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Buying Guide



Pinot Noir grapes undergoing veraison (color change).

Special Advance Release

Wines reviewed for the September 2010 issue,
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crisp aftertaste. Imported by Polaner Selections. —R.V.

87 **Domaine de la Sauveuse 2009 Cuvée Carolle (Côtes de Provence); \$20.** Light pink/gold in color, this is an exotic ripe wine, melon and tropical fruit flavors underlined by toast. It is big, rich and mouthfilling. Imported by Vintage Trading Inc. —R.V.

PIEDMONT RED WINES

BARBERA D'ASTI

92 **Braida di Giacomo Bologna 2007 Bricco dell'Uccellone (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA.** Bricco dell'Uccellone is an historic wine that shaped the modern history of Barbera d'Asti and Piedmont in general. Aged 15 months in oak casks, the wine is bountiful and harmonious with aromas of cherry, blackberry and spice. There's a bright splash of crisp fruit on the close. Imported by Vinifera Imports. —M.L.

92 **Braida di Giacomo Bologna 2007 Bricco della Bigotta (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA.** Here's a super-modern and thoroughly lovable style of Barbera with intense and complex notes of milk chocolate, big black berry spice and espresso coffee. This wine stands tall among a new school of Barbera producers who have opted for a soft and extracted interpretation of this otherwise thorny and acidic grape. Imported by Vinifera Imports. —M.L.

91 **Cantina Alice Bel Colle 2007 Alix (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA.** Here's a dark, plush and modern Barbera with thick, chocolate tones followed by spice, espresso and blackberry. You'll get a whiff of the grape's natural acidity, but in the case of this well-crafted wine, its thickness, density and extraction dominate the experience overall. —M.L.

91 **Cascina La Barbatella 2007 La Vigna dell'Angelo (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$NA.** Rich and densely extracted, this modern expression of Barbera d'Asti Superiore from the Nizza subzone offers enormous richness, power and intensity. The wine is smooth and velvety in the mouth with bright cherry and cassis flavors on the close. —M.L.

91 **Cascina Lana 2007 Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza; \$NA.** Soft, round and slightly sweet smelling, this is a modern expression of Barbera that offers enormous extraction, power and intensity. That said, there is little here to remind you of the sharp, acidic Barbera of yesteryear because this wine tastes chewy, plush and rich in the mouth. —M.L.

91 **Il Cascinone 2006 D'Annona (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA.** Here's a plump and chewy expression of Barbera with thick fruit notes followed by dense extraction and power. The wine is plush, ripe and velvety and there are soft flavors of fruit and spice on the long finish. —M.L.

91 **Il Cascinone 2007 Rive (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$27.** This Barbera shows elegance and harmony with ripe berry notes that are offset by wood spice and mineral notes. The extraction is thick and dense and the wine yields a plush, smooth texture in the mouth with bitter berry nuances on the close. Imported by Vias Imports. —M.L.

91 **Marchesi Alfieri 2007 Alfiera (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$60.** This is a fantastic Barbera d'Asti Superiore with a plush, soft, velvety feel and loads of intensity that peels back into layers of fresh blackberry, cherry, spice, chocolate, leather and exotic spice. This wine carries the banner high for all the Barbera producers now experimenting with a more modern style. Imported by Wineworth LLC. —M.L.

91 **Prunotto 2007 Costamiòle (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$50.** Here is a well crafted and plush Barbera with equal measures of fruit intensity and spicy oak tones of vanilla, smoke and tobacco. The wine is soft and velvety with a long chewy finish. Pair it with spicy lamb curry stewed in coconut milk. Imported by Winebow. —M.L.

91 **Tenuta La Pergola 2007 Vigne Vecchie della Cappelletta (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA.** This is a very likeable Barbera d'Asti Superiore executed in a plush, modern style with loads of soft fruit and sweet spice in the bouquet. Chocolate, espresso and blackberry fruit appear and the wine is bright and firm on the close. You need that extra acidity to balance against the wine's thickly extracted texture. Imported by Amante Wine and Spirits. —M.L.

91 **Tenute Cisa Asinari dei Marchesi di Gresy 2006 Monte Colombo (Barbera d'Asti); \$43.** Here's a very pleasurable Barbera with loads of fruit intensity followed by smoke, pipe tobacco, sweet chocolate and vanilla bean. The wine is executed in a modern style with enduring intensity and a soft, velvety finish. Pair it with baked chèvre cheese. Imported by Dalla Terra Winery Direct. —M.L.

91 **Tre Secoli 2007 (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$NA.** Here's a beautifully balanced Barbera with equal elements of fruit, spice and toast that balance each other very nicely. The wine is crisp and dense in the mouth but the naturally high acidity is integrated and elegant. Tre Secoli is a producer to watch for in the future. —M.L.

91 **Vietti 2007 La Crena (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$45.** Here's a dense and thickly extracted Barbera from the excellent 2007 vintage with a brooding, black appearance and aromas of smoke, black fruit, cassis and leather. The oak elements you taste at the very end still need to integrate within the overall flavors of this wine. Give it two more years. Imported by Dalla Terra Winery Direct. —M.L.

91 **Vinchio-Vaglio Serra 2004 Sei Vigne Insynthesis (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$70.** The fullness and intensity of the aromas here tell you that this is not your standard, easy-drinking Barbera. On the contrary, Sei Vigne Insynthesis is a well-crafted expression that shows quality of fruit and modern winemaking (with soft tones of vanilla and spice) woven throughout. Imported by Ionia Atlantic. —M.L.

90 **Agostino Pavia & Figli 2006 La Marescialla (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$32.** This is a plush and dense interpretation of Barbera with loads of fruit intensity followed by blackberry plum and sweet tobacco. The wine is dense, clean and offers round texture with a crisp acidity finale that is typical of this Italian grape variety. Imported by Oliver McCrum Wines. —M.L.

90 **Bersano 2007 Cremosina (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA.** Here's a softer, modern interpretation of Barbera d'Asti Superiore with velvety oak tones that surround a bright core of berry fruit. This wine is thicker and more extracted than most with slight hints of smoke and tobacco at the back. —M.L.



90 Cascina Guido Berta 2006 Canto di Luna (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$NA. Here's a nicely balanced Barbera d'Asti Superiore from the Nizza subzone that shows not too much fruit and not too much oak. The wine is clean and polished and delivers light steps on the palate, unlike some of the much denser and heavier expressions you will find. Very nice and elegant. —M.L.

90 Cascina La Barbatella 2007 (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Generous aromas, intensity, density and a bright ruby color characterize this vibrant Barbera d'Asti. If you are new to this native grape of northern Italy, this wine is a good place to start. You'll get plenty of those characteristic cherry and berry tones followed by acidity that has been softened by this softer style. —M.L.

90 Cascina Lana 2007 L'Anniversario (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Here's a dense and well-concentrated Barbera d'Asti with thick extraction and oak-driven tones of vanilla and spice that soften the natural sharpness of the acidity. This is a pleasurable wine with a soft, velvety approach. —M.L.

90 Coppo 2007 Pomorosso (Barbera d'Asti); \$90. Here's a wine that opens beautifully to all your senses. It boasts a dense, vibrant ruby color and delivers bright aromas of cherry, blackberry and bitter cranberry. In the mouth, however, this wine is softer and plusher than you'd expect. Sure, that trademark Barbera acidity is present, but its natural sharpness has been dulled. Imported by Winebow. —M.L.

90 Costa Olmo 2006 (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$70. Here's a lovely interpretation of Barbera Superiore from Asti with extremely well-integrated notes of spice, chocolate, black fruit and dusty mineral. The wine has all the aromas you look for in this type of wine and delivers a very clean and polished feel in the mouth with subtle hints of toasted oak at the very end. Imported by Il Pioppo. —M.L.

90 Dario Ivaldi 2007 1613 (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. Intense notes of blackberry and cherry emerge first from the nose and are followed by subtle tones of chocolate, spice and tobacco. This wine boasts dense extraction and a fresh, tonic quality of fruit that shows both ripeness and crispness on the close. —M.L.

90 Dezzani 2007 La Luna e Le Stelle (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$19. Chocolate, coffee and espresso come to life thanks to the solid base of natural fruit that keeps the wine lively and fresh. Fruit and oak-related aromas work well together and give the wine brightness, softness and a velvety texture. Imported by Misa Imports. —M.L.

90 Guasti Clemente 2006 Barcarato (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$35. Well balanced and nicely integrated (the fruit elements jive smoothly with the oak components), this is a modern incarnation of traditional Barbera. You'll get spice, warmth and a velvety texture in the mouth. Imported by Margaux and Associates. —M.L.

90 La Ballerina 2006 Ajè (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. This dense, ruby-colored Barbera delivers aromas of plush fruit, drying mineral, toasted nut and moist tobacco. There is a nice ensemble of fresh cherry and blackberry in the background and the wine tastes rich and dense in the mouth with a long, smoky aftertaste. —M.L.

90 La Fiammenga 2007 Paion (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. This is a very compelling Barbera d'Asti Superiore that is characterized by ripe fruit notes and smoky tones of ham or bacon fat. You'll get brambly notes of underbrush as well that give the wine a sharper, more defined personality and this impression is reinforced by the natural acidity. —M.L.

90 La Gironda di Galandrino 2007 Le Nicchie (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$NA. Smoke and mineral notes come together over a plush base of cherry and cassis fruit to create a big, modern interpretation of Barbera. You'll also get cola and coffee notes backed by plush richness in the mouth. Imported by Eurobiz Inc. —M.L.

90 Michele Chiarlo 2007 La Court (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$40. Here is a ripe and chewy Barbera d'Asti Superiore from the Nizza subzone with sticky fruit flavors and a thick, dense mouthfeel. The wine is plush, rich, naturally fresh and would pair well with roasted or grilled meats. Imported by Kobrand. —M.L.

90 Paolo Avezza 2007 Sotto la Muda (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza);

\$NA. Here's a dark and deeply concentrated Barbera with a generous base composed mostly of black fruit, prune, spice and tobacco. The wine is thick and velvety in the mouth with a long aftertaste of black cherry and currants. —M.L.

90 Pico Maccario 2005 Tre Roveri (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. This is an irresistible wine with loads of velvety softness, sweet spice and vanilla to balance against sharp aromas of forest fruit, raspberry and white cherry. There's also a polished note of white mineral and the wine offers fresh, but not aggressive acidity. Imported by Grape Expectations (CA). —M.L.

90 Scrimaglio 2007 Acsé (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. Here's a balanced and sophisticated Barbera d'Asti Superiore with oak tones that seem to jive well with the natural intensity of the fruit flavors. The wine's texture is smooth and silky although there is that characteristic bite of acidity on the close. —M.L.

90 Tenuta La Meridiana 2007 Tra la Terra e il Cielo (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$39. Smoky, toasted elements are followed by aromas of cherry and blackberry. This is a modern expression of Barbera with thick extraction and obvious oak intervention. The style is velvety and push and this wine would pair with cheese-filled ravioli. The finish is marked by very refreshing acidity. Imported by Nicola Biscardo Selections. —M.L.

90 Tenuta Olim Bauda 2007 Le Rocchette (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$29. Coffee, vanilla and tobacco create warm background tones for a mostly fruit-driven bouquet. The wine's aromatic layers seem well integrated and invite a pairing with succulent meat or braised lamb. Imported by US Wine Imports. —M.L.

89 Agostino Pavia & Figli 2007 Molisse (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$19. Here's a harmonious and well-balanced Barbera d'Asti Superiore with pretty mineral tones that are woven tight within a fabric of wild berry fruit and spice. The wine is tart and

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fresh on the finale with a long blast of blackberry and cherry on the close. Imported by Oliver McCrum Wines. —M.L.

89 **Antonia Gazzi 2006 Praiot (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$NA.** There's personality and depth here thanks to this wine's unique aromas of wild mushroom, wet earth and black cassis fruit. This is definitely a territory-driven wine (born in the Nizza subzone of Barbera d'Asti Superiore) with a light and elegant touch that can easily be appreciated. —M.L.

89 **Bava 2003 Piano Alto (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$33.** Despite the infamous heat of the 2003 vintage, Piano Alto Barbera d'Asti Superiore is a surprising and impressive wine. There are pretty linear notes of black stone and granite backed by some ripe berry and blackberry. The wine seems younger than it really is. Imported by Wine Wave. —M.L.

89 **Borgo Isolabella 2007 Augusta (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$NA.** Here's a dense, black and chewy expression of Barbera that delivers all the rich benefits of high extraction and wood aging. There are smoky layers here of pipe tobacco and cured meat, although there is enough fruit pulp here to make it work at the end of the day. —M.L.

