

Wine Spectator Insider

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INSIDER SPECIAL REPORT: 2005 BAROLO

THE 2004 VINTAGE for Nebbiolo from Italy's Piedmont region has received a lot of hype over 2005, but it just isn't justified. The more I taste the 2005s, the more I like them. The best are juicy, rich wines with beautiful fruity aromas and round, polished tannins. Many are approachable now, but they have the structure to improve with age for many years ahead.

This was more than apparent following extensive blind tastings of 2005 Barolos in my office in Tuscany. I found dozens of outstanding wines, not to mention plenty of classic-quality versions as well (you'll find this report's top-scoring Barolos among the Hot Wines, on page 4). The wines should be arriving now in the marketplace. Prices are about the same as those of 2004.

Stylistically, the 2005 Barolos are slightly less aromatic, firm and tannic than the 2004s, and their acidity is reduced. But this doesn't mean that they are not structured. It is like comparing 1996 and 1997 or 2000 and 2001. The '96s were firmer and slightly harder than the ultraripe '97s, while the 2001s were more reserved, with higher acidity than the opulent 2000s. Most of the 2005s will be drinking well in about four or five years.

The 2005 vintage was a little tricky for growing grapes. Most growers had to deal with intermittent rain as well as bouts with hail. But the best wine producers in Barolo are also the best vineyard managers, so they knew how to handle the problematic conditions. —James Suckling

Italy Piedmont

DOMENICO CLERICO

Barolo Ciabot Mentin Ginestra 2005

95 points | \$98 | 380 cases imported | Red

Perfumed and aromatic, with fresh ripe strawberry and toasty oak. Full-bodied, with focused, chewy tannins and loads of wood and jammy fruit. Powerful. Needs time. Best after 2013.—J.S.

DOMENICO CLERICO

Barolo Pajana 2005

95 points | \$98 | 300 cases imported | Red

Delivers ripe fruit, with lots of raisin and red licorice character on the nose and palate. Full-bodied, offering chewy yet polished tannins and a vanilla, blackberry and cherry aftertaste, with coffee and toasty oak. A blockbuster wine. Best after 2014.—J.S.

ALDO CONTERNO

Barolo Cicala 2005

95 points | \$176 | 200 cases imported | Red

Strawberry pie and cream aromas lead to a full-bodied palate. Very thick and powerful, with big, velvety tannins and masses of fruit. A blockbuster style. Best after 2013.—J.S.

ALDO CONTERNO

Barolo Colonello 2005

95 points | \$176 | 160 cases imported | Red

Enticing aromas of plum tart and vanilla bean aromas follow through to a full body, with a beautiful concentration of ripe fruit and supersilky tannins. A wine with beautiful balance and finesse that's also concentrated and rich. Best after 2013.—J.S.

GAJA

Langhe Sperss 2005

95 points | \$240 | 300 cases imported | Red

Blueberry and ripe raspberry aromas, with hints of fresh flowers, follow through to a full body, with extra-refined yet powerful tannins and a long, long finish. Polished and well-crafted. Best after 2014.—*J.S.*

BRUNO GIACOSA

Barolo Le Rocche del Falletto 2005

95 points | \$320 | 200 cases imported | Red

Displays pure strawberry and raspberry, with notes of rose. Full-bodied, with ultrarefined tannins and a persistent finish. A wine with grace, finesse and wonderful depth. Best after 2014.—*J.S.*

MASSOLINO

Barolo Margheria 2005

95 points | \$97 | 120 cases imported | Red

There's lovely sweet fruit, cedar and strawberry character in this wine, which is full and supersilky, with ultrarefined tannins and a plum and berry aftertaste. Very polished and pretty. Best after 2013.—*J.S.*

PAOLO SCAVINO

Barolo Carobric 2005

95 points | \$90 | 1,100 cases imported | Red

This rich wine shows exotic fruit on the nose, with blueberry, blackberry and flowers. Full-bodied, concentrated and chewy, with layers of ripe tannins and loads of fruit. The finish is massive. Best after 2013.—*J.S.*

VIETTI

Barolo Brunate 2005

95 points | \$120 | 95 cases imported | Red

Shows ripe strawberry, raspberry and plum pudding. Full-bodied, with loads of ripe, juicy fruit. Chewy and tannic, yet polished. Big and powerful. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

ROBERTO VOERZIO

Barolo La Serra 2005

95 points | \$300 | 45 cases imported | Red

There's lovely sweet berry and plum aromas, with hints of cream. Full-bodied, with big, juicy, powerful tannins. A massive wine. Best after 2014.—*J.S.*

ALDO CONTERNO

Barolo Romirasco 2005

94 points | \$260 | 80 cases imported | Red

Blackberry and blueberry aromas, with light vanilla and floral character, lead to a full-bodied palate, with very sweet fruit and chewy tannins. Turns to a real mouthful. A beautiful single-vineyard wine. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

