



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



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HIS MAJESTY THE PRINCE OF WALES
WINE MERCHANTS
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CORNEY &
BARROW

INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS-1780



CANTINA GIACOMO CONTERNO

THE 2018 RELEASES



“2014 was one of the rainiest years with one of the coldest summers ever. But then we had the fantastic weather conditions in September and October, the heart of an optimal growing season. The result was a more than excellent vintage.”

ROBERTO CONTERNO

CONTERNO

I have seen the “challenge” of this year’s Giacomo Conterno offer coming for some time. This small offer, in both number of wines and quantity of those wines, is a result of Roberto’s total unwillingness to be anything other than a perfectionist. It is the “All Blacks” mentality I spoke of in last year’s offer.

Those who know the intricacies of this great estate and the Piedmont region will know what I am alluding to. For the less obsessed, let me explain. Currently a “full” offering from this estate would be five wines: two Barberas, Cerretta and Francia, two Barolos, again Cerretta and Francia and then a Monfortino Riserva. This would always span three vintages, as the Barberas are released after two years, the Barolos after four years and Roberto tends to release Monfortino after six or seven years. Roberto just focusses on the best wines he can produce and that means there are no hard and fast rules, no range to keep going, no boxes to tick. To this end we have an offer this year of just three wines: Barbera Cerretta, Barbera Francia and Barolo Cerretta. This is because, as mentioned last year and profiled at the end of the offer, there will be no Barolo Francia 2014. It will all make it into Monfortino. There was no Monfortino 2011 nor 2012 made either, as those were released as Barolo Francia back in 2015 and 2016. Got it?

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This therefore is an offer for the aficionado. I have often said that in many ways the Barberas deserve their own focus and I am sure that they would be heralded as “stand alone stars” were it not for their more blue blooded Barolo brothers. Barolo Cerretta is brilliant in its own right, this being the 7th vintage of Cerretta under Roberto.

I want to take this chance to update you on two other developments. Arione, the vineyard abutting Francia, bought by Roberto back in early 2015, is coming along very well - I can tell just how excited Roberto is. The recent tasting Adam and I did back in May of the Arione 2015s was superb. See the Arione vineyard on the photograph on pages 16 & 17.

Secondly, and possibly most exciting of all, is that Roberto has acquired the Nervi Estate in Gattinara up in Alto Piemonte. Adam and I have visited and I have known the wines for a little while. This is going to be a very exciting journey and we look forward to making our first offer this Autumn. When Antonio Galloni says “For Gattinara, the arrival of the most prestigious producer in Italy is clearly a huge positive,” he is not wrong!

William Hargrove

WILL HARGROVE
Head of Fine Wine
Autumn 2018



Roberto Conterno





THE WINES

THE 2016 BARBERA

The 2016 vintage sits right in the middle of a very good trio of Barbera vintages - 2015, 2016 & 2017. What defines a great Barbera vintage is a dry and warm season. I have often tried to suggest to Roberto that Barbera must have been planted historically as something of a “hedge” against Nebbiolo, being picked sometimes as much as a month before. Roberto always politely refutes this - both can be successful in the same vintage. It is a situation more analogous with Merlot and Cabernet in Bordeaux therefore. The precision, effort and consideration that goes into the Barberas is exactly the same as the Barolos.

BARBERA CERRETTA

2016

From one hectare of 23 year old vines. Vigorous arterial colour, a dash of purple. Precise with a nose of cherry fruit, dark cherries but with a lively cranberry and rhubarb acidity. Delicious texture, rich but in no way heavy. Superb balance and always a joy to taste. Sadly small in quantity!

Corney & Barrow Score 17 – 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2020 – 2027

£450/Case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

BARBERA FRANCIA

2016

From 42 year old vines. Bold colour, a shade darker than the Cerretta. Textbook saline edge, a signature of the Francia vineyard. Good density, more texture, it is a lazy analogy but this is an older brother to the Cerretta's more feminine tones. A serious wine and one that is all about the texture.