89 **Braida di Giacomo Bologna 2007 Montebruna (Barbera d'Asti); \$23.** There are slightly toasted notes here of chestnut or almond followed by bitter berry fruit and dark chocolate. The wine is crisp, polished and clean in the mouth with a tart, bitter almond close. Pair it with creamy potatoes dauphinoise. Imported by Vinifera Imports. —M.L.

89 **Cantina Sociale Barbera dei Sei Castelli 2007 Le Vignole (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA.** This is a pleasurable and modern interpretation of Barbera with plenty of soft notes of spice and chocolate backed by fresh fruit, coffee and mineral notes. The wine is thick and plush in the mouth and leaves a very satisfying aftertaste of cherry and chocolate. —M.L.

89 **Cantina Vignasone 2007 Selezione (Barbera d'Asti); \$17.** This is a distinctively linear and sharp Barbera d'Asti with a strong mineral vein that runs straight through the middle. You'll sense those mineral, granite notes on the bouquet and the mouthfeel is especially dry and polished. Imported by Rama Merchants. —M.L.

89 **Cascina Castlet 2006 Litina (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA.** Nicely linear and compact, this wine has many elements that make it particularly food friendly. The bouquet is characterized by aromas of black fruit, tobacco, Indian tea and spice. The mouthfeel is tonic, tight and crisp. Imported by Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —M.L.

89 **Cascina Giovinale 2006 Ansema (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$NA.** Spice, smoked meat and oak tones come to the forefront of this bright Barbera and are followed by black berry, cherry and cassis. The wine is plush and velvety with good crispness and a lively berry driven finish. —M.L.

89 **Castello di Razzano 2007 Del Beneficio (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA.** Thick, black and extracted, this dense Barbera d'Asti Superiore opens with intense aromas of black fruit and fresh oak. Definitely give this wine at least two more years in the bottle for those smoky wood notes to find balance. At this young stage, the wine tastes new, chewy and raw. —M.L.

89 **Dacapo 2007 Vigna Dacapo (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$28.** You'll encounter smoky notes here that recall bacon fat or beef jerky. But you'll also recognize aromas of tobacco, black cherry and currant berry. The wine is soft and smooth in the mouth with a blast of cherry flavors, deep extraction, oak notes and bright acidity. Imported by Zig Zagando. —M.L.

89 **Damilano 2008 (Barbera d'Asti); \$19.** This is a very attractive oak-aged Barbera with aromas of sweet spice, bitter chocolate and loads of bright berry fruit. The wine is compact, clean and thanks to the bright acidity, it leaves your palate polished and fresh. Imported by Vias Imports. —M.L.

89 **Erede di Chiappone Armando 2007 Brentura (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA.** Soft oak tones of vanilla and spice surround the wine's bright base of bitter berry fruit. You'll get extra intensity and complexity in the form of tobacco, tea leaf and leather and the wine is both thick in texture and fresh in acidity. —M.L.

89 **Il Falchetto 2007 Bricco Paradiso (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA.** Here's a mature expression of Barbera with ripe

notes of blackberry, plum and dark fruit. The wine is dense and thickly extracted with a soft velvety texture and loads of oak influence. It will, no doubt, evolve into a beautiful wine in two or three more years: All the right elements are there and the wine seems poised for harmony and balance. Imported by International Gourmet. —M.L.

89 **L'Armangia 2007 (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$NA.** Smoke and graphite notes, coupled with a solid base of black fruit and cassis, give this wine many aromatic layers to contemplate. There are drying mineral notes here yet the wine is ultimately very plush and velvety in the mouth and it ends with a touch of oak sweetness and bitter cherry. Imported by DGL Distributors. —M.L.

89 **Marchesi Alfieri 2007 La Tota (Barbera d'Asti); \$28.** Pretty coffee notes are offset by ripe aromas of raspberry, black cherry and chocolate. There is nice softness and density in this wine that is balanced against the natural acidity of the fruit. Pair this wine with cheesy pasta al forno. Imported by Wineworth LLC. —M.L.

89 **Michele Chiarlo 2006 La Court (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$50.** La Court is a plush, chewy and rich Barbera from one of the most successful wineries in Piedmont. You'll recognize sweet oak and vanilla aromas wrapped tight by black fruit, cherry and blueberry. In the mouth, the wine is appropriately dense and fresh. Imported by Kobrand. —M.L.

89 **Noceto Michelotti 2007 Montecanta (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$NA.** Smoke and mineral notes ride alongside blackberry and cassis to create an intense and deeply layered Barbera. This wine represents a modern school of winemaking in Asti and boasts rich, chewy texture on the close. Imported by Noble House. —M.L.

89 **Poderi dei Bricchi Astigiani 2006 Bricco del Perg (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA.** Sweet cherry notes with some vanilla and cinnamon give this wine a softer, more approachable disposition than most Barbera-based wines. That characteristic acidity is present but hard work by the winery has rendered it more manageable. —M.L.

89 **Scagliola 2008 Vigna dei Mandorli (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA.** Here's a slightly more sophisticated and evolved Bar-



bera d'Asti from the 2008 vintage. There are notes of fresh fruit, spice, wet earth and a touch of natural rubber. The wine is exceedingly crisp, clean and polished in the mouth. Very nice, simple and pure. Imported by Vinilandia USA. —M.L.

89 Scrimaglio 2007 Croutin (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. Here's a concentrated and bright Barbera d'Asti Superiore with aromas of cherry, tobacco and tea leaf that are delivered in an intense and immediate manner. The wine is soft and velvety in the mouth thanks to the high extraction and despite the natural acidity. —M.L.

89 Tenuta La Tenaglia 2007 Giorgio Tenaglia (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. This is a genuine and extremely clean expression of Barbera with a compact but pristine bouquet of wild berries, porcino mushroom, bitter almond and fresh tobacco. The wine is polished and compact in the mouth with crisp acidity on the close. —M.L.

89 Terre da Vino 2007 La Luna e i Falò (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$16. Here's a lovely expression of Barbera from Asti, Piedmont, with a pretty balance of chocolate, cherry and blackberry aromas. Smoky oak-related elements appear in the background as do drying mineral notes. With some 29,000 cases made, this wine should not be difficult to locate and the low price is hard to beat. Imported by International Wine Traders. *Editors' Choice.* —M.L.

89 Tre Donne 2005 Donna Bruna (Barbera d'Asti); \$19. Donna Bruna Barbera d'Asti is a big, bold and modern expression with thick concentration and intense aromas of black cherry and spice. You'll notice tones of plum, prune and sweet cinnamon on the finish. Imported by Small Vineyards LLC. —M.L.

89 Vinchio-Vaglio Serra 2007 Vigne Vecchie (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. Here's a plush, modern and thickly extracted Barbera d'Asti Superiore with a polished bouquet and well-dosed aromas of cherry, blackberry, spice, chocolate and tobacco. The wine is drying and crisp at the same time with polished tannins on the close. Imported by Ionia Atlantic. —M.L.

88 Alfonso Boeri 2007 Porlapà (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$28. The wine opens with a thick, black and dense appearance and segues to raw aromas of blackberry, cherry, tobacco, spice and natural rubber. There's a vinous, chewy quality here that needs more time in the bottle to unwind. Imported by Testa Wines Of The World. —M.L.

88 Antonia Gazzi 2007 Praiot (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Coffee, tobacco and finely ground espresso come to light at the back of blackberry, cranberry and pomegranate. This is a fresh and vibrant interpretation that makes good use of the natural acidity present in Barbera d'Asti. —M.L.

88 Bava 2007 Piano Alto (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$NA. This Barbera d'Asti Superiore from the Nizza subzone offers bright aromas of cherry cola, red apple, balsam notes, dried mint and currant berry. It's a different and unique wine with a high level of inherent grace and elegance. Imported by Wine Wave. —M.L.

88 Bersano 2007 (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$NA. Here's a heavily oak-influenced Barbera with distinctive tones of spice, tobacco, wood, bramble and forest floor. There are red fruit notes in there, mostly masked by the wood. Give this wine two or three more years of bottle aging to find harmony. —M.L.

88 Bersano 2007 Ca d'Galdin (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Apparent notes of coffee and freshly ground espresso appear at first and are followed by chocolate, cherry and raspberry. This is a modern, plump Barbera that will appeal to those who like a softer, more supple style. —M.L.

88 Cantina Sociale di Mombercelli Terre Astesane 2007 Terre Astesane (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. This Barbera d'Asti Superiore opens with brambly notes of underbrush and wild berry followed by wet earth and smoked ham. Give it two or three years in the bottle and pair this fruit-forward wine with lasagna or meatloaf. —M.L.

88 Cantina Vignasone 2007 (Barbera d'Asti); \$17. Pretty notes of dark chocolate and spice are well integrated within notes of blackberry and forest floor. This is a modern interpretation of a traditional wine that

leaves enough space for the grape's rustic charm and sharp acidity to come through. Imported by Rama Merchants. —M.L.

88 Cantine Sant'Agata 2007 Cavalé (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. Here's a modern and well-extracted Barbera with drying mineral tones followed by blackberry, plum and a dash of exotic spice. The thicker density and fresh acidity suggest a pairing with pizza or cheesy pasta. Imported by Vintners Estate Direct Importing. —M.L.

88 Cascina Galarin 2008 Le Querce (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. This is a delicately perfumed Barbera d'Asti with elegant floral and fruity notes. There's bright acidity here yet that crispness is backed by the wine's natural density and richness. Cascina Galarin is a small, family-run winery and it should be interesting to see what they achieve five years from now. —M.L.

88 Cascina Garitina 2006 Neuvsent (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$NA. This inky-black Barbera boasts granite and slate aromas with black fruit, cassis, wild mushroom, tobacco and wet earth. These are the characteristic aromas of this native grape variety, although the deep extraction and sweet oak flavors on display here denote a very modern interpretation. Imported by Ideal Wine and Spirits Co. Inc. —M.L.

88 Cascina Garitina 2007 Caranti (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. Here's a clean and bright interpretation of Barbera d'Asti Superiore with intense aromas of cherry, blackberry, pomegranate, wet earth and tobacco. The wine is chewy, dense and bright in the mouth and could be paired with lamb or beef. Imported by Ideal Wine and Spirits Co. Inc. —M.L.

88 Cascina Guido Berta 2006 (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. Black fruit and wild berry are wrapped in an enticing envelope of spice and tobacco. This expression of Barbera d'Asti Superiore has both elements of the modern and the traditional and leaves the mouth refreshed thanks to its naturally crisp acidity. —M.L.

88 Cascina La Ghera 2007 Muasca (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. Here's an intensely aromatic Barbera d'Asti Superiore with a simple, genuine approach and a



fresh delivery of wild berry nuances. The wine is clean and compact in the mouth with a bright, fresh and slightly bitter finish. —M.L.

88 Cascina La Ghersa 2007 Vignassa (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. This Barbera represents a return to Asti tradition thanks to its clean, simple aromas of fresh fruit, mild spice and wet earth. The wine is sharp, tangy and crisp in the mouth and would pair perfectly with cheesy or buttery dishes. —M.L.

88 Cascina Roera 2004 Cardin (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$29. This wine really opens a fascinating window on the aging potential of Barbera. From the 2004 vintage, it still exhibits elegant mineral notes with polished granite and slate. There's plenty of fruit there too, mostly cherry, and the wine ends with vanilla and spice. Imported by David Vincent Selection. —M.L.

88 Caudrina 2006 Montevenere (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. This is an austere and linear interpretation of Barbera with smoky and drying mineral tones followed by elegant notes of wild berry and pomegranate. It's a less plump and fruity style that would pair with pork roast or lamb. —M.L.

88 Coppo 2007 Campu du Rouss (Barbera d'Asti); \$19. Slight hints of smoked meat and toasted nut open the aromatic parameters of this vibrant Barbera d'Asti. There's plenty of berry fruit at the base as well as natural crispness, but those warmer aromas help soften the acidic blow. Imported by Winebow. —M.L.

88 Elio Perrone 2008 Tasmorcan (Barbera d'Asti); \$18. Here's a pleasantly fresh and fruit-forward Barbera d'Asti with notes of wild berry and blackberry backed by a delicate touch of vanilla spice and bitter chocolate. Aromas of smoked bacon fill in the rear and give the wine a long-lasting and penetrating finish. Imported by Rare Wine Company. —M.L.

88 Guasti Clemente 2006 Boschetto Vecchio (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$24. Soft spice tones with chocolate and tobacco are offset by intense and vibrant berry fruit. This is a fresh and tonic Barbera d'Asti Superiore that will pair with most cheese- or butter-based foods. The naturally high acidity can counter the fatty textures found in many foods. Imported by Margaux and Associates. —M.L.

