



THE RARE WINE Co. NEWSLETTER

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Mastroberardino's vines in the ancient ruins of Pompeii. See Page 1.

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Roots

Mastroberardino's Noble Legacy as the "Barolo of the South"

Now that Taurasi is finally being recognized as one of Italy's greatest red wines, we can offer thanks to Mastroberardino, the greatest producer and champion of this ancient Campanian wine. Without Mastroberardino, the "Barolo of the South" might no longer exist.

Brothers Antonio and Walter Mastroberardino, as co-directors of this historic *azienda* in the post-World War II era, dedicated themselves to preserving Campania's traditional varietals, such as Taurasi's Aglianico, brought to the area by the ancient Greeks.

For decades Mastroberardino was the only producer of high-quality Aglianico, single-handedly establishing the reputation of Taurasi and saving it from extinction. This stood in sharp contrast to other wineries in the region who opted for high-yielding lesser varietals for bulk wine production.

To Age Like Barolo

What Antonio and Walter knew was that Aglianico—when grown on Taurasi's high slope with low yields—produced a wine that could stand with, and age as well as, the better-known Barolo, Barbaresco and Brunello.

Antonio and Walter's unwavering belief in the magical combination of Aglianico and Taurasi's *terroir* resulted in a series of wines that are, as Burton Anderson wrote in *Vino*, "the ultimate expression of the antique nobility of the Aglianico grape."

Their towering 1968 Riservas still stand as Taurasi's benchmarks—monumental wines that are today as remarkable for their youthful vigor as for their ethereal complexity.

Radici

Since 1986, Mastroberardino's flagship wine has been Taurasi Radici, which is released as both a *normale*, and in fine vintages, as a *riserva*. Radici is the Italian word for roots, a reference to the family's role as guardian of Campania's ancient noble varietals.

Today the Radici *normale* is sourced from their vineyards in the villages of Montemarano and Mirabella Eclano, sited at the 1650 foot sweet spot on Taurasi's steep, south- through southeast-facing slopes of volcanic deposits and limestone.

Here the cool climate, soils and exposures are ideally suited for Agilanico, producing Taurasi of rich black fruit aromas and flavors, complex bouquet and firm structure.

The Best

The Radici Riserva is composed exclusively from the best lots from Montemarano, Mastroberardino's finest Taurasi *crus*, selected both for quality and suitability to the extra year of aging in cask and bottle.

Winemaker Massimo di Renzo carefully matches the temperature and length of fermentation and time in cask and bottle for the different bottlings of Radici to optimize their individual characters.

The *normale* is aged for a minimum of 2½ years, while the *riserva* spends a full four years in cask and bottle as the Mastroberardinos have long believed that, like Barolo, Taurasi really needs time, particularly in barrel, to fully express itself. ►

Mastroberardino's Noble Legacy as the "Barolo of the South"

► From the great 1999 vintage, Mastroberardino released a special Centotrenta Riserva to commemorate the firm's 130 years of fine Taurasi wines. The cream of the lots selected for the Radici Riserva, Centotrenta is a wine of enormous complexity and depth and was aged for eight years in barrel and bottle for before release.

This Offer

We are fortunate that Mastroberardino, unlike other great Italian producers, has

2006 Radici Taurasi

\$39.95 bottle \$235.00 six-pack

Antonio Galloni: "95 rating ... hits the palate with masses of blueberries, black berries, flowers and spices. The 2006 is a big, explosive wine ... remarkably accessible for a young Taurasi from this historic property. Layers of fruit continue to build towards the exotic, concentrated finish. This is a marvelous wine in the making"

2003 Radici Taurasi Riserva

\$42.95 bottle

Antonio Galloni: "94 rating ... a fascinating wine ... a fairly dark, brooding Radici Riserva endowed with tons of depth and an imposing personality. Still vibrant and youthful, the 2003 should find its balance and elegance with further bottle age. Anticipated maturity: 2015-2033."

