise Bottle 3)

## Our thoughts:

*What a spectacular evening of fine Barolos and spontaneous surprises. We started our*



*evening with a bottle of Champagne J. De Telmont Grand Rose Brut NV. This time our focus was solely on matured, fine Barolos. The Bruno Giacosa, Barolo Falletto 1995 was the first to taste along side with Luciano Sandrone, Barolo Cannubi Boschis 1993, which is older than Bruno Giacosa's Barolo by couple years but performed best of the two with plenty of youth and supreme aging potential. Bruno Giacosa, Barolo*

*Falletto 1995 was literally falling apart rapidly with clear signs poor health. Up next was Domenico Clerico, Barolo Ciabot Mentin 1996 and Paolo Scavino, Barolo Carobric 1996. Both belonged to the same vintage but both showed great originality in their own style. Domenico Clerico displayed earthiness which resembled closely to matured Pinot Noirs from Chambolle Musigny where as Paolo Scavino displayed notes of fresh watermelon (Yes! Watermelon) and smooth leather. Both has strong, grippy tannins on the palate with bright acidity. The thought-to-be-final two were the most masculine ones of the group, the surprise bottle was Gaja, Barolo Conteisa 1997 which raised everyone's eye brows for its overall gorgeousness and drinkability. The comparison bottle, Conterno Fantino, Barolo Sori Ginestra 2001 was pure power with weight and firm tannic backbone makes this bottle, the one to keep of the bunch. Just when we thought the tasting was over, it was only the beginning of another comparison tasting. Couple of our very generous guests have taken three spectacular 1997 Brunello di Montalcinos from their own cellar for us to taste. They were Casanova di Neri, Brunello di Montalcino 1997, Sassetti Livio, Brunello di Montalcino 1997 and Gaja, Brunello di Montalcino Rennina 1997. All three were indeed very different from each other but out of the three, Gaja's Rennina stood out the most with distinctiveness and background story. Sassetti Livio was quite earthy and savoury. My personal favorite of the three was the Casanovi di Neri for its masculine, robust character.*

### **Champagne J. de Telmont Grand Rose Brut NV (Reception)**

*“The color is raspberry pink with light salmon reflections. Nice, long-lasting mousse with fine bubbles. The initial nose reveals citrus fruit notes (grapefruit and lemon). When swirled, berry notes emerge (strawberry, raspberry and grape), with cherry eventually dominating. In the mouth, the taste buds really explode as if biting into a Morello cherry. There is a good attack with remarkable subtlety and an extraordinarily long finish. A very fresh, fruity cuvee (exceptional berries).”*



*Our refreshing reception bubbly, Champagne J. de Telmont Grand Rose Brut NV (Left). Artisanal pairing canapes flown in fresh from Piedmont and other parts of Italy (Right).*

### **Bruno Giacosa, Barolo Falletto 1995**

*“I enjoyed the outstanding 1995 Barolo Falletto. It possesses a medium dark ruby color with some lightening at the edge. The intense nose of cedar, spice box, soy, tar, rose petals, and black fruits is followed by a wine with a sweet attack, full body, and dense, layered, concentrated, spicy flavors. As this muscular, tannic wine sat in the glass, all spice and dried herbs became increasingly apparent. Cellar it for 4-5 years, and consume over the following 12 years” 90 pts, WA*

### **Luciano Sandrone, Barolo Cannubi Boschis 1993**

*“Sandrone has been performing at a superstar level since the 1982 vintage, but in 1993 he has significantly more competition from - his best friends. Nevertheless, his 1993s are near the top of the qualitative pyramid for the 1993 vintage. The dark ruby-colored 1993 Barolo Cannubi Boschis is reserved, but it reveals a sweet, elegant nose of roasted meats and nuts intermixed with scents of underbrush and black fruits. As the wine sits in the glass, notes of melted tar and rose petals emerge. More firmly structured than many 1993s, it is full-bodied, with considerable character, outstanding concentration, and an expansive inner-core of sweet fruit. Cellar it for 1-3 more years and drink it over the subsequent 15+.” 92 pts, WA*