88 Il Falchetto 2007 Lurei (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. Red fruit notes of cherry and blackberry appear at first and are followed by subtle shadings of spice, chocolate and tobacco. The wine is tart and ripe with a blast of cleansing acidity and cherry on the close. Nice job. Imported by International Gourmet. —M.L.

88 La Fiammenga 2007 (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. An elegant and polished expression of Barbera from a vintage that seems to have yielded many overripe wines. That's not the case here. The secret is the wine's successful balance of fruit, acidity and overall extraction, which is neither too heavy or thin. —M.L.

88 Malgrà 2006 Mora di Sassi (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$16. Mora di Sassi offers nice fruit, cherry and berry tones followed by strong tones of smoke, spice and leather. The acidity is fresh and zippy and overall this wine needs two more years to integrate. Imported by Metrowine Distribution. —M.L.

88 Oddero 2007 (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Here's a straightforward and honest interpretation of Barbera d'Asti with bitter almond and fresh notes of wild berries and juicy pomegranate. The wine ends with a cleansing blast of crisp acidity. Imported by Soilair Selection. —M.L.

88 Tenuta dei Fiori 2007 Rusticardi 1933 (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$55. Black, dense and thickly concentrated, this modern Barbera d'Asti Superiore shows loads of wood influence in front of the fruit. It still needs to find harmony and those sharp oak influences will surely fall into the background with two or three more years of bottle aging. Imported by Lionstore International. —M.L.

88 Tenute Cisa Asinari dei Marchesi di Gresy 2007 (Barbera d'Asti); \$18. Here's a textbook Barbera that boasts well-integrated mineral notes with plusher aromas of chocolate and ripe fruit. The wine is clean and compact but there's enough body and heft here to pair with braised pork or grilled lamb shanks. Imported by Dalla Terra Winery Direct. —M.L.

88 Tenute dei Vallarino 2008 La Ladra (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. A step above your basic Barbera d'Asti, this interpretation of the Piedmont indigenous grape offers extra layers of complexity in the form of spice and tobacco notes that sit firmly

behind a massive bouquet of fresh fruit. The wine is crisp, polished with good density on the finish. —M.L.

88 Tenute dei Vallarino 2007 La Ladra (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. There are fresh, almost raw, berry notes here followed by sophisticated tones of pipe tobacco and exotic spice. The wine is chewy and fresh and there's a touch of bitter fruit and almond on the finish. —M.L.

88 Villa Giada 2007 Bricco Dani (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$30. Here's an inky-black Barbera with impossible extraction and rich tones of blackberry, smoke, mineral and currant berry. This is a modern expression of a native grape from Piedmont with an extremely chewy, raw and sweet sensation on the close. Imported by Vedi Wines. —M.L.

87 Alfonso Boeri 2007 Martinette (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$14. Here's an exceedingly friendly and approachable Barbera d'Asti Superiore with compact and clean aromas of mineral, tart fruit, hazelnuts and wild mushroom. The mouthfeel is fresh and there's a touch of sweetness here that offsets the sharpness of the natural acidity. Imported by Testa Wines Of The World. —M.L.

87 Antica Casa Vinicola Scarpa 2006 Casascarpa (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Light-bodied, crisp and clean, this is a simple interpretation of Barbera that will surely pair with most meat and pasta dishes. The wine is polished, bright and fruity on the close. —M.L.

87 Bricco dei Guazzi 2007 (Barbera d'Asti); \$22. There are brambly notes here of forest floor and underbrush backed by enough fresh fruit to keep the wine chewy and fresh in the mouth. You'll also get notes of wet tobacco and wild mushroom that add complexity. Imported by Bedford International. —M.L.

87 Ca'Romè 2007 La Gamberaja (Barbera d'Alba); \$35. Vintner Romano Marengo has crafted a bright Barbera d'Alba with a simple approach that is generously rich in fruit. There's sharp, evident acidity here with polished tannins and a bright finish. Pair it with ravioli stuffed with fresh ricotta cheese. Imported by Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.



87 Cantina Alice Bel Colle 2008 Al Caso (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Here's a bright and plush Barbera d'Asti with a vibrant ruby color and smoke or spice notes that follow through to the palate. The wine offers bright acidity and a smooth, silky delivery. —M.L.

87 Cantina di Nizza 2007 50 Vendemmie (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. The oak influence here is obvious and does cover some of the natural fruity brightness that is inherent to the Barbera grape. Vanilla, spice and moist tobacco come to light and will hopefully become integrated with two or three more years of bottle aging. —M.L.

87 Cantina Sociale di Mombercelli Terre Astesane 2008 (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Coffee and leather notes appear in front of wild berry, cranberry and tart raspberry. Warm earth notes fill the mouth and are pushed over the palate thanks to the wine's natural acidity. —M.L.

87 Cantine Sant'Agata 2007 Altea (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. This Barbera shows a twofold aromatic approach that puts as much emphasis on its drying mineral tones as it does on the integrity of the fruit. Cherry, blackberry and spice appear and there's a crisp blast of acidity on the close. Imported by Vintners Estate Direct Importing. —M.L.

87 Cantine Volpi 2006 Vobis Tua (Barbera d'Asti); \$11. This is a milky, dark and deeply concentrated Barbera with soapy, floral notes and loads of blueberry and blackberry at the back. The quality of the fruit is sweet and chewy and although there is bright acidity here, the closing note delivers a blast of black cherry. A great value too. Imported by Bedford International. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

87 Cascina Galarin 2007 Le Querce (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. This Barbera opens with meaty aromas that resemble smoked bacon or beef jerky but you'll also get whiffs of blackberry, prune and plum. The wine is tart but also slightly sweet in the mouth and the overall fruit seems to show very mature, chewy characteristics. —M.L.

87 Cascina Roera 2006 La Roera (Barbera d'Asti); \$18. La Roera is a light and fresh expression of Barbera with bright fruit intensity and cooling crispness. The wine would work with wintery appetizers of cold cuts, salami,

capers or olive paste on garlic toast. Imported by David Vincent Selection. —M.L.

87 Cascina Roera 2004 Vigna San Martino (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$28. Vigna San Martino offers warm aromas of wet earth and exotic spice backed by sweet cherry and blackberry preserves. The wine is smooth and velvety with a chewy, sweet finish. Imported by David Vincent Selection. —M.L.

87 Castello del Poggio 2006 (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. This is a beautiful estate with an amphitheater of vines that represents one of the biggest single vineyards of Barbera in the Asti area. This particular expression ushers forth aromas of ripe fruit, smoked bacon and blackberry jam. It's clean, compact and fresh on the close. Imported by Zonin USA. —M.L.

87 Castello del Poggio 2005 Masarèj (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Masarèj is Castello del Poggio's top expression of Barbera d'Asti, but this vintage shows warm characteristics of earth, smoked bacon, bresaola, prunes and plums. It doesn't seem to have what it takes for long aging, so drink up. Imported by Zonin USA. —M.L.

87 Castello di Razzano 2006 Vigna Valentino Caligaris (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. Heavy oak use is still evident (this wine is from the 2006 vintage so those toasted notes should be integrated by now) and takes away from the natural integrity of the fruit. Spice, tobacco and chocolate appear and the wine ends with fresh crispness. —M.L.

87 Caudrina 2008 La Solista (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Brambly notes that recall forest berry and wild blueberry are backed by a very attractive mineral vein that holds this wine's aromas tightly together. This is a crisp, bright Barbera d'Asti with a touch of bitter almond on the close. —M.L.

87 Costa Olmo 2007 La Madrina (Barbera d'Asti); \$55. Here's a straight-laced Barbera d'Asti (aged in stainless steel) with linear aromas of berry fruit and cherry that appear in a direct and immediate manner. There's no great complexity here, nor is there supposed to be. This is a genuine expression of a fundamentally easy-drinking food wine. Imported by Il Pioppo. —M.L.

87 Crivelli Marco Maria 2008 Collina La Mora (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Here's a tight and traditional Barbera with a compact bouquet of forest berry, earth tones and a dash of exotic spice. It is tart and crisp on the palate with an enduring note of wild berry that characterizes the close. Imported by Michael R. Downey Selections. —M.L.

87 Elio Perrone 2007 Mongovone (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$35. Here's a thickly extracted and dense interpretation of Barbera lavished over with intense secondary aromas of oaky spice and toasted wood. There's a lot of wood here that is offputting at first but that will hopefully find harmony with more years in the bottle. Imported by Rare Wine Company. —M.L.

87 F.lli Trinchero 2007 Rico (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. Light coffee and tea-like aromas emerge from the nose of this sharp and crisp Barbera d'Asti Superiore. The wine is compact, firm and the mouthfeel is characterized by fresh berry notes and crisp fruit on the close. —M.L.

87 F.lli Trinchero 2008 La Trincerina (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Although this is a young Barbera—from the 2008 vintage—the wine already shows signs of aging. The color is ruby bordering on garnet and the nose is characterized by mature berry, wet earth, bramble and a touch of black truffle. —M.L.

87 I Quaranta 2007 Asia (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. There's a raw, vinous quality to this wine that is made even more apparent thanks to the enormous thickness and extraction of its mouthfeel. You almost smell the winery here and get a good whiff of the freshness and overall maturity of the fruit. Its texture is extra chewy and plush. Imported by Terra Verus Trading Co. LP. —M.L.

87 L'Armangia 2008 Sopra Berruti (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Raw fruit aromas of blackberry and wild fruit are followed by subtle tones of natural rubber and spice. The wine is soft and plush in the mouth with fresh acidity and good density to maintain a long, bright aftertaste. Imported by DGL Distributors. —M.L.

87 La Ballerina 2007 GB (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Here's a full and generous Barbera with ripe aromas of blackberry fruit,



plum and jammy raspberry. This is a plump, soft style of wine from Piedmont with thick extraction and a chewy, dense feel. —M.L.

87 La Gironda di Galandrino 2007 La Gena (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. This Barbera d'Asti boasts a distinctive aromatic profile with elements of dried herbs and thyme surrounded by fresh berry fruit and warmer hues of smoked meat and wet earth. This is a down-to-earth but genuine expression with a bright finale and long fruit flavors. Imported by Eurobiz Inc. —M.L.

87 Michele Chiarlo 2007 Le Orme (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$15. If you are new to Barbera, Le Orme makes for a perfect introduction to this popular native grape of Northern Italy. This expression focuses on bright fruit tones with cherry and blueberry nuances. Try it with a pizza Margherita topped with fresh mozzarella and basil. Imported by Kobrand. —M.L.

87 Michele Chiarlo 2008 Cipressi della Court (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. Here's a very fresh and vinous smelling Barbera d'Asti with raw notes of chewy cherry fruit and bright forest berry. It's a simple, easygoing wine with a high dose of natural acidity to keep your palate refreshed. —M.L.

87 Montalbera 2008 La Ribelle (Barbera d'Asti); \$20. There are brambly, wild berry or crabapple notes here that are reinforced by the wine's naturally high acidity. This Barbera shows a pretty ruby color with dense thickness and a smooth, berry-filled finish. Imported by Bonhomie Wine Imports. —M.L.

87 Pescaja 2007 Solneri (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$35. Here is a distinctive interpretation of Barbera with candy-like aromas of cherry and raspberry followed by sweet spice and fruit cola. The nose is extremely floral and fragrant and might not appeal to everyone, although the mouthfeel—acidic and dense—is very much in line with Barbera. Imported by BelVino LLC. —M.L.

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87 Pico Maccario 2008 Lavignone (Barbera d'Asti); \$13. Here's a fresh and zippy Barbera d'Asti aged only in stainless steel with pristine notes of fresh berry fruit and cooling acidity to match. It's an easy red wine with a simple but genuine flavor profile that would pair with home-cooked pasta. Imported by Grape Expectations (CA). —M.L.

87 Pico Maccario 2008 Berrò (Barbera d'Asti); \$9. Tremendous value is offered by this nicely concentrated and intense expression of Barbera. Pure aromas of berries and white cherries emerge from the nose and the wine offers a blast of piquant freshness that would pair with spaghetti carbonara. Imported by Grape Expectations (CA). **Best Buy.** —M.L.

87 Poderi dei Bricchi Astigiani 2006 Bricco Preje (Barbera d'Asti Superiore Nizza); \$NA. This bright Barbera combines fresh and crisp fruit notes with spicy tones of old leather and dried tobacco leaf. The wine is sharp and thin in the mouth with loads of bright berry fruit on the close. —M.L.

87 Prunotto 2008 Fiulot (Barbera d'Asti); \$15. Here's a nicely clean and compact Barbera d'Asti with pretty, albeit simple, aromas of wild fruit, pomegranate juice and fresh blueberries. You'll enjoy the aromatic purity of this wine—which shows little sign of interference in the winery—and the overall crispness of the fruit. Imported by Winebow. —M.L.