1999 Radici Taurasi Riserva

\$42.95 bottle

Antonio Galloni: "93 rating ... simply beautiful. Sweet dried cherries, licorice, menthol and spices waft from the glass. Made in an elegant style ... balance is utterly compelling. The finish is long, sweet and ethereal, as pretty suggestions of mint come back to frame the wine beautifully. Mastroberardino gave this Riserva a whopping 30 months in small and large used oak barrels."

maintained a library of great vintages from the past fifteen years. We have taken full advantage of their library to make possible the extraordinary offer that follows, with every wine—including the ultra-rare Villa dei Misteri, grown in the ruins of Pompeii—coming directly from the family's cellars.

This is a wonderful opportunity to explore, under optimal circumstances, one of the great, and most important, winemaking traditions of Italy.

1999 Taurasi Centotrenta Riserva

\$49.95 bottle \$110.00 magnum

Wine Enthusiast: "94 rating. This is a beautifully aged Collector's Edition of Taurasi made to celebrate Mastroberardino's 130th anniversary as an exporter of wine to Europe and America. Elegant and aristocratic, the wine delivers fine notes of resin, molasses, black licorice, prune and plum cake. The intensity of flavors is remarkable and the wine has thick, impenetrable density and solid tannins."

1997 Radici Taurasi Riserva

\$45.00 bottle

Antonio Galloni: "93 rating. Tobacco, smoke and ash are some of the notes that appear to round out the rich fruit ... a fat, full-bodied Taurasi loaded with fruit ... an impressive showing from a wine that could merit a higher score down the road."

1998 Radici Taurasi Riserva 39.95

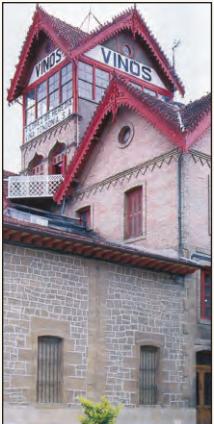
Galloni: "91 rating ... The supple, forward 1998 is an excellent choice for near-term drinking. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2020."

2004 Villa dei Misteri 149.95

In 1966, Mastroberardino was selected to restore grape growing in Pompeii, amidst the ruins of the 79 A.D. Vesuvius eruption. The first tiny harvest from which 144 cases were made was in 2001. A true rarity and piece of history.

Keeper of the Faith

López de Heredia Keeps Alive Rioja's Glorious Past



For lovers of mature red wine, Mecca has been a moving target. Thirty years ago it was Bordeaux. In recent years, it's been Piedmont. But in the future, if our instincts are correct, it will be Rioja.

Rioja alone among the world's wine regions produced large quantities of great, ageworthy red wines that remain unconsumed.

And because the greatness of classic Rioja is as yet largely undiscovered, its older wines remain bargains ... much like old Barolos were 15 years ago and even old Bordeaux were 30 years ago.

A Noble Winemaking Tradition

These great Riojas are the product of a school of winemaking that flourished for a century—until the 1980s and '90s, when many producers abandoned the old ways to make more commercial wines.

A few houses did remain loyal to tradition, either wholly or in part: CUNE, Rioja Alta and Bodegas Riojanas stand out. But the producer most unbending in its devotion to tradition has been López de Heredia.

Little about López has changed in the 125 years since its founding. It occupies the same

1994 Tondonia Gran Reserva

\$79.95 bt. \$475 six pack

Neal Martin: “**96 rating** ... has an elegant bouquet with light red cherries, orange blossom, mahogany bureau and burnt buttered toast. The palate has a meaty, savory entry with crisp tannins and racy acidity. It displays superb structure towards the finish where one finds notes of bitter lemon, orange peel and sage. Delicious! Drink now-2030+”

1995 Bosconia Gran Reserva

\$79.95 bt. \$475 six pack

Neal Martin: “**94 rating** ... has an alluring leather, dried orange peel and strawberry leaf scented bouquet that blossoms beautifully in the glass. The palate is medium-bodied with very fine, elegant tannins. It is both precise and exquisitely defined with hints of cured meat and leather towards the graceful finish. Drink now-2018+”

2001 Tondonia Reserva*

\$36.50 bt. \$205 six pack

\$105.00 mag. \$21.95 half bt.