**Domenico Clerico, Barolo Ciabot Mentin 1996**

*“This is a spectacularly powerful, rich, concentrated wine. The 1996 Barolo Ciabot Mentin Ginestra possesses a deep, dark purple color, and a nose of over-ripe plums, cherries, and cassis. Rich and full-bodied, with admirable glycerin, subtle oak, and licorice/floral nuances, it is a large-scaled yet beautifully balanced Barolo to drink between 2004-2018. One of the most gifted winemakers in Piedmont, Domenico Clerico has fashioned this riveting wine from the vineyards surrounding the village of Monforte d’Alba. Clerico utilizes rotary fermenters, and new oak. This a wine of extraordinary richness, amazing aromatics, and a sensual personality that satiates both the hedonistic and intellectual senses.” 90 pts, WA*

**Paolo Scavino, Barolo Carobric 1996**

*“1996 which was the first vintage Scavino produced this wine. Carobric is made from a blend of fruit sourced from the Rocche di Castiglione, Cannubi and Bric del Fiasc vineyards. Scavino’s 1996 Barolo Carobric, tasted from magnum, displays notable vibrancy and freshness in both its aromas and flavors, with layers of sweet dark fruit, minerals and earthiness that are just starting to show some tertiary nuances. It offers notable length, lively acidity and plenty of fruit to drink well for at least another decade. Anticipated maturity: 2006-2016.” 92 pts, WA*



**Gaja, Barolo Conteisa 1997 (Mystery Bottle)**

*“The 1997 Conteisa offers classic aromas of licorice, melted tar, black cherries, wet stones, and tobacco. It is a full-bodied, unctuously-textured wine of remarkable density and thickness. The tannin is high, but sweet. This brawny offering cuts an immense swath across the palate, but there are no hard edges and all the component parts are pure as well as well-integrated. There are 15,000 bottles of this spectacular wine. Anticipated maturity: 2003-2030.” 98 pts, WA*

**Conterno Fantino, Barolo Sori Ginestra 2001**

*“The 2001 Barolo Sori Ginestra emerges with a bouquet redolent of crushed flowers, tobacco, spices and mint, all of which come together beautifully. The integration of fruit and oak is more harmonious than it is in the Gris. Even with all of the textural richness, the slightly forward aromatics suggest the 2001 is at or close to peak. There is plenty of muscle here, but I would prefer to enjoy the 2001 over the next few years. The downside risk to holding this wine further is just too great. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2016.” 94 pts, WA*



***Casanova di Neri, Brunello di Montalcino 1997 (Surprise Bottle 1)***

*“In my blind tasting notes for the 1997 Brunello di Montalcino Tenuta Nuova, I wrote: “I bet this is one of the flagship wines that cemented the vintage’s greatness.” And so it was. This wine did help to bring 1997 Brunello to world attention. Executed in impeccable fashion, Tenuta Nuova shows extreme balance and care that is evident from the outset. The bouquet is comprised of a mixture of both secondary (fruity) and tertiary (or aged) aromas and the finish is pristine and polished. The tannins have retreated and softened over the course of the past decade. Drink: 2014-2024.” 92 pts, WA*

***Sassetti Livio, Brunello di Montalcino 1997 (Surprise Bottle 2)***

*“Always a top-notch Brunello, the 1997 is staggering in its aromatic fireworks and concentrated, long, intense flavors. Sumptuous aromas of dried Provencal herbs, roasted meats, soy, spice box, asphalt, truffles, and black fruits linger in the air. Flavors of new saddle leather are added to jammy black fruit characteristics. Opulently-textured, full-bodied, and gorgeously pure, this wine creates an olfactory overload. Its low acidity, high glycerin, and huge fruit reserves suggest drinking it now and over the next 12-18 years. Mamma mia!” 96 pts, WA*

***Gaja, Brunello di Montalcino Rennina 1997 (Surprise Bottle 3)***

*“Opaque garnet with violet and ruby tones. Explosive nose of clove, nutmeg and mocha, laced with violet scents. Sweet entry of cassis, vanilla bean and espresso leads to a creamy middle palate, with the wine considerable weight and extract nicely leavened by a delightful sense of delineation and freshness. Sweet berry and sottobosco scents accompany mouthcoating tannins on the persistent finish. An impeccably balanced wine, from Angelo Gaja Montalcino property.” 94 pts, AG*