



BY APPOINTMENT TO  
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN  
WINE MERCHANTS  
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED  
LONDON



BY APPOINTMENT TO  
HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES  
WINE MERCHANTS  
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED  
LONDON

CORNEY &  
BARROW

INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS-1780

2014  
CONTERNO

BARBERA d'ALBA

DENOMINAZIONE DI ORIGINE CONTROLLATA

CERRETTA

2014

IMBOTTIGLIATO ALL'ORIGINE DA  
AZIENDA VITIVINICOLA  
GIACOMO CONTERNO di GIOVANNI CONTERNO  
MONFORTE D'ALBA - ITALIA

PRODOTTO IN ITALIA

CANTINA GIACOMO CONTERNO

EN PRIMEUR

# CANTINA GIACOMO CONTERNO

EN PRIMEUR

---



To find out more about Corney & Barrow visit  
[www.corneyandbarrow.com](http://www.corneyandbarrow.com)

# INTRODUCTION

---

To say that I am obsessive about the wines of Piedmont, a “Nebb-head” as our friends over the Atlantic might say, may be an understatement.

Colleagues’ eyes often seem to glaze over as I launch into another monologue, map in hand, on this region that I admire so much. What I love is that these wines are approachably delicious in youth (a point many people miss), profound with age and that they come from such a beautiful place. Every year in May or June we, a combination of Adam, Alison, Guy and myself, head over to Monforte d’Alba to see Roberto. We taste and discuss the wines both in the cellars and around the dinner table; I get excited for days beforehand. Cantina Giacomo Conterno is to Barolo what Romanée-Conti is to Burgundy or Petrus is to Pomerol, an estate at the very top of the tree that has stood the test of time and pushed the boundaries of quality. I urge, demand in the case of those customers unlucky enough to have me look after them, that you buy these wines (we’ll try not to ration you too severely). You will thank me and I am always available to help you drink them when the time comes!



WILL HARGROVE  
Head of Fine Wine  
July 2016

# BACKGROUND

---

The story of Cantina Giacomo Conterno covers four generations, each of which introduced a unique set of skills. Roberto's father Giovanni, the elder of two brothers, worked closely with his father, taking charge in 1959.

6 Strongly influenced by his father before him, he chose to follow a traditional path, producing a very classical style of Barolo, made with long ageing in mind. Aldo, his brother, was more interested in modernising Barolo and in 1969 the brothers went their separate ways, each with their own clear idea of the future of Barolo. In 1974, Giovanni spearheaded the fortuitous and courageous investment in the 14 hectare monopole of Cascina Francia, lying at 400 metres above sea level. It is a limestone/sandstone slope, facing south-west – a fabulous site but one which must have required quite an imagination. When Giovanni Conterno bought Cascina Francia it had never been planted with vines: it was a wheat field. It proved to be perfect for the Conterno style.

From the first spectacular vintage of Barolo Cascina Francia and Monfortino in 1978, the family stopped buying in grapes. It is this move that definitively put Cantina Giacomo Conterno on the map. Quality was for the first time entirely under family control from vineyard to bottle. After Giovanni's untimely death in 2004, Roberto took the helm. It can never be easy taking over from an iconic figure and Roberto descends from a line of them. The weight of history and responsibility could sit heavily on the shoulders of Roberto, yet all evidence is to the contrary. Even the tightest-lipped cynics could only admit that Roberto has taken control with extraordinarily single-minded determination, rigour and drive. Hard work allied to fanatical commitment in the vineyard and cellar have produced epic results time and again.

Having written about Cascina Francia above, it is important to detail the Cerretta holding, also in the

commune of Serralunga d'Alba. Bought in June 2008, this was the first addition to the estate since the acquisition of Cascina Francia 34 years earlier. Roberto immediately jumped at the opportunity to mould this new and quite different *terroir*. The vineyard comprises two hectares of Nebbiolo and one hectare of Barbera on a unique soil: part clay, part limestone. Roberto's first vintage, 2008, proved something of a trial, a tough year with rain in spring and summer and some hail for good measure, though nature came good in the end. Both wines from 2008 are drinking very well right now. Roberto rose to the challenge and used the experience as an essential part of gaining an understanding of this new property, the better to facilitate its individual character. Every year adds to that knowledge. Always a perfectionist, the first two vintages of "Barolo" from Cerretta – 2008 after 2 years in *botti* and 2009 after 3 years – were declassified under the label *Langhe Nebbiolo* whilst Roberto got to know the site and its vines.