87 Tenuta La Tenaglia 2007 Bricco Crea (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Ripe notes of raspberry and strawberry come to the forefront and are followed by spice, bramble and distant mineral tones. The wine is chewy, bright and polished and there's a nice finale that sees both bitter almond and chocolate. —M.L.

87 Tenuta Olim Bauda 2008 La Villa (Barbera d'Asti); \$16. This is an informal and easygoing Barbera d'Asti that presents an interesting medley of fruit and berry aromas. The style is fresh and clean (you'll taste that characteristic acidity of this grape variety) and would pair well with butter- or cheese-based foods. Imported by US Wine Imports. —M.L.

87 Vinchio-Vaglio Serra 2007 I Tre Vescovi (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$18. This is a genuine but simple interpretation of Barbera d'Asti Superiore with fresh fruit layers and vibrant tones of cherry, cranberry and

pomegranate. This easy-pairing food wine boasts cleansing acidity, medium density and a polished finish. Imported by Ionia Atlantic. —M.L.

86 Araldica 2007 Albera (Barbera d'Asti); \$12. Albera is a very well-valued Barbera d'Asti with chalky aromas of talc powder and schoolroom blackboard backed by cherries, blueberries and black fruit. Those polished mineral notes makes this is very interesting and unique expression of this native Italian grape. Imported by Vias Imports. —M.L.

86 Borgo Isolabella 2008 Maria Teresa (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Here's what local producers call a "traditional" style in Barbera d'Asti (meaning the presence of oak is all but undetectable) with vibrant fruit aromas of cherry, cranberry and white almond. This is an easygoing pasta or pizza wine. —M.L.

86 Ca' dei Mandorli 2007 La Bellalda (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. Here's a chalky, mineral interpretation of Barbera with drying sensations of granite and slate backed by a delicate impression of wild berry and cassis. The wine is crisp and tonic with a bitter finale that recalls white almond skins. Imported by Vignaioli. —M.L.

86 Cantina Sociale Barbera dei Sei Castelli 2008 (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. This Barbera d'Asti offers a slightly sweet-smelling nose with bright berry notes, cranberry and pomegranate juice. There are also background notes of wet earth and wild mushroom that add an additional layer of complexity. Bright acidity follows. —M.L.

86 Cantine Aurora 2006 Aurora (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$10. This Barbera d'Asti Superiore offers good value with a thinner, more traditional style that puts emphasis on the liveliness of the fruit found in its bouquet and on the finish. Bright acidity is followed by a touch of smoke or toast at the very end. Imported by Verdoni Imports. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

86 Cascina Castlet 2007 Passum (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. Smoky elements of roasted nut combined with jammy fruit make for an offbeat aromatic assembly. This is a raw, chewy wine with a dense, plush mouthfeel that needs a year or two to fully integrate. Imported by Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —M.L.



86 Coppo 2008 L'Avvocata (Barbera d'Asti); \$16. L'Avvocata delivers a linear and correct approach with balanced fruit tones opposite fresh acidity. You'll recognize aromas of wild berry, blueberry and cherry and the close is capped by a slight pinch of fizziness. Imported by Winebow. —M.L.

86 Dogliotti 2008 (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. This is a tart and streamlined Barbera d'Asti that delivers a clean and swift blast of acidity on the close. Take care when pairing this wine with food: the strong acidic component must be countered by a butter- or cheese-based dish. —M.L.

86 Franco Mondo 2008 (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. This Barbera d'Asti presents an interesting aromatic profile with notes of cherry cola, sweet berry fruit and a touch of red candy. The wine is crisp and tonic in the mouth with a very fresh and acidic finish. —M.L.

86 Marcaurelio 2007 Terranuda (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. This is a super-extracted and modern interpretation of Barbera that almost goes overboard. The wood elements are distinct and not integrated yet, so you should give this wine a year or two more in the bottle. It's also jammy, thick and raw with dense, chewy extraction. —M.L.

86 Michele Chiarlo 2008 Le Orme (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$15. Le Orme is a celebrated Barbera that is especially popular among enthusiasts of this indigenous grape in the United States. It offers a traditional approach with raw cherry and cola notes that would pair perfectly with pizza and pasta. Imported by Kobrand. —M.L.

86 Pico Maccario 2007 Lavignone (Barbera d'Asti); \$13. The 2007 vintage was a hot one and La Vignone delivers all the jammy, mature fruit tones you'd expect in an immediate and upfront manner. Aromas of strawberry and blackberry preserves are backed by sour, almost sharp acidity. Imported by Grape Expectations (CA). —M.L.

86 Ricossa 2007 Antica Casa (Barbera d'Asti); \$13. This is a ripe and jammy expression of Barbera d'Asti that offers sweet aromas of blackberry, strawberry and blueberry preserves. All that mature fruit is nicely balanced by bright acidity in the mouth. Imported by Touchstone Wines. —M.L.

86 Tenute Cisa Asinari dei Marchesi di Gresy 2006 (Barbera d'Asti); \$18. From one of the most simpatico producers in Piedmont, Marchesi di Gresy's bright Barbera d'Asti opens with a dark, browning color and inky aromas of mineral and black fruit. The finish is surprising bright and lively. Imported by Dalla Terra Winery Direct. —M.L.

86 Villa Giada 2008 Ajan (Barbera d'Asti); \$13. Here's a well concentrated Barbera d'Asti with a deep shade of ruby and garnet and vibrant aromas of cola, teabag and fresh forest fruit. The mouthfeel is both drying and crisp at the same time. Imported by Vedi Wines. —M.L.

85 Bava 2007 Cocconato Libera (Barbera d'Asti); \$15. Cocconato Libera makes a slightly awkward first impression with sulphur notes that blow off fast enough to reveal cherry cola, raspberries and earthy white mushrooms. Drink now, just decant first. Imported by Wine Wave. —M.L.

85 Pescaja 2008 Soliter (Barbera d'Asti); \$25. Very ripe, almost jammy, notes of mature raspberry and strawberry appear at first, giving this wine a sunny, full and generous disposition. Barbera's naturally high acidity kicks in to clean the palate and give the wine a fresh and tonic sensation overall. Imported by BelVino LLC. —M.L.

85 Quattro Leoni 2008 (Barbera d'Asti); \$17. Here's a bright and fresh Barbera d'Asti that would make a perfect companion to pizza or simple pasta dishes. The aromas are pleasing and inviting with tones of raspberry and crushed white pepper. Cooling acidity leaves a fresh sensation overall. Imported by Marquee Artisan Wines. —M.L.

84 Cantine Cavallotti 2007 Ca' La Mandrana (Barbera d'Asti); \$NA. This light-bodied expression of Barbera d'Asti offers sharper tones of pungent wild berry, Indian tea and bitter cranberry followed by firm acidity. This is a tonic and steely wine that would pair with salami, sliced ham or cheese. —M.L.

84 Dario Cocito 2007 Violanda (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. There are ripe notes here of raspberry roll-up, bramble, tea and even a touch of berry yogurt that makes this Barbera muddled and hard to understand.

Bitter notes of black steeped tea appear in the mouth and leave a slightly bitter aftertaste. —M.L.

83 Dezzani 2008 Ronchetti (Barbera d'Asti); \$18. Sweet aromas of ripe berry fruit and some earth tones create a slightly awkward nose that lacks balance. Those mature fruit notes come on a bit too strong and the wine ends with bitter fruit aromas. The mouthfeel is characterized by good acidity and good density. Imported by Misa Imports. —M.L.

82 Franco Mondo 2007 Vigna del Salice (Barbera d'Asti Superiore); \$NA. There are pungent aromas here of alcohol and fruit, that when coupled with the wine's naturally high acidity, rip through the palate with determination and force. There's also a very strong oak element here that has yet to find harmony with the rest of the wine. —M.L.

BARBERA D'ALBA

91 Fontanafredda 2007 Papagena (Barbera d'Alba Superiore); \$NA. This is a soft and succulent Barbera d'Alba with soft oak notes followed by bright fruit, black cherry and red currants. There's crisp, acidic fruit here followed by the softness and finesse supplied by the supple oak element. Imported by Domaine Select Wine Estates. —M.L.

91 Parusso 2007 Vecchie Vigne in Località Ornati (Barbera d'Alba Superiore); \$45. Here is a bright and modern Barbera d'Alba with succulent fruit tones followed by chocolate and exotic spice. The wine is soft and plush (it hardly seems like a Barbera if you consider more traditional expressions of this native grape) and would pair with a long list of rich, hearty foods. Imported by Montecastelli Selections. —M.L.

91 Rivetto 2007 Lirano Soprano (Barbera d'Alba); \$50. Rich and modern, with dense extraction and raw notes of cherry, blackberry and spice, this wine is very representative of the new face of Barbera d'Alba. There are sweet fruit notes followed by equally sweet oak tones of cinnamon, chocolate and spice. Imported by Vintage Imports, Inc. —M.L.

91 Rocche Costamagna 2007 Rocche delle Rocche (Barbera d'Alba Superiore); \$NA. Clove, exotic spice, dark chocolate and cured meat come to the forefront



of this rich, plush Barbera d'Alba. There's power and bright acidity here and the wine tastes rich, smooth and enduring on the palate. Pair it with cheese-stuffed ravioli. Imported by Laird & Company. —M.L.

91 Vietti 2007 Scarrone (Barbera d'Alba); \$45. Here's a plush, modern Barbera d'Alba with bright fruit and berry tones followed by softer notes of cinnamon and chocolate. On the whole it is a well-integrated wine, although there is power and density here that suggests a pairing with lasagna or thickly cheesy pasta. Imported by Dalla Terra Winery Direct. —M.L.

90 Andrea Oberto 2006 Giada (Barbera d'Alba); \$45. This is a bright and fruit-forward red wine from Piedmont in Northern Italy that exhibits prominent, but not overly intense or intrusive, aromas of fresh fruit, exotic spice and drying mineral. The wine has a fresh acidic component balanced by a jammy, sweet finish. Imported by Chambers & Chambers. —M.L.

90 Damilano 2007 La Biù (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA. Bright cherry, blackberry and currants are backed by oak-driven aromas of toast, cinnamon and tobacco. You'll also get whiffs of cured meat and moist earth with smooth texture and rich density. Cooling acidity at the end balances out the softer wood tones. —M.L.

90 Le Vigne di Ca' Nova 2007 Bric dei Maschi (Barbera d'Alba Superiore); \$19. Here's a very successful expression of Barbera from the Alba zone of Piedmont with bright fruit tones followed by smooth spice, chocolate and tobacco. The wine is rich, supple and powerful on the close with a blast of crisp acidity at the end. Imported by The Shepherd Company. **Editors' Choice.** —M.L.

90 Marchesi di Barolo 2006 Ravera (Barbera d'Alba); \$34. This celebrated Barbera d'Alba from the historic Marchesi di Barolo winery opens with a dark, brooding color and earthy aromas of wild mushroom, cured beef and dark forest fruit. It shows impres-

sive color and concentration and those inviting earth, mineral notes would pair with elegant dishes such as game hen, roast duck or porcini risotto. Imported by Wine Wave. —M.L.

90 Marziano Abbona 2008 Rinaldi (Barbera d'Alba); \$20. Smooth and sophisticated with rich blackberry and plum aromas backed by oak-driven tones of spice and leather, this is a very rich expression of Barbera (that sees eight months in oak barrels). The overall effect is excellent and the mouthfeel culminates with bright tones of prune and crushed black pepper. Imported by Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —M.L.

90 Orlando Abrigo 2007 Mervisano (Barbera d'Alba); \$28. The Mervisano Barbera d'Alba (that ages 15 months in oak) offers a deliciously ripe and rich array of spice, black fruit and blackberry. The wine shows dark, inky concentration with creamy fruit tones and warm smoothness on the finish. The acidity is present, but very well integrated. Imported by Ionia Atlantic. —M.L.

90 Ponchione Maurizio 2007 Monfrini (Barbera d'Alba); \$30. With 16 months of careful oak barrique aging, this opulent wine represents a new generation of Barbera d'Alba. It opens with a gorgeous appearance and thick aromas of black cherry, boysenberry, plum and sweet spice. It has dense, sweet tannins and offers a biting touch of astringency on the close that would pair with succulent cuts of meat. Imported by BelVino LLC. —M.L.

90 Rivetto 2006 Lirano Soprano (Barbera d'Alba); \$35. The Lirano Soprano Barbera d'Alba is ripe with aromas of coffee and freshly ground espresso bean, followed by chocolate and a playful touch of white pepper. The fruit tones hold up nicely to round off the bouquet and the wine balances richness and freshness. Imported by Voliovinio. —M.L.