Neal Martin: “**95 rating** ... a lovely nose of decayed red fruit, fireside hearth, a touch of mulberry and small red cherry. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannins ... immense precision. There is a slight saline note lingering in the mouth after the wine has (regretfully) departed. Drink now-2030+”

historic cellars and is still owned—and every detail of its operation is handled—by the family who founded it. And they still age their greatest wines in old barrels for years.

In fact, their winemaking today is *the* textbook example of how the top bodegas made wine up until a few years ago—aging their Reservas and Grand Reservas anywhere from six years to a decade or more before selling them.

It is a method that produced wines of luxurious texture and breathtaking perfume. And because of the long time in barrel, it has also made wines capable of aging 30, 40 or 50 years with ease.

In fact, in coming months, you will have the opportunity to buy not only the great old wines of López, but those of CUNE, Riojanas and a dozen other legendary producers. These will be part of a series of unprecedented Rare Wine Co. offers.

This Offer

But there's no better place to start than with a 10-, 20-, or 30-year-old wine from López de Heredia. For these, we looked to the library of López itself, from which we've been privileged to buy directly for more than a decade.

In the new *Wine Advocate*, Neal Martin revealed his passion for López, adding to the chorus of critical praise from the likes of Asimov, Tanzer and Gilman. And so we're pleased to offer these cherries.

An Important New Voice

The Heroic 2010 Côte Rôtie of Jean-Michel Stéphan

There is no more noble *terroir* than Côte Rôtie. Since ancient times, it has produced wines that magically balance power and opulence with delicacy and nuance, marked by aromas and flavors that could come from nowhere else on earth.

Just how this singular character is expressed has as many interpretations as there are growers, but the most uniquely artisanal approach may belong to cult *vigneron* Jean-Michel Stéphan.

And his greatest Côte Rôtie to date, earning the highest ★★★★½ ★★ rating from Rhône guru John Livingstone-Learmonth, is the blindingly beautiful 2010.

Comparisons to Allemand

Comparisons to Cornas' Thierry Allemand are inevitable. They are both independent thinkers rooted in tradition, with a lust for site expression. And both make startlingly pure wines that capture the soul of their *terroirs*.

Stéphan farms his old vines without chemicals as the old timers did, works the soil by hand and favors Sérine, the ancient local clone of Syrah prized for its aromatic complexity and finesse. And he uses only neutral barrels for aging.

But there are departures from tradition designed for greater purity. He de-stems completely in most years and then ferments slowly and gently, using partial carbonic maceration without sulfur to express a "maximum of fruit, a perfection of the elements in a wine" as he told Livingstone-Learmonth.

His carbonic maceration and low sulfur use echoes Allemand's methods. But he developed them independently, influenced by the late Jules Chauvet—France's father of the natural wine movement—while studying winemaking at Belleville in Beaujolais.

Departures in 2010

In most years, Stéphan bottles his *lieux dits* separately. These are mostly in the

Côteaux de Bassenon and Côteaux de Tupin—in the Côte Blonde—with the balance from Verenay in the Côte Brune. He also bottles a *vieilles vignes* from century-old vines, with a high proportion of Sérine and Viognier.

*"The Independent
Spirit of Côte-Rôtie"
Livingstone-Learmonth
on Jean-Michel Stéphan*



But in 2010, due to losing over half his crop to rain at flowering, Stéphan married all of these great sources into one magical Côte Rotie *classique*. Only 230 cases were made, including all of the juice from the oldest, best-placed vines. To give this remarkable wine greater structure, he used utterly classic whole-cluster fermentation.

This is a profound Côte Rôtie, stunningly nuanced and exquisitely balanced, that takes its place easily alongside Rostaing and Guigal among the very few 2010s to receive 6 stars from Livingstone-Learmonth. It is also an astonishing bargain, given its raw materials, its quality and its rarity.