Last year we announced the addition of a beautiful 9 hectare plot, Arione, next to the Cascina Francia vineyard. This south – southwest facing vineyard has always been held in high regard with wines produced there in the 1970s by Bruno Giacosa. This is a tremendous commitment to the future by the Conterno family and a major coup, advancing the family's holdings for a second time under Roberto's tenure. Roberto will, as ever, take his time to get under the skin of the new site, everything being vinified separately. There is currently 3.5 hectares of Nebbiolo, a little over 1 hectare Nebbiolo d'Alba and 1 hectare of Barbera d'Alba. We cannot wait to see what emerges. The first wines will be made from 2015 fruit but how they are to be released is yet to be confirmed.



Roberto Conterno

# THE 2014 VINTAGE

The weather in 2014 was cool and often wet, especially at the height of summer, but September and October were warm and sunny.

As Roberto says “the last 3 to 4 weeks before picking are always the most important”. Having this weather at the end of the growing season was crucial to perfect ripening. The Barbera was picked rather late, on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of October. Normally the Barbera harvest is at the end of September. The Nebbiolo ended up being picked between the 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of October. The 2014 Barbera, besides showing good fruit and acidity, which is typical for Barbera, is built on a firm tannic structure. Roberto feels the Barbera 2014s do not demand so much time before you can enjoy them. Even just a couple of months from bottling, the wines are already drinking well.

8



## BARBERA D'ALBA FRANCIA 2014

Full crimson colour to the edge, deep at the core. Rich and full dark cherry nose with stones, minerality and a saline edge which is not quite as marked. Very good nose, all round balance. The tannins are delicious and moreish. This is a brooding wine but not a heavy one, the fruit lifts on the finish to an almost cranberry freshness. I wonder how Roberto does this every year.

Corney & Barrow Score 17,5 to 18  
Recommended drinking from 2018 - 2024+

£325/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK  
£345/case of 6 magnums, in bond UK

## BARBERA D'ALBA CERRETTA 2014

Lighter in colour than the Francia but very similar. The nose is more lifted, more obviously fruity, more opulent maybe. Wines coming from Cerretta are characterized by a forward fruit and sweetness in the front of the mouth. The fruit character is redder, strawberry and raspberry, but actually deeper than either of those fruits suggest. The palate has a tang to it with moreish tannins. This has more approachability and lift than the more savoury Francia.

9

Corney & Barrow Score 17,5+  
Recommended drinking from 2017 - 2022+

£325/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

### TASTING GUIDE

Our tasting notes provide full details but, at your request, we have also introduced a clear and simple marking system. We hope these guidelines assist you in your selection.

Wines are scored out of 20. Customers seem to like it and it has the benefit of simplicity.

We will often use a range of scores (eg 16,5 to 17) to indicate the potential to achieve a higher mark. When a '+' is shown it adds further to that potential. Wines from lesser vintages will, inevitably, show a lower overall score.

Wines are judged, in a very broad sense, against their peers. Why? Well, you cannot easily compare a Ford with an Aston Martin, other than they are both cars and have wheels. It is not that different with wine.

A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes and, as always, speak to our sales team.



# THE 2012 VINTAGE

2012 was a very regular vintage in terms of climate.

Where 2011 was characterized by bolder fruit, 2012 is a very elegant vintage for Barolo. The wine has a firm tannic structure, but the tannins are very silky and soft. Elegance is the key word. Nebbiolo grapes were picked on the 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> of October, which is in line with the regular picking time.



## BAROLO FRANCIA 2012

There will be no Monfortino from the 2012 vintage (as was the case in 2011) so the “Monfortino *botti*” was blended into Francia in January this year. Lovely bright and complex colour. Ever so slightly muted just now but a lovely red fruited sweetness comes through behind, very fine. Tobacco leaf and tea then appear, with a little leather. The palate is fruity but with good, proper tannins. Mellow but persistent. The overriding impression is of a wine in balance with gentle fruit and a lovely complexity of silky tannins. Very good indeed.