90 Rivetto 2007 Zio Nando (Barbera d'Alba); \$30. This is a rich and chocolatey expression of Barbera d'Alba with thick concentration and immediate aromas of black currant and cherry. The wine is dense and extracted with smooth, drying tannins and a piquant blast of acidity on the close. Imported by Vintage Imports, Inc. —M.L.

90 Scarzello 2006 (Barbera d'Alba Superiore); \$25. There's slight sweet-

ness here in the form of soft oak elements that glide easily together with the natural fruitiness and freshness of Barbera. There's nice personality and dimension and the wine is smooth and soft on the finish (save for that prickly touch of acidity you should expect). Imported by Vignaioli. —M.L.

89 Agostino Bosco 2007 (Barbera d'Alba); \$30. Sweet oak tones come to the forefront of this bright Barbera d'Alba and add tones of vanilla, chocolate and cinnamon spice. There is enough fruit here, however, to balance out the wood tones and the wine is smooth and rich in the mouth. Imported by Tanaro River Imports LLC. —M.L.

89 Albino Rocca 2007 Gepin (Barbera d'Alba); \$28. Velvety, rich and concentrated, this modern interpretation of Barbera from Alba offers silky tones of cherry, black cassis fruit and spice followed by bright acidity and a smooth texture. Pair this fruit-forward wine with roasted pork and fennel sauce. A Marc de Grazia selection; various American importers. —M.L.

89 Cascina Ballarin 2007 Giuli (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA. Here's a sweet and luscious Barbera d'Alba with bright, thick concentration and immediate aromas of blackberry, cassis and cherry. There is an obvious wood element here that adds tones of spice, vanilla and tobacco. The high density and richness of the wine leaves purplish glycerin trails on the side of the glass. —M.L.

89 Cascina Roccalini 2007 (Barbera d'Alba Superiore); \$35. This Barbera d'Alba Superiore shows elegance and sophistication with linear mineral notes of graphite and lead pencil as well as black fruit and cherry. This wine exhibits big freshness, loads of fruit and you don't feel the 15% alcohol at all. Imported by Domenico Selections. —M.L.

89 Cascina Roccalini 2008 (Barbera d'Alba); \$23. Crafted by vintner Paolo Veglio, this bright Barbera d'Alba shows evident oak tones of spice and tobacco surrounded by black fruit, plums and prunes. Those black fruit aromas do a very good job of balancing out the more austere oak influences. Imported by Domenico Selections. —M.L.

89 Conterno Fantino 2008 Vignota (Barbera d'Alba); \$33. The Vignota Barbera d'Alba exhibits generous and simple fruit aromas of blackberry and boysenberry with loads

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of fresh cherry concentration. Those lively fruit tones are backed by tones of spice, cola and chocolate. Imported by Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.

89 **Costa di Bussia 2008 Campo del Gatto (Barbera d'Alba); \$25.** Here is a smooth and modern interpretation of Barbera d'Alba with plush and bright notes of cherry, blackberry, exotic spice, natural rubber and a touch of moist earth or forest floor. The wine is rich and smooth in the mouth and ends with a blast of cooling cherry fruit. Imported by Siena Imports. —M.L.

89 **E. Pira e Figli (Chiara Boschis) 2008 (Barbera d'Alba Superiore); \$31.** One year of careful oak aging has helped to shape a very attractive bouquet loaded with Christmas spice, cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla and bright cherry. The wood element is still evident but will most likely integrate with a bit more time in the bottle. Imported by Indigenous Selections. —M.L.

89 **Elvio Cogno 2007 Bricco dei Merli (Barbera d'Alba); \$32.** Here's a rich and thickly extracted Barbera d'Alba with purplish hues to its ruby color and bright aromas of cherry, black currants and cassis. Like many of the wines from the Alba area, we notice quite a lot of toast here that comes forth as cinnamon, vanilla and exotic spice. —M.L.

89 **Enrico Serafino 2006 Parduné (Barbera d'Alba Superiore); \$NA.** This ruby-garnet colored Barbera d'Alba offers spicy notes of clove and cinnamon backed by fresh cherry, blackberry and moist earth. This is Barbera done in a big, bold style with a thick and warming presence in the mouth and a crisp, drying close. —M.L.

89 **Fratelli Casetta 2007 Suri (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA.** Here's a bright and sweet-smelling Barbera d'Alba with cherry and cassis nuances followed by cinnamon, vanilla and spice. It offers a smooth, silky texture and this winemaker has done a very good job of taming Barbera's sometimes aggressive acidity. Imported by Sober LLC. —M.L.

89 **Giacomo Vico 2007 (Barbera d'Alba Superiore); \$24.** This elegant Superiore expression of Barbera d'Alba offers loads of spice and black fruit aromas and slightly jammy notes of strawberry and blackberry pie. You'll also get pretty tones of chocolate and

tobacco, capped by a smooth, velvety finish. Imported by Total Wine & More. —M.L.

89 **Orlando Abrigo 2008 Vigna Roreto (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA.** Here's a bigger, more sophisticated expression of Barbera with thick concentration and loads of plum, blackberry and spice. The mouthfeel is thick and meaty and the wine offers a long, crisp finish. Very nice. Imported by Ionia Atlantic. —M.L.

89 **Palladino 2006 Bricco delle Olive (Barbera d'Alba); \$30.** Bricco delle Olive is an elegant and austere Barbera d'Alba with a dark color and rich concentration backed by bright acidity and polished tannins. This lively wine (from the 2006 vintage) still shows very good integrity of fruit. Imported by Enotec Imports, Inc. —M.L.

89 **Rocche Costamagna 2007 Annunziata (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA.** Coffee, toasted hazelnut, espresso bean and vanilla ride in the forefront of black fruit and cherry. This is a bold, big and modern Barbera d'Alba with ripe fruit tones and soft wood nuances that help dull the grape's natural acidity. Imported by Laird & Company. —M.L.

89 **Terre da Vino 2008 Croere (Barbera d'Alba Superiore); \$21.** Here's a bold interpretation of Barbera with a lush, modern style that sees both wood influences and loads of ripe, jammy fruit. This is a hearty meat wine or a wine to pair with cheesy lasagna: there's bright acidity here and enough pulp and forward fruit to stand up to winter foods or stews. Imported by International Wine Traders. —M.L.

88 **Andrea Oberto 2008 Vigneto San Giuseppe (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA.** Bresaola and smoked meat aromas are backed by cola, spice, wet earth and loads of black fruit and ripe cherry. Pair this wine with hearty stews or grilled meat. The fresh acidity adds to the longevity and crispness of the finish. Imported by Chambers & Chambers. —M.L.

88 **Angelo Negro & Figli 2007 Bertu (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA.** Thick oak-driven aromas of vanilla, spice and tobacco roll out in front of cassis and black cherry. This is a well-worked wine (the oak element is very strong) in which the winemakers have dulled some of the sharpness of Barbera's natural acidity. Imported by Nardone Wine. —M.L.

88 **Bric Cenciurio 2007 Naunda (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA.** Dark, concentrated and oak-driven, this is a smooth and sophisticated Barbera d'Alba with intense aromas of black fruit, cassis and cherry. The wood notes are still a bit raw and apparent, so give this wine two more years in the bottle to integrate. Imported by Italia Wine Imports. —M.L.

88 **Cascina Ballarin 2007 Pilade (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA.** This is a friendly Barbera d'Alba with a bright, ruby color, dense concentration and immediate aromas of black cherry, cassis, spice and dark chocolate. The wine is smooth and thick in the mouth with bright acidity on the close. —M.L.

88 **Cascina del Monastero 2007 Vigna Parroco (Barbera d'Alba); \$28.** Sweet oak-driven notes of cinnamon, vanilla and dark chocolate appear at first, leaving only a sliver of room for the natural berry and cherry fruit to come forward. The mouthfeel is silky and smooth with a touch of bright acidity on the close. Imported by Metropolis Wine Merchants, Inc. —M.L.

88 **Cascina del Monastero 2006 Vigna Parroco (Barbera d'Alba); \$18.** Cascina del Monastero's bright Vigna Parroco Barbera opens with sweet aromas of spice, cinnamon, clove and forest fruit. The texture is smooth and rich here and bright berry crispness appears on the close. Imported by Metropolis Wine Merchants, Inc. —M.L.

88 **Francone 2007 I Patriarchi (Barbera d'Alba Superiore); \$14.** Warm tones of cured meat, wet earth and wild mushroom are balanced out by brighter notes of wild berry, cherry and cassis. This is a modern Barbera d'Alba with a rich palate, crisp acidity and long persistency (at an attractive price). Imported by De Benedetto Imports. **Editors' Choice.** —M.L.

88 **Marcarini 2008 Ciabot Camerano (Barbera d'Alba); \$18.** Barbera Ciabot Camerano shows thick concentration and bright aromas of black fruit, plum and forest berry. There's good intensity here and background notes of cinnamon and milk chocolate. It's a thick, well-textured wine that would serve well when paired with veal ragù. Imported by Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.



88 Mauro Sebaste 2008 Santa Rosalia (Barbera d'Alba); \$21. Mauro Sebaste is an up-and-coming winery to watch with a full range of Piedmont wines. This pretty Barbera from Alba shows big oak tones that need more time to integrate within the folds of the dark berry and sweet spice tones that are typical of this deeply beloved native grape. Imported by Tutto Vino. —M.L.

88 Pecchenino 2007 Quass (Barbera d'Alba); \$28. The longer this wine sits in the glass, the more beautiful its aromas become. It opens with a dark and rich appearance and vibrant notes of blueberry, wild berry and exotic spice. There's a slightly lactic note at first that slowly evolves into milk chocolate and fudge. Imported by Vias Imports. —M.L.

88 Pelassa 2007 Tucci (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA. This Barbera d'Alba is almost too much of a good thing: it's very rich and dense, with a dark, impenetrable color and inviting aromas of black stone, mineral, opulent fruit, cherry candy and sweet spice peppermint. It taste very ripe and chewy in the mouth. Imported by Slocum & Sons, Inc. —M.L.

88 Poderi Colla 2008 Costa Bruna (Barbera d'Alba); \$28. This hearty Barbera from the Costa Bruna cru exhibits thick, almost meaty aromas of cured bresaola, leather, tobacco and black fruit. It's a crisp, clean and inherently food friendly wine that would pair with ham, beef or game dishes. Imported by Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.

88 Ponchione Maurizio 2006 Vigneto Pasau (Barbera d'Alba); \$25. Prominent oak tones of spice, leather and chocolate sit heavy over a broad base of dark, jammy fruit. This wine is executed in a big, bold style and would pair well with stews or game dishes. The acidic finish will cut through hearty meat recipes. Imported by BelVino LLC. —M.L.

88 Rocche Costamagna 2006 Annunziata (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA. Bursting with fresh berry aromas, espresso and dark chocolate, this is a rich, opulent Barbera that would pair beautifully with egg pasta or quiche Lorraine thanks to the naturally bright acidity. The finish is characterized by bright cherry and blackberry flavors. Imported by Laird & Company. —M.L.

88 Terre da Vino 2006 Croere (Barbera d'Alba Superiore); \$21. Here's a ripe and slightly jammy expression of Barbera d'Alba with thick fruit layers followed by intense spice, chocolate and toasted almond. The wine is succulent and dense in the mouth and would stand up to braised beef or country stew. Imported by International Wine Traders. —M.L.

88 Virna Borgogno 2008 (Barbera d'Alba); \$18. Aged for 12 months in large oak casks, this bright Barbera offers a friendly blend of fresh berry fruit and subdued spice. The wine is not overdone or over extracted and you'll appreciate the touches of cherry, blackberry and natural rubber. It wins more points in the mouth thanks to its power and determination. Imported by Ionia Atlantic. —M.L.

87 Boroli 2007 Quattro Fratelli (Barbera d'Alba); \$14. This bright wine opens with sweet tones of cherry, chocolate and a touch of cinnamon spice. That characteristic Barbera acidity kicks in at the end and the wine offers smooth richness and plenty of fruit in the mouth. Imported by Dalla Terra Winery Direct. —M.L.

87 Cascina Chicco 2008 Granera Alta (Barbera d'Alba); \$20. Here is a plush and elegant Barbera d'Alba with bright fruit tones followed by graphite, a dash of exotic spice and pretty earthy nuances. The wine is bright and fruity in the mouth with cherry and blackberry on the close. Imported by Vinifera Imports. —M.L.

87 Cascina Chicco 2007 Bric Loira (Barbera d'Alba); \$40. Here's a Barbera d'Alba that is almost too much of a good thing. The wine is black and dense with inky concentration and thick aromas of smoked bacon, beef jerky and black fruit. You'll also recognize tones of moist earth and wild mushroom. The fruit seems on the ripe and jammy side and the wine is smooth and thick in the mouth. Imported by Vinifera Imports. —M.L.