ROBERTO VOERZIO

Barolo Cerequio 2005

94 points | \$300 | 50 cases imported | Red

Offers strawberry, cedar and flowers on the nose. Full-bodied, with a solid core of ripe fruit that builds to big, polished tannins. Very rich and powerful, with pure fruit. Best after 2013.—*J.S.*

BENI DI BATASIOLO

Barolo Vigneto Boscareto 2005

93 points | \$86 | 200 cases imported | Red

Ripe strawberry aromas, with mahogany and coffee bean. Full-bodied, with very ripe fruit character, chewy tannins and a long finish. Powerful and rich. Balanced and tight. Best after 2013.—*J.S.*

CORINO

Barolo Vigneto Arborina 2005

93 points | \$60 | 150 cases imported | Red

Blackberry and toasty oak on the nose follow through to a full body, with focused, powerful tannins and lots of new wood and ripe fruit on the finish. Should come together wonderfully. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

DAMILANO

Barolo Brunate Cannubi 2005

93 points | \$87 | 150 cases imported | Red

Pure plum, raspberry and flowers on the nose. Full-bodied, with silky tannins and a combination of bright fruit and Spanish cedar. Very, very long, with red licorice. This is a new blend of two excellent vineyards. Best after 2013.—*J.S.*

DAMILANO

Barolo Cannubi 2005

93 points | \$93 | 450 cases imported | Red

Shows fresh raspberry and sweet tobacco. Very fruity and aromatic. Full-bodied, with polished yet chewy tannins and lots of fruit. Subtle and silky. Best after 2013.—*J.S.*

GAJA

Langhe Conteisa 2005

93 points | \$210 | 200 cases imported | Red

Offers glorious aromas of sweet berries, ripe plum, flowers and mineral. Full-bodied, with soft, velvety tannins and raspberry flavors. There's a wonderful texture to this wine, which builds on the palate. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

PAOLO SCAVINO

Barolo Bric dël Fiasc 2005

93 points | \$125 | 550 cases imported | Red

Sliced plum, floral and leaf aromas. Full-bodied, with very soft, velvety tannins with rich, generous fruit. Long and powerful. Best after 2013.—*J.S.*

PAOLO SCAVINO

Barolo Cannubi 2005

93 points | \$124 | 150 cases imported | Red

Offers blackberry and dried flower aromas, with interesting ripe fruit. Full and chewy, with ripe tannins. Big and structured. Just barely giving out what's there. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

CORINO

Barolo 2005

92 points | \$40 | 500 cases imported | Red

Bright blackberry and cherry aromas follow through to a full body, with vanilla cream, blueberry and raspberry flavors. Very long, chewy and polished. Best after 2013.—*J.S.*

DAMILANO

Barolo Liste 2005

92 points | \$85 | 150 cases imported | Red

Intense aromas of blueberry and black cherry. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and a long finish. Big and rich. Very powerful and structured. Best after 2013.—*J.S.*

BRUNO GIACOSA

Barolo Falletto 2005

92 points | \$275 | 200 cases imported | Red

Offers pure strawberry on the nose, with flowers. Full-bodied, with round yet refined tannins and intense, bright fruit. Very long. Always beautiful. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

MASSOLINO

Barolo 2005

92 points | \$64 | 750 cases imported | Red

This is so pure and beautiful on the nose, with strawberry and raspberry character. Full-bodied, with silky tannins and pretty fruit in reserve. Long and silky. A beautiful blended Barolo. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

LUCIANO SANDRONE

Barolo Le Vigne 2005

92 points | \$140 | 435 cases imported | Red

Sweet blackberry and cherry aromas, with hints of flowers. Full-bodied, with a solid core of blackberry fruit and a long finish. Layered, tight and chewy. Racy and fruity. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

PAOLO SCAVINO

Barolo Bricco Ambrogio 2005

92 points | \$90 | 450 cases imported | Red

Beautiful ripe strawberry and raspberry aromas, with hints of violet. Full-bodied, with velvety tannins and a long finish. Very refined and polished. Plenty of finesse. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

VIETTI

Barolo Castiglione 2005

92 points | \$45 | 1,200 cases imported | Red

Shows sweet berry and perfume on the nose, with rose and raspberry. Full-bodied, with silky tannins and a milk chocolate, berry and vanilla aftertaste. Big and chewy. Yet balanced and very pretty. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

MARCHESI DI BAROLO

Barolo 2005

91 points | \$46 | 5,600 cases imported | Red

Offers strawberry jam on the nose, with hints of vanilla. Full-bodied, with big, velvety tannins and a long aftertaste of ripe fruit and cream. Very, very chewy, but the tannins are polished. Excellent value. Best after 2013.—*J.S.*