Corney & Barrow Score 18 to 18.5+  
Recommended drinking from 2020 - 2035+

£695/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK  
£260/case of 1 magnum, in bond UK  
£560/case of 1 double magnum, in bond UK

## BAROLO CERRETTA 2012

2012 is the third vintage of Barolo coming from the vineyard Cerretta. This vineyard sits on clay soil. The first two vintages, 2008 and 2009, were declassified into Langhe Nebbiolo. Paler in colour, but only just, more obviously fruited and lifted with strawberry leaf this is easier to understand for the uninitiated. The texture is lush the fruit is more pronounced and therefore the tannins less obvious. There is a real freshness and a certain rich elegance. It is quite a wine, a perfect foil to the classicism of the Francia.

Corney & Barrow Score 18+  
Recommended drinking from 2019 - 2030

£695/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK  
£260/case of 1 magnum, in bond UK  
£560/case of 1 double magnum, in bond UK

### TO ORDER

Please call

020 7265 2430 (London)

or

01875 321 921 (Edinburgh)

Please email

[sales@corneyandbarrow.com](mailto:sales@corneyandbarrow.com)

Please note: these wines are released *en primeur*. Delivery dates to be confirmed. All prices are quoted in bond UK.



## Monfortino – What is it? What is next?

I am often asked how Roberto decides whether there will be a Monfortino in a given year and where the wine comes from. Monfortino is a selection from the Cascina Francia vineyard based on the absolute quality of the fruit. It is not a specific site though there is of course significant crossover from one Monfortino to another in terms of the area used. There is always an initial intention to make a Monfortino. The large barrels (*botti* as they are called) that are selected to be “Monfortino”, are tasted over time. If they are significantly high in quality and, importantly, significantly different in character from the Barolo Francia then a Riserva Monfortino will be bottled. The ageing for Monfortino is 5-7 years, in other words 1-3 years longer than for Barolo Francia. If Monfortino is not to be made separately then it is blended in with the Barolo 6 months to a year before it is bottled. Recent vintages in which Monfortino was not made were 2012, 2011, 2009, 2007 and 2003. The only time, to date, when there has been a Monfortino and no Barolo Francia was the 2002 vintage, a very small vintage but one where, against the odds, the quality was superb. The next Monfortino to be released will be the 2010, this time next year. Arguably the most eagerly awaited release ever from the region, it is a wine I have tasted several times from *botti* and which lives up to all the hype that surrounds it.



# WHEN, HOW AND WHAT TO DRINK NOW?

**Barberas** In most vintages the Barbera wines show best at 4-8 years of age. They become more savoury over time and continue to age (a recent 2001 with Roberto was superb) but, as you would expect, have a less defined character. The 2009, 2010 and 2011 vintages are very good now. As these are unfiltered and Barbera is a thicker skinned grape variety, I would recommend decanting 15-30 minutes before serving.

**Barolos** The warmer years drink very well when younger and served a shade cooler (14-15 degrees). The vintages in this bracket are 2003, 2007, 2009 and 2011. These will all improve but are ready to drink. I recommend continuing to cellar the 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010 vintages. Those wines from 2001 and before are ready to drink, though 2001 and 1999 are still youthful and evolving gracefully. Sediment is less of an issue than with Barbera so I would either

allow the wine to breathe standing up with half a glass removed or decant gently before serving. I far prefer the wine to evolve in the glass so, personally, do not advocate extended decanting, though some people do.

**Barolo Riserva Monfortino** Monfortino is a wine with a vast drinking window, one of the most long-lived of all wines. The youngest vintages that I feel are drinking well now are 1997 and 1998. I would never put someone off drinking a younger vintage as the enjoyment of watching a wine develop bottle by bottle from youth to full maturity is one of the real joys of wine. Younger vintages will require more time in decanter. I recommend 1-2 hours. I would decant mature vintages but, as with the Barolos above, not for extended time so the wine can evolve in glass.