87 Giacomo Vico 2008 (Barbera d'Alba); \$18. This wine is packed tight with plum and blackberry aromas and even a drying touch of Graham cracker. The wine is not too concentrated or rich, which makes it more appropriate with easy, home-cooked meals. On the close, it offers a ton of sweet, bright cherry fruit. Imported by Total Wine & More. —M.L.

87 Oscar Bosio 2007 La Bruciata (Barbera d'Alba); \$12. Here's a genuine and straightforward Barbera d'Alba with good quality of fruit (this wine is neither too dense or extracted) and ripe tones of cherry and raspberry. The mouthfeel is compact and firm. This is your quintessential pizza or pasta wine. Imported by Baroness Wines. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

87 Tenuta Carretta 2007 Bric Quercia (Barbera d'Alba); \$22. Liquid smoke and toasted elements of roasted hazelnut and cured meat dominate the nose of this modern Barbera d'Alba. There is power and high alcohol here too, coupled by the wine's naturally high acidity that is a bit strong on the palate. Pair this wine with very cheesy foods. Imported by Suprex International. —M.L.

87 Tre Donne 2006 Tradizione (Barbera d'Alba); \$17. Tradizione, as the name suggests, does evoke the storied traditions of Piemontese winemaking. Aged in Slavonian oak casks (instead of French barrique) the wine exhibits bright berry aromas with raw tones of raspberries and white cherries. Imported by Small Vineyards LLC. —M.L.

86 Angelo Negro & Figli 2007 Nicolon (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA. Here's a powerfully fruit-driven Barbera d'Alba that gives the impression of high alcohol, ripe fruit and oak use. The wine is lush and smooth in the mouth and thanks to the naturally high acidity, it keeps the palate very clean. Imported by Nardone Wine. —M.L.

86 Giacomo Fenocchio 2008 (Barbera d'Alba Superiore); \$22. Warm and inviting, Giacomo Fenocchio's Barbera d'Alba Superiore offers earthy tones of cured meat, white mushroom and dark fruit. You don't expect the sudden sweetness that appears in the mouth, nor do you foresee the chewiness of its texture. Imported by Masciarelli Wine Co. —M.L.

86 Giacosa Fratelli 2007 Bussia (Barbera d'Alba); \$16. You'll appreciate the easygoing and straight-shooting nature of this fresh and informal Barbera d'Alba from the Bussia cru. The nose includes bright aromas of spice and raw, somewhat sharp tones of forest berry and raspberry. Pair this wine with meat involtini (meat rolled with breadcrumbs and pignoli nuts). Imported by Bedford International. —M.L.



86 **Marchesi di Barolo 2007 Ruvei (Barbera d'Alba); \$17.** The Ruvei expression of Barbera d'Alba (from one of Piedmont's biggest and most historic producers) offers a simple, crisp and genuine red wine experience. A small percentage of Nebbiolo is added to a lush base of Barbera, resulting in a lighter, brighter wine. Imported by Wine Wave. —M.L.

86 **Palladino 2008 Ca' del Sarto (Barbera d'Alba); \$11.** Here's an easygoing and traditional expression of Barbera that is not overstated or exaggerated in any way. In fact, fruit intensity is measured and the wine presents an informal, no-fuss but elegant front. You'll get aromas of cherry, blackberry and spice. Imported by Enotec Imports, Inc. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

86 **Pertinace 2006 (Barbera d'Alba); \$15.** This Barbera d'Alba from the 2006 vintage exhibits a slightly brownish, aged color with aromas of candied fruit, dried plums and prunes. There are gritty, thick tannins with flavors of smoked ham or beef jerky on the close. Imported by MW Imports. —M.L.

86 **Ponchione Maurizio 2007 Donia (Barbera d'Alba); \$18.** Upfront and generous, this is a bright and food-friendly Barbera d'Alba. What it lacks in overall complexity and aromatic intensity, it makes up for in terms of freshness and fruity simplicity. You'll love the dense concentration and fresh cherry flavors. Imported by BelVino LLC. —M.L.

86 **Rivetti Massimo 2005 Serraboella (Barbera d'Alba); \$29.** Serraboella Barbera d'Alba is loaded with aged aromas of dried fruit, prunes, apricots, tobacco and Indian spice. The wine shows black, inky concentration and fine, polished tannins. Imported by Wine Emporium. —M.L.

86 **Tenuta L'Illuminata 2005 Colbertina (Barbera d'Alba); \$25.** Despite its age (the wine is from the 2005 vintage) this Barbera d'Alba is impressively vinous and fresh with bright berry notes backed by some prune and plum nuances. It's tart and chewy in the mouth. Imported by Majestic Imports. —M.L.

85 **Oriel 2004 Trifola (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA.** Signed by winemaker Antonio Deltetto, this expression of Barbera shows aged aromas of dried fruit, dusty earth, wild mushroom and cured or smoked meat. It is polished and streamlined and would pair with

cooked prunes wrapped in thinly sliced prosciutto. Imported by Oriel Wines. —M.L.

85 **Silvano Bolmida 2007 Conca del Grillo (Barbera d'Alba); \$19.** The oak element is strong here—very strong—and one wonders if it will ever fully integrate even with more years of aging in the bottle. There's not much fruit left and what you do get is ripe and jammy. You can feel the alcohol at the back. Otherwise, the wine is dense and smooth on the palate. Imported by Morgan Import LLC. —M.L.

84 **Boffa 2006 Buschet (Barbera d'Alba); \$NA.** From vintner Carlo Boffa, this earthy Barbera from the 2006 vintage seems to have reached and passed its prime. Cured meat and Graham cracker aromas segue to pressed violets and candied fruit. Imported by PWM Merchants Inc. Astoria. —M.L.

82 **Cascina del Monastero 2005 (Barbera d'Alba); \$20.** This Barbera d'Alba from the warm 2005 vintage definitely seems past its prime. The wine is browning and dark with aromas of candied fruit and dried beef. The mouthfeel, however, is pleasantly marked by crisp, spicy freshness. Imported by Metropolis Wine Merchants, Inc. —M.L.

BARBERA DEL MONFERRATO

92 **Cantina Iuli 2006 Barabba (Barbera del Monferrato Superiore); \$59.** Here's a standout Barbera from Monferrato with loads of intensity, complexity and persistency. You'll get aromas of blackberry and cherry followed by exotic spice, vanilla and pipe tobacco. The mouthfeel is smooth, soft and thick. Excellent. Imported by Indie Wineries Division. —M.L.

89 **Cantina Iuli 2007 Umberta (Barbera del Monferrato); \$28.** Here's a dark, fruit-forward Barbera del Monferrato with plump aromas of cherry, blueberry, forest fruit and plum. The aromas focus on simple fruit, making this an easy, food-friendly wine that you'll want to serve at home with friends and family. This is a dynamic winery to watch. Imported by Indie Wineries Division. —M.L.

89 **Giulio Accornero e Figli 2007 Bricco Battista (Barbera del Monferrato Superiore); \$30.** A tiny hint of vanilla and toasted almond surrounds a plump core of bright fruit, black cherry and blueberry. This is a simple, easygoing wine that has an added layer of thickness and concentration that makes it appropriate to serve with meat-filled pasta or lasagna. Imported by Montecastelli Selections. —M.L.

89 **La Scamuzza 2006 Vigneto della Amorsosa (Barbera del Monferrato Superiore); \$NA.** This thick Barbera from the Monferrato subzone offers great intensity and meaty aromas of cured beef, smoke and roasted nut. There's loads of black fruit here to balance out those dryer tones and the wine is succulent, chewy and bright on the close. Imported by Siena Imports. —M.L.

89 **La Spinosa Alta 2007 La Punta (Barbera del Monferrato Superiore); \$NA.** Here's a Barbera with a cheerful level of complexity that is enhanced by extra tones of spice and vanilla. The aromas are well integrated and there's plenty of fruit freshness here to pair with oven-roasted pasta. —M.L.

89 **Marco Canato 2006 Rapet (Barbera del Monferrato Superiore); \$NA.** Here's a well-integrated Barbera with equal measures of fruit and spice. You'll get aromas of blackberry and cherry followed by vanilla and leather. The mouthfeel is velvety and thick and is capped by a blast of cleansing acidity. —M.L.

89 **Tenuta La Tenaglia 2007 1930 Una Buona Annata (Barbera del Monferrato Superiore); \$NA.** Bright berry fruit is reinforced by oak-driven aromas of spice, vanilla and tobacco. Give this wine a year or two to integrate. The smoothness and thickness of its texture promise to pair with either meatloaf or pasta with ragù sauce. —M.L.

89 **Vicara Visconti Cassinis Ravizza 2006 Vadmo (Barbera del Monferrato Superiore); \$NA.** Here's an interesting Barbera with aromas that include black fruit, exotic spice and pecorino cheese rind. The ensemble is attractive and so is the medium

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thickness of its body and smoothness of its tannins. That typical touch of Barbera acidity does kick in at the end however. —M.L.

88 Agricola Sulin 2004 Ornella (Barbera del Monferrato Superiore); \$20. From the celebrated 2004 vintage, this expression of Barbera offers solid and correct aromas of ripe fruit, raspberries, wet earth and leather. The wine is bright and incredibly generous in terms of intensity and purity of the fruit flavors. Imported by Michael R. Downey Selections. —M.L.

88 Castello di Uviglie 2008 Le Cave (Barbera del Monferrato Superiore); \$NA. This is a very pleasant Barbera from the Monferrato zone with good concentration and bright aromas of blueberry, wild fruit, wet earth and hazelnut. There's good dimension here as well as a smooth texture that is accented by the wine's natural acidity. —M.L.

88 Castello di Uviglie 2007 Le Cave (Barbera del Monferrato Superiore); \$NA. Here's a youthful Barbera with dark, purplish hues and immediate aromas of blackberry, cherry, spice, wet earth and tobacco. From the Monferrato zone of Piedmont, it offers good intensity, staying power and a velvety smooth texture coupled by natural freshness and fruitiness. —M.L.

88 Colle Manora 2007 Pais (Barbera del Monferrato); \$NA. This Barbera presents a nice package with fresh fruit elements backed by slight hints of toast and spice that give it more dimension and personality. The wine is compact and lean in the mouth with a bright, vinous finish. Imported by Southern Wine and Spirits. —M.L.

88 Gaudio 2008 Zerolegno (Barbera del Monferrato); \$15. Bright, succulent berry tones are followed by a touch of smoked meat and wet earth that is typically found in the Barbera grape. This expression also has a hint of tobacco and exotic spice at the back that gives it more dimension and personality. Imported by Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.

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88 Marco Canato 2007 La Baldea (Barbera del Monferrato Superiore); \$NA. You'll find bright berry notes followed by white licorice, forest floor and a distant touch of chopped herbs in this fresh, well-integrated Barbera from Monferrato. The mouthfeel is not too concentrated and the wine is naturally acidic (try it with cheese- or butter-based pasta dishes). —M.L.

88 Olivetta 2007 Barbera del Monferrato Superiore; \$NA. There's a thick, creamy element to this wine that is reinforced by aromas of ripe berry, vanilla and milk chocolate. This is a raw, chewy wine with a soft, smooth temperament and a touch of crisp acidity on the close. —M.L.

87 Agricola Sulin 2008 Barbera del Monferrato; \$16. This hearty Barbera del Monferrato offers surprisingly thick concentration and loads of bright fruit intensity. It's an inky, dark wine with bright nuances of cherry and blackberry and although there's a vinous, raw aspect to the bouquet, the mouthfeel is attractively thick and chewy. Imported by Michael R. Downey Selections. —M.L.

87 Braida di Giacomo Bologna 2008 La Monella (Barbera del Monferrato); \$NA. Here's a fresh, simple Barbera with a tiny touch of toasted almond that gives it slightly more complexity and intensity. The mouthfeel is lean and light with a short but satisfying finish. Imported by Vinifera Imports. —M.L.

87 Bricco dei Guazzi 2007 Barbera del Monferrato; \$24. Here's a simpatico Barbera from Monferrato with bright berry and cherry notes followed by a slightly thicker, more substantial texture. You'll get drying tannins and bright acidity that keeps the palate polished and clean. Imported by Bedford International. —M.L.

87 Danilo Spinoglio 2008 Barbera del Monferrato; \$NA. This Barbera from the Monferrato area offers more evolved notes of spice and nut along with bright fruit and berry tones. The wine is tonic and tight in the mouth but those berry nuances and bright acidity make it a perfect match to cheese-filled ravioli. —M.L.

87 La Casaccia 2007 Bricco del Bosco (Barbera del Monferrato); \$NA. Blueberries, raspberry and bright fruit emerge immediately from the nose of this dark ruby, slightly purplish Barbera. The wine is chewy and bright in the mouth with raw fruit flavors and dark cherry on the close. —M.L.