We've lined up a good chunk of Stéphan's tiny production which we are honored to offer. Please hurry!

2010 Jean-Michel Stéphan Côte Rôtie

★★★★★ Livingstone-Learmonth

\$59.95 bottle \$350.00 six pack

Livingstone-Learmonth: "Clear, fine red robe; has a notably peppery nose, comes with an air of fine violet, and a soft, delicate fruit, an appealing welcome, with each element knowing its place, is very precise. The palate holds curved, restrained fruit, and there is a joyous perfume of spice—I detect myrrh in with the red berry and grainy licorice. This is a 'slow down and pay attention' wine of great finesse, comes with Burgundian precision, is savoury, measured—*quell Beau Vin* it is. I have to drink this, not just taste it. One for dreamers and romantics—it is utterly lovely. Excellent balance, and lots of saintly character."

A Tuscan Icon in Four Great Vintages

“The complete vertical of Percarlo left me speechless.”

Antonio Galloni

Over the last three decades, San Giusto a Rentennano's Percarlo has proven itself one of the world's greatest expressions of pure Sangiovese outside of Montalcino, a marvel of power and intensity allied with nuance and finesse.

The secret is the Martini di Cigale family's perfectionist tending of their providential *terroir* in the Tuscan village of Monti, known by the *cognoscenti* as the source of Chianti Classico's most powerful and long-lived wines.

But Percarlo is not only great—it is also astonishingly consistent, as Antonio Galloni noted in his vertical tasting report in April.

Cases in point are four very different Percarlos from the last decade: the vibrant

2008 Percarlo*
\$69.95 bt. \$149.95 mag.



Galloni: “**96 rating**. The 2008 Percarlo is holding back serious power in reserve. A tightly wound core of fruit hits the palate as this energetic, vibrant wine shows off its taut personality. The 2008 needs time to resolve some of its inner tension, but it is strikingly beautiful just the same. Anticipated maturity: 2018-2033.”

2007 Percarlo
\$72.50



Galloni: “**96 rating** ... flows across the palate with tons of depth and richness ... There is plenty of Sangiovese nuance in this large-scaled, voluptuous wine ... the wine should drink well earlier than some of the more powerful surrounding vintages, namely 2006 and 2008. Anticipated maturity: 2015-2027.”

1999, the elegant 2001, the rich yet nuanced 2007 and the profoundly structured 2008. Each displays the power and longevity conferred by the estate's steep, south-facing hills of *galestro* soil, while expressing the unique character of the vintage.

Relentless

The key is relentless attention to quality. To maximize both site and vintage expression, yields are kept scrupulously low—only one kilogram of fruit per vine—and a cluster-by-cluster inspection.

Outside of Montalcino, pure-Sangiovese blue chips like Percarlo are rare, which only adds to its allure. We've just acquired pristine parcels of '99, '01, '07 and '08—including rare magnums of '08—that we can offer at very attractive prices while supplies last. Please hurry!

2001 Percarlo*
\$84.95



Galloni: “**94 rating** ... impresses for its length and overall sense of harmony. I am quite surprised to see just how delicate the 2001 comes across in this vertical, as I expected a bigger wine. The 2001 remains quite young, but readers should expect a more laid back style relative to the powerhouse vintages. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2021.”

1999 Percarlo*
\$79.95



Galloni: “**94+ rating** ... bristles on the palate with tons of energy. This is a medium-bodied Percarlo laced with vibrant red cherries, freshly cut flowers and spices. The 1999 still has good depth, but it is not an eternal wine, so it is far from a crime to be drinking it today. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2019.”

A New Star

Moreau-Naudet's Marvelous 2008 Chablis Valmur and Forêts

"I find Moreau to be one of the most exciting young growers in Chablis"

Allen Meadows, Burghound

Something compelling is happening in Chablis. In contrast to the industrial farming and winemaking practiced by many in the region, a handful of Chablis' most dynamic young growers are fashioning wines of startling quality and purity by embracing the natural methods of their grandparents.

