

Wine & Spirits

SPECIAL ISSUE

26th Annual
BUYING GUIDE

Best Wines Best Buys

TOP
WINERIES
OF 2012



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ROCCHIE DEI MANZONI

PIEDMONT



Rodolfo Migliorini

Founded: 1974

Winemaker:

Giuseppe Albertino

Viticulturist/owner:

Rodolfo Migliorini

Acres owned: 124

Annual production:

20,833 cases

Estate grown: 100%

Known for: Meaty, long-lived Barolos

Importer: Vignaioli Selections, NY

Website: barolobig.com

VALENTINO MIGLIORINI WAS A LEGEND IN Barolo for the winery he began in 1974. Originally a Michelin-starred restaurateur from Emilia-Romagna, he got away with doing things few other people would have tried, and revolutionized the region in the process. In 1976, reacting to the challenging vintage, he put a blend of nebbiolo and barbera in French barriques, and called it Bricco Manzoni. The result—like the recent release 2005, a elegant red packed with fat, spicy fruit structured with fine, smooth tannins—inspired a textural shift in Piedmont reds.

He was also the first to plant chardonnay, and made a spumante out of it in 1978 using the *metodo classico*. He wasn't trying to make Champagne, however: as the 2001 Brut Zero Riserva demonstrates, it's Italianate, with fresh almond notes finessing the golden apple fruit and a tight structure that suits it for the dinner table.

At the same time, he was dedicated to exploring the potential of the area's crus, and produced a variety of single-vineyard wines. Vigna d'la



Roul was his first, from the southern-facing slope in Manzoni Soprani, just outside the winery's offices in Monforte d'Alba. The 2005 is as meaty as a steak, savory rather than sweet, with tannins so rich they feel as if they are marbled with fat. Yet it also has finesse—statuesque rather than monolithic—with shape and line given by the hints of details to come.

In 2007, Migliorini passed away, leaving the estate in the hands of his 32-year-old son, Rodolfo. The two had been working side-by-side for years, and while Rodolfo has since moved the vineyards toward more sustainable farming, he's committed to maintaining the style set by his father—a style perhaps best captured in the Cappella di Santo Stefano di Perno, from a vineyard surrounding an ancient Roman chapel. The 2005 combines lush, meaty fruit and barrel tones with delicate nebbiolo scents of porcini and roses—a seamless melding of traditional and modern tastes in a wine built to last another 20 years. —T.Q.T.

**TOP-SCORING
WINES**

94

'05 Barolo Vigna Cappella di S. Stefano \$141 (12/11)

93

'01 Piemonte Metodo Classico Valentino Brut Zero Riserva \$71 (12/11)

93

'05 Barolo Vigna d'la Roul \$130 (12/11)

WINE OF THE YEAR