87 Montalbera 2008 La Biosa (Barbera del Monferrato); \$20. Bright fruit aromas such as wild berry, red apple, white almond and blueberry come to the foreground. This is a still wine but there's a touch of tonic foaminess in the mouth that is followed by a long array of simple fruit nuances. Imported by Bonhomie Wine Imports. —M.L.

87 Silvio Morando 2007 Barbera del Monferrato Superiore; \$NA. Buoyant berry notes jump out of the glass in a very direct and vertical manner. You'll recognize aromas of black cherry, red apple and cassis berry. But there's also a slight notes of nut or spice at the back followed by soft, sweet fruit flavors. —M.L.

86 Bottazza 2008 Rubia (Barbera del Monferrato); \$NA. Here's a fresh style of Barbera with bright fruit notes that recall blueberry and raspberry. The wine is sharp and pointed in the mouth (the high acidity feels prickly on the tongue) and the body is lean and compact. —M.L.

86 Marchesi di Barolo 2007 Maràia (Barbera del Monferrato); \$11. A small percentage of Dolcetto has been added to this Barbera del Monferrato to smooth out the natural acidity and add a touch of extra structure to the finish. You can't beat the low price here or the simple generosity of its cherry and vanilla aromas. Imported by Wine Wave. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

86 Silvio Morando 2008 Barbera del Monferrato; \$NA. Here's a fresh, densely concentrated Barbera with a dark purplish hue to its ruby color and bright aromas of blueberry, raspberry and black cherry. There's not much complexity here, but the point of this wine is to be informal and a good partner to home cooked meals. —M.L.

85 La Casaccia 2008 Barbera del Monferrato; \$17. Here's a modern, thickly extracted Barbera d'Asti with a very distinctive nose that includes mature fruit elements, white mushroom, wet earth, bramble, spice and



fresh grapes. There is a chewy rawness or vinous quality to this wine. Imported by Oliver McCrum Wines. —M.L.

85 Mario Garrone 2008 Barbera del Monferrato Superiore; \$NA. Here's an easygoing Barbera with some ripe notes of strawberry and raspberry followed by a compact mouthfeel and bright acidity. This is your quintessential pizza or pasta wine: simple, easy, bright. —M.L.

85 Terre d'Aleramo 2009 Fermo (Barbera del Monferrato); \$NA. Here's a Barbera from the Monferrato subzone (believed to be the birthplace of this popular indigenous grape) that offers bright, youthful fruit tones and an easy, informal style. The wine is aged in stainless steel to maintain its fruity purity and freshness. Imported by Cutting Edge Selections. —M.L.

84 Mario Garrone 2008 Barbera del Monferrato; \$NA. Here's a bright, ruby-colored Barbera with a vertical and immediate delivery of aromas of red apple, forest fruit and white almond. Those apple notes appear again in the mouth and the wine is crisp on the close. —M.L.

OTHER BARBERA

85 Araldica 2008 Castelfero Barbera (Piedmont); \$10. Here's a value wine and a fresh expression of Barbera that can be served with cheeseburgers and fries at an outdoor barbecue. The wine is informal and light and seems to be engineered for immediate consumption. Imported by Vias Imports. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

84 Vinchio-Vaglio Serra 2008 Cantina Tre Serre Barbera (Piedmont); \$11. Cantina Tre Serre is a well-priced and informal Barbera with a thin and informal style backed by fruity freshness. There's even a tiny touch of effervescence that adds a perky and peppery sensation to the mouthfeel. Imported by Bon Vivant Imports. —M.L.

82 Vinchio-Vaglio Serra 2008 Kroara Barbera (Piedmont); \$10. Kroara opens with a tired, slightly browning appearance and offers raw berry flavors with sour cherry and cranberry. Zippy freshness helps pick it up in the mouth. Imported by Ionia Atlantic. —M.L.

DOLCETTO D'ALBA

90 Bricco Maiolica 2008 Sori Bricco Maiolica Superiore (Dolcetto di Diano d'Alba); \$25. This is a beautiful Superiore expression of Dolcetto that shows many qualities, including a distinct sense of informal elegance. There are mineral aromas balanced by ripe fruit tones and the wine shows a higher than expected level of complexity. Imported by Zig Zagando. —M.L.

88 Araldica 2009 (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$NA. The freshness and inherent liveliness of the fruit and the clear overtones of raspberry, blueberry and black cherry are praiseworthy. The wine exhibits a purplish-ruby color with sweet, chewy fruit and dense consistency. Firm tannins are followed by dusty mineral tones. Very nice. —M.L.

88 Aurelio Settimo 2008 (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$25. Aurelio Settimo's lively Dolcetto offers a surprise twist in the form of black fruit, Indian spice and natural rubber. The overall effect is rich in cherry and sweet fruit and the wine tastes plush and creamy on the close. Imported by Masciarelli Wine Co. —M.L.

88 Cascina Corte di Barosi Alessandro 2007 Vigna Pirochetta (Dolcetto di Dogliani); \$20. This organically farmed Dolcetto delivers surprising sophistication with tones of wild mushroom and spice behind bright red fruit and berry. The wine is slightly tannic but closes with a smooth, polished texture. Imported by Casa Bruno. **Editors' Choice.** —M.L.

88 Ceretto 2009 Rossana (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$25. The historic Ceretto estate excels in the production of crisp whites and important red wines. That same attention to detail is paid to this informal expression of Dolcetto. Aromas here recall cherry cola and blueberry and the wine boasts a bright, saturated color and a palate-cleansing finish. Imported by Wilson Daniels Ltd. —M.L.

88 Gianni Voerzio 2009 Rochettevino (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$25. This is an impressive Dolcetto with a deeply aromatic character. The generous notes of pressed flowers, roses and perfumed violets distinguish this expression from the rest. Those huge floral and fruit tones transfer to the mouth as well, where

they last long on the finish. Imported by BelVino LLC. **Editors' Choice.** —M.L.

88 Prunotto 2008 Mosesco (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$45. Here is a raw, chewy and vinous expression of Dolcetto with loads of bright berry and fruit intensity. The wine is easy and fresh with dense pulp and texture on the close. Imported by Winebow. —M.L.

88 Tre Donne 2007 Donna Rossa (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$16. Made by the three Lequio sisters, Donna Rossa Dolcetto delivers a traditional and linear style with good intensity and a fair level of complexity. There are loads of spice and fresh fruit aromas here and the wine is capped by some sour cherry flavors. Imported by Small Vineyards LLC. —M.L.

87 Andrea Oberto 2008 Vigneto Vantrino Albarella (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$NA. This Dolcetto from the Vantrino Albarella vineyard offers a simple and easy approach, laced with plush fruit and natural richness as it makes its way down the palate. Try it with fried zucchini flowers. Imported by Chambers & Chambers. —M.L.

87 Bava 2009 Controvento (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$15. This youthful expression of Dolcetto offers a dark, concentrated style and a very noticeable mineral tone that slices through the lush blueberry and raspberry aromas. The wine is tonic and vibrant and although there isn't huge complexity here, there is a good, fresh quality of fruit. Imported by Wine Wave. —M.L.

87 Cascina del Monastero 2007 (Dolcetto d'Alba Superiore); \$12. Lively and vibrant with loads of wild berries and black fruit, this is an oak-aged Dolcetto that lives up to the best qualities this native Italian grape can offer. The wine would pair with a long list of Mediterranean and South American foods thanks to its firm tannins and bright finish. Imported by Metropolis Wine Merchants, Inc. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

87 Cascina Roccalini 2008 (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$16. Here's a decidedly uncomplicated expression of Dolcetto from vintner Paolo Veglio that plays its fruit and spice cards very well. You'll get tones of blueberry, plum and wild berry, with a touch of cinnamon and clove at the end. The tannic structure is firm enough to contend with creamy cheese. Imported by Domenico Selections. —M.L.



87 Ceretto 2008 Rossana (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$25. Rossana makes an ideal match to pizza or pasta with fresh tomato, a clove of garlic and chopped basil. The berry tones are bright and compact and there are light but polished tannins on the close. This lively wine is widely available in the United States. Imported by Wilson Daniels Ltd. —M.L.

87 E. Pira e Figli (Chiara Boschis) 2009 (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$19. This bright Dolcetto d'Alba offers fresh fruit and berry flavors on top of rich concentration and a plush, velvety feel. This is a very easy, uncomplicated wine that will pair with most home-cooked pasta dishes. Imported by Indigenous Selections. —M.L.

87 Giacosa Fratelli 2008 San Rocco (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$16. Dolcetto San Rocco is a clean and elegant wine with a less obvious aromatic offering of forest berry, blueberry and spice. The wine is bright and tonic in the mouth with a touch of firmness on the close that helps keep the mouth refreshed. Imported by Bedford International. —M.L.

87 Gianni Gagliardo 2009 (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$22. Gianni Gagliardo is a winery to watch and its fresh Dolcetto is a distinctive wine with a touch of green or wild herb mixed within a greater context of forest berry and cherry. This is a unique expression with good freshness and structure on the close. Imported by Enotec Imports, Inc. —M.L.

87 Marchesi di Barolo 2008 Madonna di Como (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$17. This expression of Dolcetto is packed tight with loads of bright berry and black fruit aromas, but also has a polished mineral vein at the core. This is a lively, cheerful wine with good intensity, sour cherry flavors and firm tannins. Drink now. Imported by Wine Wave. —M.L.

87 Mauro Sebaste 2009 Santa Rosalia (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$18. Santa Rosalia is the quintessential pizza wine with bright fruit integrity and a touch of piquant spice on the close. The wine is fresh, firm and keeps the palate clean. Imported by Tutto Vino. —M.L.

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87 Pe're Alessandro 2009 (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$17. Easy, bright and sweet smelling, this vibrant Dolcetto offers an informal drinking match to home-cooked pasta and light meat dishes. The wine is soft and plush with firm structure. Imported by Vintwood International Ltd. —M.L.

87 Prunotto 2009 (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$17. If you're not familiar with the tastes and character of the Dolcetto grape, this widely available expression by Prunotto is typical in its bright array of wild berry and black fruit aromas. The wine is young, fresh and generous in its youthful flavors. Imported by Winebow. —M.L.

87 Renato Ratti 2009 Colombè (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$15. This bright Dolcetto from Renato Ratti opens with a dark, inky color and well concentrated fruit aromas of blueberry and cherry. Those big fruit tones are enhanced by the wine's full color and polished finish. Very nice and well priced too. Imported by Dreyfus, Ashby & Co. **Editors' Choice.** —M.L.

87 Rivetto 2009 Ercolino (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$15. Ercolino offers an informal interpretation of Dolcetto with a nicely concentrated and dense appearance and loads of vibrant fruit aromas (raspberry and blackberry foremost). There are polished mineral tones here as well that emerge on the wine's dusty, drying finish. Imported by Vintage Imports, Inc. —M.L.

87 Tenute Cisa Asinari dei Marchesi di Gresy 2008 Monte Aribaldo (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$20. There's a certain elegance to this Dolcetto that distinguishes it in a crowd. The fruit element is bright and strong and the wine shows generous layers of raspberry and cherry on the close. Imported by Dalla Terra Winery Direct. —M.L.

86 Cantine San Silvestro 2009 Primavera (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$14. This Dolcetto offers a correct nose with fresh layers of cherry, blueberry and wild berries. There isn't huge intensity here but the wine does offer a full, soft mouthfeel with some mild tannins on the close. Imported by BelVino LLC. —M.L.

86 Conterno Fantino 2009 Bricco Bastia (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$23. Bricco Bastia offers an inky, dense expression of Dolcetto with loads of dark fruit, cherry and blueberry intensity. There are also mineral notes

in there and the close is slightly vinous, chewy and raw. Imported by Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.

86 Giacomo Fenocchio 2009 (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$17. This is an easygoing but exceedingly fresh expression of Dolcetto with a full array of fruit aromas that span from delicate wild berry to ripe black cherry. There's fullness, softness and firmness in the mouth. Imported by Masciarelli Wine Co. —M.L.

86 Marcarini 2009 Fontanazza (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$18. This young Dolcetto opens with loads of fresh fruit, but there's also a slightly musky smell at the back that gives the wine a touch of complexity. It's an earthy, warm wine with a full and velvety feel. Imported by Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.

86 Poderi Colla 2008 Pian Balbo (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$18. Here's a subdued and understated Dolcetto that has been executed in a lighter, fruit-forward style with informal appeal and sour tannins on the close. You'll recognize aromas of dark fruit, berries and fresh spice. Imported by Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.

85 Prinsi 2008 San Cristoforo (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$18. Here is a light and thin expression of Dolcetto with a bright fruit personality and loads of berry intensity. Try it with cold cuts, salami or slices of pizza. Imported by Enotec Imports, Inc. —M.L.