A leader of this exciting movement is Stéphane Moreau, who quickly transformed his family's domaine, Moreau-Naudet, upon taking charge in 1999. He slashed yields, farms organically, hand harvests, and he ages in neutral barrels to

2008 Moreau-Naudet Chablis Forêts 30.95

Burghound: "92 rating. A beautifully layered, pure and elegant nose ... complex with dense lemon-tinged green fruit plus mineral reduction notes. The stony and saline medium weight plus flavors are blessed with ample amounts of dry extract that confer a textured mouth feel to the chiseled and cuts-like-a-knife finish that is explosive, dry and balanced. This sneaky long effort is excellent."

produce Chablis with the citrus and honey aromatics and bracing minerality that are its birthright.

The domaine boasts old vines in some of Chablis' most revered sites. These includes Forêts—the "stealth grand cru"—made famous by Vincent Dauvissat, and the perfumed, long-lived Valmur *grand cru*.

Stéphane nailed both in the classic 2008 vintage, receiving lavish praise from Allen Meadows. And we can offer them at great prices while supplies last. Hurry!

2008 Moreau-Naudet Chablis Valmur 59.95

Burghound: "94 rating ... mix of citrus, stone and iodine aromas that are followed by wonderfully rich, dense, powerful and gorgeously well-detailed flavors that ooze a fine minerality and there is plenty of Chablis character to be found on the racy and tension-filled finish that seems to go on and on. This is a brilliant effort that will require up to a decade to reach its full maturity but should be approachable, and enjoyable, after 5 to 6 years of cellar time."

... and Christian Moreau's Epic "Clos des Hospices"

2009 Christian Moreau Les Clos "Clos des Hospices" 93 Burghound 93 Tanzer**

\$69.95

Burghound: "... rich, full-bodied and serious flavors that possess excellent mid-palate density ... powerful, driving and persistent finish. This is notably bigger than the regular cuvée yet not inelegant"

Tanzer: "Denser and more savory than the 'regular' Clos, but at the same time silkier (the vines here are older) ... More bracing on the long finish"

Burghound's Allen Meadows has written that another Moreau—Domaine Christian Moreau—has joined Domaine William Fèvre as the new "leading light to add to the region's traditional stars of Raveneau and Dauvissat." That's no small praise.

In terms of vineyards, Moreau's crown jewel is its one-acre parcel at the foot of Les Clos—**Clos des Hospices**—which was acquired by the Moreau family in 1904. This parcel, owned entirely by Moreau, has slightly different soil from the rest of Les Clos, with slightly heavier marl. The vines themselves are quite old and densely planted.

We are pleased to offer this Grand Cru Chablis rarity at a seriously low price.

Vintage Champagne Treasures

Jacques Beaufort's Transcendent 1990, 1996 and 2000

“Some of the most pure, unadulterated and highly singular Champagnes readers are likely to come across.”

- Antonio Galloni on Jacques Beaufort

Among Champagne connoisseurs, 1990 and 1996 are worshipped as two of the greatest vintages of the past century. And demand for the best examples has not only driven prices skyward, it has dried up much of the supply.

The revered grower Jacques Beaufort has answered this challenge by parcelling out his remaining stocks of 1990 and 1996 a bit at a time, but at quite high prices.

With the 1996 having a suggested retail of \$200 a bottle, we don't even want to think what the 1990 is supposed to sell for. Yet, through a stroke of very good luck, we bought a parcel, just released from the domaine, at prices sharply below usual levels.

We were also able to acquire some of Beaufort's brilliant 2000 at a similarly dramatic price reduction.

With this impeccable provenance, and the bottles having enjoyed extended time



Beaufort's Champagnes are pure grand cru Ambonnay pinot.

on the lees, this is an opportunity no lover of great Champagne dare pass up.

A Grower Pioneer

All three vintages can be viewed as mileposts in a long and influential career.

Beaufort—whose domaine is André Beaufort—was among the pioneers of the *Champagne de terroir* movement, having farmed organically since the 1970s. He has also long been

known for allowing his wines to “make themselves,” revealing the glory of his *grand cru* Ambonnay sites with startling clarity.