MARCHESI DI BAROLO

Barolo Cannubi 2005

91 points | \$88 | 1,200 cases imported | Red

Blackberry and green tobacco aromas follow through to a full-bodied palate, with a firm, tight tannin structure and a fresh finish. Needs time to soften and open up. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

MARCHESI DI BAROLO

Barolo Sarmassa 2005

91 points | \$71 | 150 cases imported | Red

Shows ripe strawberry and blackberry aromas, with hints of flowers. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and plenty of fruit to back it all up. Needs time to open and come together. Best after 2013.—*J.S.*

MARCHESI DI BAROLO

Barolo Vigne di Proprietà 2005

91 points | \$90 | 100 cases imported | Red

Exotic aromas of ripe red fruits, with hints of flowers. Full-bodied, with velvety tannins and a long, caressing finish. Polished and rich. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

MASSOLINO

Barolo Parafada 2005

91 points | \$97 | 120 cases imported | Red

Highly perfumed, with sweet strawberry and cherry aromas that follow through to a full body, with balanced, silky tannins and a pretty finish. Delicate yet structured. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

PAOLO SCAVINO

Barolo 2005

91 points | \$53 | 1,500 cases imported | Red

Shows loads of ripe blackberry and rose petal on the nose. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and lots of fruit. Delicious. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

BENI DI BATASIOLO

Barolo 2005

90 points | \$48 | 5,000 cases imported | Red

Complex aromas of tea, dried flowers, dark fruits and hints of wood follow through to a full body, with silky tannins and a long finish. Refined and fascinating. Tight. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

ALDO CONTERNO

Barolo 2005

90 points | \$128 | 400 cases imported | Red

Dried berry on the nose, with coffee bean, new leather and flowers. Medium- to full-bodied, with fine tannins and a long, caressing finish. Subtle and classy. Builds on the palate. Best after .—*J.S.*

DAMILANO

Barolo Lecinquevigne 2005

90 points | \$50 | 4,665 cases imported | Red

Berry, rose and cinnamon aromas lead to a full body, with a solid core of fruit and silky tannins. Long and refined. Always very good value for Barolo. Best from 2011 through 2015.—*J.S.*

HOT WINES

These are the most exciting discoveries from our editors' most recent tastings, published exclusively in *Wine Spectator Insider*. They are high-scoring, low-production wines from around the world that may be difficult to find, but are worth seeking out.

ROBERTO VOERZIO

Barolo Brunate 2005

99 points | \$300 | 50 cases imported | Red

Shows dried blackberry and blueberry aromas, with hints of vanilla. Full-bodied, with layers of ripe tannins and incredible fruit. This is an amazing young wine, with loads of fruit concentration and a long finish of ripe tannins. Mind-blowing. Best after 2013.

From Italy.—J.S.

VIETTI

Barolo Lazzarito 2005

98 points | \$120 | 120 cases imported | Red

Dark in color, with a fabulous purity of fruit, from blackberry to blueberry. Full-bodied, showing awesome concentration, but with a finish that's beautiful and honest. What a fabulous and thoughtful wine. Best after 2013. *From Italy.—J.S.*

CORINO

Barolo Vigna Giachini 2005

96 points | \$60 | 400 cases imported | Red

A wine with very attractive aromas of ripe blackberry, fresh forest mushroom and raspberry. Full-bodied, with amazing fruit concentration and powerful tannins. The power and richness of this wine are superb. A fantastic effort for the vintage. Best after 2014.

From Italy.—J.S.

LUCIANO SANDRONE

Barolo Cannubi Boschis 2005

96 points | \$150 | 240 cases imported | Red

Offers blueberry aromas, with sweet tobacco and mahogany. Full-bodied, rich and powerful, with plum pudding and milk chocolate flavors. This is very special. The Sandrones are genius with Cannubi. Best after 2013. *From Italy.—J.S.*

VIETTI

Barolo Rocche 2005

96 points | \$120 | 90 cases imported | Red

Offers Christmas pudding, currant and other dried fruit. Full-bodied, with amazing concentration of ripe fruit and chewy tannins. Yet it's all in balance. Monumental. Best after 2014.

From Italy.—J.S.

WINE SPECTATOR'S TASTERS

The Most Experienced Team of Wine Journalists in the World

Wine Spectator's tasting staff includes 15 people in four offices. They work together to review more than 15,000 wines each year, more than any other publication. Together, our seven senior tasters count more than 140 years of tasting experience.

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Wine Spectator's 100-Point Scale

95-100	Classic
90-94	Outstanding
85-89	Very good
80-84	Good
75-79	Mediocre
50-74	Not recommended