## A word on corks

When the topic of corks arises with Roberto, there is always something new to discuss. He just does not accept that corks should be less than perfect. In fact, one of his favourite phrases is “with my wines you are not opening a bottle of Barbera or Barolo or Monfortino you are opening a bottle of CONTERNO”. It is a point made with no wink or half smile, it is heartfelt. The corks are of the same standard in all the wines. More and more of the great producers say “you don’t ever negotiate prices with cork suppliers; you get what you pay for”.

All these corks are inspected mechanically with a view to answering two questions.

### QUESTION 1)

Is the cork good enough? If yes, then on to question 2, if not the bin.

### QUESTION 2)

Which is the better end? The vintage is then laser etched on the “lesser” end so the perfect end faces the wine with no etching having been added. Rarely have the words ‘perfectionist’ and ‘fanatical’ been so apt.

# CONTACT US

## LONDON

1 Thomas More Street  
London E1W 1YZ  
T +44 (0)20 7265 2400  
F +44 (0)20 7265 2444  
sales@corneyandbarrow.com

## EAST ANGLIA

Belvoir House  
High Street, Newmarket  
Suffolk CB8 8DH  
T +44 (0)1638 600 000  
F +44 (0)1638 600 860  
newmarket@corneyandbarrow.com

## NORTH OF ENGLAND

Sedbury Stables  
Sedbury Hall, Richmond  
North Yorkshire DL10 5LQ  
T +44 (0)1748 828 640  
F +44 (0)1748 821 928  
sedburyorders@corneyandbarrow.com

## EDINBURGH

Oxenfoord Castle by Pathhead  
Midlothian  
Scotland EH37 5UB  
T +44 (0)1875 321 921  
F +44 (0)1875 321 922  
edinburgh@corneyandbarrow.com

## AYR

8 Academy Street, Ayr  
Ayrshire, Scotland KA7 1HT  
T +44 (0)1292 267 000  
T +44 (0)1292 265 903  
ayr@corneyandbarrow.com

## TWITTER

@corneyandbarrow

## FACEBOOK

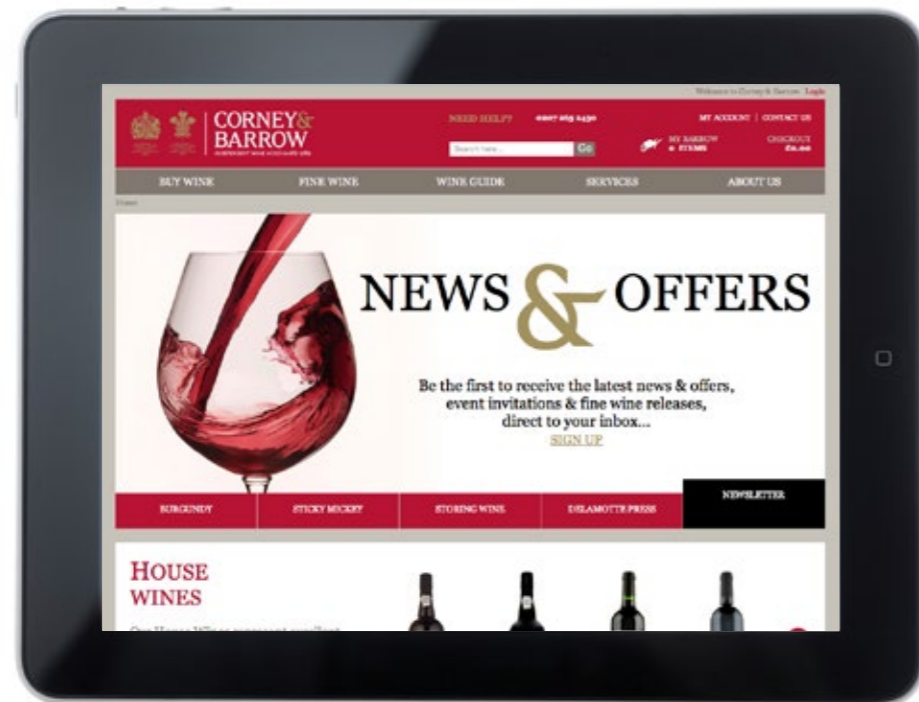
Corney and Barrow

## INSTAGRAM

@corneyandbarrow



**CORNEY &  
BARROW**  
INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS-1780



www.corneyandbarrow.com