So, these are not only great examples of these historic years. They are also remarkable wines of *terroir*, with Ambonnay's transcendent Pinot Noir on full display.

This, then, is a rare opportunity to buy iconic grower Champagnes in their full bloom of maturity at very attractive prices.

2000 André Beaufort Brut Millésimé Grand Cru

\$84.95 bottle

Galloni: “**94 rating** ... shimmers on the palate with layers of silky-textured, perfumed fruit that come to life in a gorgeous display of class ... superb clarity in a chiseled style, with a mousse that is exceptionally fine.

Overtones of mint, licorice, lemons and flowers linger on the sublime finish. This is a reference-point wine ...”

1996 André Beaufort Brut Millésimé Grand Cru

\$129.95 bottle

Galloni: “**94 rating** ... captures the best qualities of this legendary vintage. Only the wine's volume is a hint as to its age, because the aromas and flavors remain decidedly youthful. With time in the glass mint, licorice, oranges and dried apricots reluctantly make an appearance, but this is a big, structured wine that could still use another few years in bottle.”

1990 André Beaufort Brut Millésimé Grand Cru

\$165.00 bottle

Galloni: “**93 rating** ... a very pretty, harmonious wine. Made in a subtle, understated style, it reveals hushed tones of candied apricots, flowers and sweet spices, with white truffles that linger on the long, refined finish. It is a terrific effort from Beaufort”

Vins de Garde

Michel Gaunoux's 1995 & 1998 Pommard 1er Cru

Pommard, due to its unique soils and exposures, produces some of the most compelling and ageworthy wines of the Côte d'Or. Those who have tasted mature examples from Comte Armand, d'Angerville or Pousse d'Or can confirm this.

But arguably the greatest, longest-lived Pommards of all are those from a producer known today only to insiders: Domaine Michel Gaunoux. Gaunoux is one of those rare producers in the Côte d'Or that doesn't show its wines in barrel, offering only bottled wines for tasting, and are therefore rarely reviewed.

Yet, those who have been fortunate to do so, including John Gilman and Allen Meadows, rave about the "intensity and impeccable balance" and "stunningly persistent finish" of a mature Gaunoux Pommard.

Mature for these wines, however, only begins at fifteen to twenty years from the vintage. Uncompromisingly traditional in method and style, they are true *vins de garde* that age gracefully for decades, developing stunning complexity.

That the wines continue to be as brilliant and ageworthy today as in the past is due to the dedication of Jacqueline Gaunoux, who took charge upon her husband Michel's passing in 1984, and their son Alexandre, who became the wine-maker in 1990.

Their approach is the same as when Michel made the wines. The old-vine fruit is de-stemmed and fermented with the indigenous yeasts in large oak vats. Aging is in *pièce*, of which no more than 20% is new.

The results are remarkably long-lived red Burgundies that combine richness and power with elegance and breed. Cases in point are Gaunoux' 1995 and 1998 Pommard 1er Cru, a blend of old vines from Les Charmots and Les Combes.

Very complex, yet youthful and only on the threshold of maturity, these are strikingly pure Pommards that will continue to get better with age.

**1995 Michel Gaunoux
Pommard 1er Cru
92+ John Gilman
\$59.95**



John Gilman: "... a stellar example of the vintage ... a superb vintage for Alexandre and Madame Gaunoux ... a fine mélange of cherries, pomegranate, wood-smoke, game, coffee and sous bois. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure ... a great underlying expression of *terroir* on the long, focused and perfectly balanced finish. Stylistically, this reminds me of the great 1995 Roumier wines. A terrific 1995 ... Drink between 2010-2035."

1998 Michel Gaunoux Pommard 1er Cru..... \$59.95

The nose is fresh and pure with aromas of plum and violet, nuanced with earth and mineral. The entry is detailed and delicate with mineral-infused black fruit flavors and purity and concentration to burn. Has excellent potential for aging.

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