84 Tenuta Arnulfo 2009 Costa di Busisia (Dolcetto d'Alba); \$15. This young wine opens with some notes of burnt matchstick and bacon fat, but those aromas seem to fade off fast enough. What's left behind is blueberry fruit and a piquant touch of spice or black pepper. Imported by Siena Imports. —M.L.

DOLCETTO DI DOGLIANI

90 Poderi Luigi Einaudi 2008 I Filari (Dolcetto di Dogliani); \$38. The impressive I Filari Dolcetto opens with plush, rich concentration and a dark, purplish color. The aromas are intense and immediate and the wine exhibits a velvety, dense texture in the mouth with sweet cherry and cola flavors followed by mild tannic structure. Imported by Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.



89 Pecchenino 2007 Siri D'Jermu (Dolcetto di Dogliani); \$28. This rich and thick Dolcetto opens with an inky, dark appearance and vinous aromas of blackberry and smoked ham. What the wine lacks in complexity, it makes up for in liveliness. Thick, textured tannins help the wine achieve good persistence and endurance. Most Dolcetto is designed to be consumed immediately, but this one promises more staying power. Imported by Vias Imports. —M.L.

89 Poderi Luigi Einaudi 2008 Vigna Tecc (Dolcetto di Dogliani); \$29. This historic estate in Piedmont delivers a clean, simple and youthful Dolcetto (packaged in a very elegant bottle). There's a pretty mix here of mineral aromas as well as black fruit and juicy blueberry. The wine is well concentrated and thick and offers a raw, gritty quality on the tannins. Imported by Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.

88 Marziano Abbona 2008 Papà Celso (Dolcetto di Dogliani); \$20. Lush concentration and deep aromas of dark fruit and black cherry make an excellent first impression. This Dolcetto shows a dark, deep color and a chewy, almost inky texture. Imported by Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —M.L.

87 Pecchenino 2008 San Luigi (Dolcetto di Dogliani); \$18. Here's an easy and openly friendly Dolcetto di Dogliani with simple fruit aromas of blueberry and forest fruit. In the mouth, however, the wine is far more expressive thanks to its spicy tones of freshly ground black pepper and Indian spice. Imported by Vias Imports. —M.L.

87 Poderi Luigi Einaudi 2009 (Dolcetto di Dogliani); \$20. Wild berries, blueberries and some natural rubber come to the forefront of this bright, young Dolcetto. In the mouth, it offers cooling fruit flavors with a hint of firmness in the form of polished tannins. Imported by Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.

OTHER DOLCETTO

88 Poderi Alasia 2008 (Dolcetto d'Asti); \$NA. This dark expression of Dolcetto opens with richly concentrated fruit and generous aromas of black fruit, plum, slate roof and granite stone. The wine is correct but simple in the mouth and offers a tannic bite at just the right level of firmness to pair with meat or cheese. —M.L.

87 Bricco Maiolica 2009 (Dolcetto di Diano d'Alba); \$19. Here's a nicely elegant and balanced Dolcetto with fresh fruit layers backed by tight tannins. Try this easy-natured wine with pepperoni pizza or pasta with sausage and tomato sauce. Imported by Zig Zagando. —M.L.

87 Carlin De Paolo 2008 (Dolcetto di Monferrato); \$15. Elegant and linear with polished mineral tones at the back of black fruit, blueberry and plum, this Dolcetto from Monferrato would pair with mixed Tuscan salumi. The wine is bright and vibrant with an easygoing and informal personality. Imported by American Northwest Distributors Inc. —M.L.

86 Carlin De Paolo 2009 (Dolcetto di Monferrato); \$15. Made by Giancarlo and Davide Ponte, this bright Dolcetto shows deep mineral tones backed by bright, plush fruit. The wine is informal and food-friendly with a touch of white pepper on the close. Imported by American Northwest Distributors Inc. —M.L.

86 Cascina Adelaide 2008 Vigna Costa Fiore (Dolcetto di Diano d'Alba); \$26. Dolcetto Vigna Costa Fiore opens with a dense, modern appearance and big aromas of ripe fruit and mature blackberry. There's also a touch of Band Aid or wet animal at the back that is barely perceptible now, but that may worsen with time. The wine is chewy and bright on the close. Imported by Tesori Wines. —M.L.

86 Massimiliano Vivalda 2008 Wine Philosophy (Dolcetto d'Asti); \$15. With a cheerful label that resembles a newspaper headline, Wine Philosophy is a thin and brambly Dolcetto with aromas of wild flower, forest floor and white cherry. There's a tiny touch of light effervescence that leaves a spicy prickle on the tongue. Pair this wine with sliced mortadella. Imported by Testa Wines Of The World. —M.L.

86 Terre d'Aleramo 2009 (Dolcetto di Monferrato); \$NA. This bright, young Dolcetto opens with easy berry fruit, cinnamon and a sprinkling of crushed white pepper. The mouthfeel is thin and informal but the wine tastes fresh enough to pair with pasta al forno. Imported by Cutting Edge Selections. —M.L.

PIEDMONT WHITE WINES

ARNEIS

87 Giacosa Fratelli 2009 Roero Arneis; \$16. This vibrant Roero Arneis from Northern Italy offers a very floral bouquet with layers of citrus blossom, melon and peach. There's a slightly sweet note in the mouth matched by some natural creaminess. Imported by Bedford International. —M.L.

87 Mauro Sebaste 2009 Roero Arneis; \$21. Mauro Sebaste delivers an exceptionally clean and compact Roero Arneis with a very defined mineral note and clean tones of kiwi, grapefruit and citrus blossom. The feel it imparts in the mouth is one of crispness and consistency. Imported by Tutto Vino. —M.L.

87 Pelassa 2008 San Vito (Roero Arneis); \$17. This special selection of Roero Arneis from vintner Pelassa offers a tart and perky ensemble of passion fruit, kiwi, mineral, citrus and peach aromas. You'll also be pleased by the crisp and focused impression it makes in the mouth. Imported by Slocum & Sons, Inc. —M.L.

86 Pelassa 2008 Roero Arneis; \$14. Here's an extremely food-friendly white wine from Piedmont in Northern Italy that delivers crisp aromas of citrus, peach blossom and white mineral. All those aromatic components make this a particularly well-suited partner to white asparagus in cream sauce or smoked salmon. You really taste those mineral notes on the finish. Imported by Slocum & Sons, Inc. —M.L.

CORTESE

87 Araldica 2008 La Luciana (Gavi); \$14. Cleansing minerality defines this brilliant and luminous Gavi from Northern Italy. It's food-friendly to the core with fresh floral aromas and crisp acidity. Try this beautiful wine with sushi or Mediterranean fish. Imported by Vias Imports. —M.L.

85 Castelveo 2008 Cortese (Piedmont); \$10. Here's a luminous and crystalline white wine in a screwcap bottle with linear and direct aromas of white mineral, kiwi



and pear. The mouthfeel is crisp and compact and this easygoing white would drink well with fish, summer foods and salads. Imported by Vias Imports. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

ITALIAN SPARKLERS

PIEDMONT

88 Gancia NV Carlo Gancia Cuvée Platinum (Piedmont); \$25. Soft tones of baked bread and warm almond are folded within a broader aromatic context of stone fruit, honey and apricot. This is a sophisticated metodo classico sparkler with good complexity and an easy but elegant personality at an affordable price. Imported by OWS. —M.L.

87 Gancia 2009 Millesimato Cuvée Platinum (Asti); \$14. Here's a vintage-dated sweet sparkling wine that opens with a crystalline, luminous appearance and enticing aromas of wildflower, white mineral, honey and stone fruit. The effervescence is tonic and firm and there's a playful touch of bitter almond on the close. Imported by OWS. —M.L.

87 Mauro Sebaste 2009 Moscato d'Asti; \$21. Here's a delightfully delicate Moscato d'Asti with foamy fruity notes integrated with balanced acidity and sweetness. This sparkling dessert wine tastes fresh and very floral to the end. Imported by Tutto Vino. —M.L.

86 Gancia NV Moscato d'Asti; \$11. Beautifully aromatic Moscato grapes offer loads of honey, sweet peach and passion-fruit on the nose. This is a delicate and feminine wine with soft, foamy bubbles capped by generous fruit flavors and natural sweetness. Imported by OWS. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

85 Gancia NV Brachetto d'Acqui; \$16. You'll love the wild berry and white cherry bouquet on this easy and informal red sparkling dessert wine. You can pair this wine from Northern Italy with light desserts and spongecake, or with salted appetizers and finger foods. Imported by OWS. —M.L.

85 Gancia NV Asti; \$NA. Friendly, easygoing and irresistibly cheerful, this light and luminous Asti delivers delicately fragrant tones of white flower, peach flower and honey-

suckle. The mouthfeel is characterized by creamy foam and there's a nice touch of piquant white pepper on the close. Imported by OWS. —M.L.

85 Gancia NV Grand Reale (Piedmont); \$10. Here is a sweet and fragrant dessert wine with aromas of white flower, honey and stone fruit accented by a slightly drying mineral characteristic. Firm, tonic effervescence keeps the palate refreshed even when paired with whipped cream or creamy fruit desserts. Imported by OWS. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

VENETO

88 Gancia NV Cuvée Platinum Extra Dry (Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore); \$15. Executed in an Extra Dry, or off-dry, style, this luminous sparkling wine delivers a feminine bouquet of floral tones, stone fruit, honey and talc powder. All these aromas form a pretty aromatic embroidery and the wine is bright and crisp on the close. Imported by OWS. —M.L.

86 Gancia NV Brut (Prosecco); \$11. This Brut style Prosecco from Gancia (one of the most historic producers of this popular Italian sparkling wine) offers fresh floral aromas backed by drying mineral tones and pulpy notes of peach and apricot. The finish is crisp, cleansing and tonic. Imported by OWS. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

NEW ZEALAND SAUVIGNON BLANC

91 Awatere River 2009 Single Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc (Marlborough); \$22. Even tasted blind, this wine's Awatere origins shone through, bursting with fresh nettles and tomato leaf which garnish currant-like fruit. It's amply concentrated and round in the mouth, then long and mouthwatering on the finish. Imported by RO Imports LLC. **Editors' Choice.** —J.C.

91 Eradus 2009 Sauvignon Blanc (Marlborough); \$20. Eradus continues a successful run with this year's Sauvignon Blanc. As usual, it's fairly pungent and herbal upfront, but then delivers waves of passion fruit. It's concentrated and fairly full-bodied for a

Sauvignon, with a lingering finish. Imported by RO Imports LLC. **Editors' Choice.** —J.C.

91 Saint Clair 2009 Pioneer Block 2 Swamp Block Sauvignon Blanc (Marlborough); \$24. A terrific example of Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc, the 2009 Swamp Block features ripe melon and nectarine fruit, balanced by hints of garden greens, such as tomato leaf and bell pepper. It's plump and succulent on the palate, with a long, slightly honeyed finish. Imported by Winesellers Ltd.. **Editors' Choice.** —J.C.

90 Barker's Marque 2009 3 Brooms Sauvignon Blanc (Marlborough); \$15. Pungent and sweaty but nevertheless inviting, this is a walk on the wild side of Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc. It's full-on boxwood and passion fruit; a potent, weighty wine with a intensely feral quality. Drink now. Imported by International Vines, Inc.. **Best Buy.** —J.C.

90 Brancott 2009 Brancott B Sauvignon Blanc (Marlborough); \$25. Made in a slightly riper, creamier style than Brancott's other 2009 Sauvignon Blancs, the B displays plenty of fig and melon fruit, tinged with currant and grapefruit. Stylish and balanced, it should prove versatile at the table. Drink it now and over the next year or so. Imported by Pernod Ricard. —J.C.

90 Kato 2008 Sauvignon Blanc (Marlborough); \$13. A flamboyantly pungent, leafy bouquet is followed by flavors of crushed tomato leaf, green tomato and hints of ripe stone fruit. This is surprisingly richly textured and long for the price, making it a really good value. Imported by Clos Du Val Wine/Goelet Wine Estates. **Best Buy.** —J.C.

90 Mills Reef 2008 Reserve Sauvignon Blanc (Hawke's Bay); \$15. This top-notch effort features bold nectarine and pink grapefruit flavors artfully accented by the merest hints of smoky complexity. It's big and mouthfilling, finishing with just the right amount of nettle-y herbaceousness. Drink it over the next year or two. Imported by San Francisco Wine Exchange. **Best Buy.** —J.C.

90 Nobilo 2009 Icon Sauvignon Blanc (Marlborough); \$20. Back on form after the disappointing 2008, Nobilo's Icon deftly combines hints of honey and stone fruit with a leafy overlay of herbal flavors. It's medium bod-