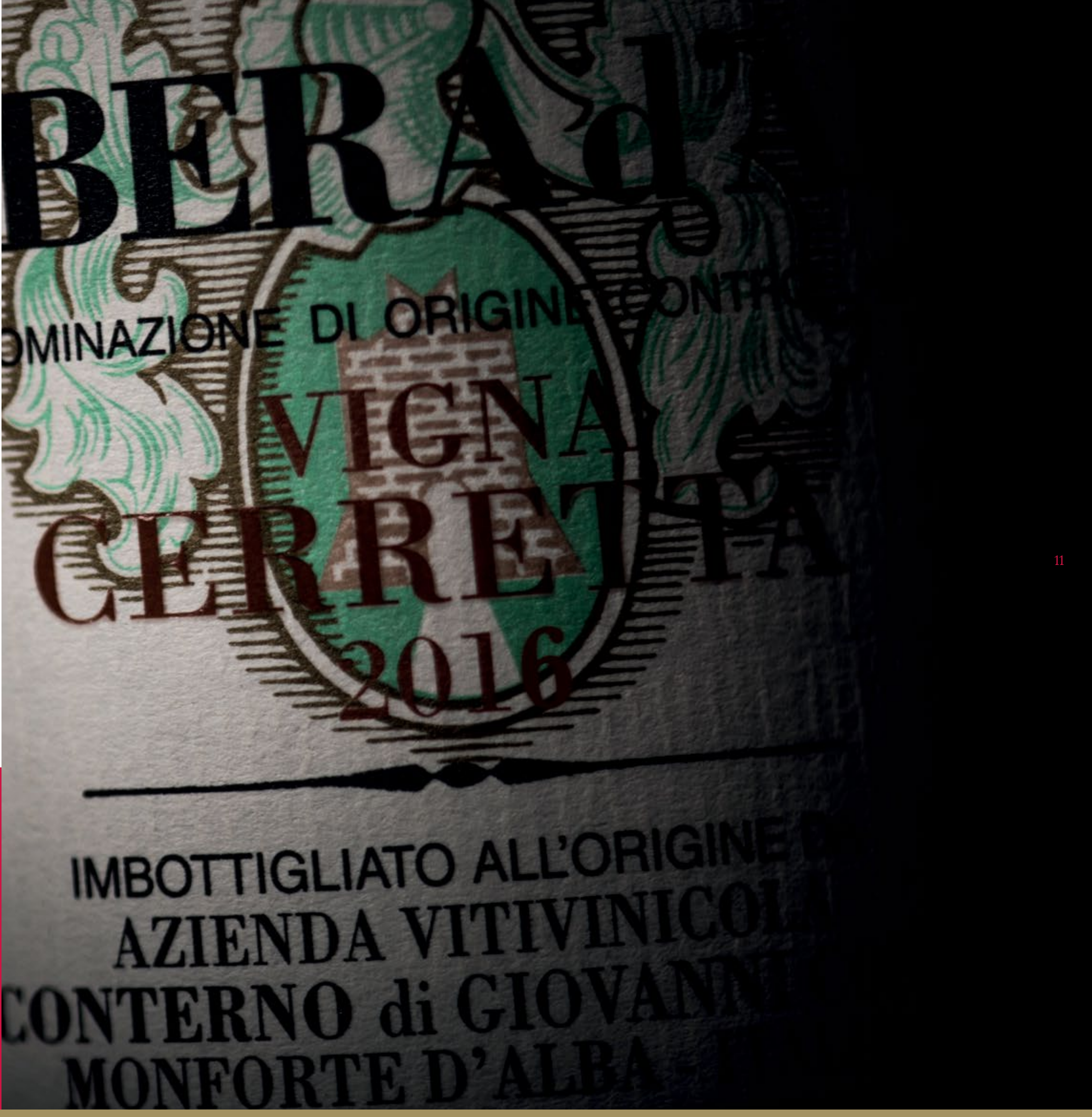
Corney & Barrow Score 18
Recommended drinking from 2021 – 2028+

£450/Case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£485/Case of 6 magnums, 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. For the benefit of simplicity, wines are scored out of 20. We will often use a range of scores (e.g. 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 WINES

THE 2014 BAROLO CERRETTA

“Not easy” might be a good summary. A rather grey, cool summer with rather more rain than might be described as optimal. Disease pressure was high throughout the summer, meaning more and more work. And then...the weather turned dry, warm and sunny in September and October. All the vineyard work that Roberto and his team had done meant they were in prime position to take advantage of this change in fortune. The estate picked their Nebbiolo between 25th and 27th of October in good conditions.

In the cellars there was one major change for 2014 which will not only have helped refine the Cerretta quality but also the decision for there to be just Monfortino (though in reality this is only decided by tasting). This is a new state of the art destemmer. Roberto is always exploring ways to refine and perfect the winemaking by having the best equipment in order to do things correctly first time and have the precision to allow the vineyards' characters to come through. The sadness though is that there are only 4,000 bottles (or equivalent) of this wine to go around.

BAROLO CERRETTA

2014

Cherry and strawberry fruits, lifted and red. This is terrific, all about elegance with a lovely hint of white pepper in the structure. Poise and balance but with a vivaciousness. The drinking window here is vast, as the refinement means the wine will be ready for early opening but will certainly go through a long and evolving maturity.

Corney & Barrow Score 18
Recommended drinking from 2020 – 2034+

£925/Case of 6 bottles, in bond UK
£350/Case of 1 magnum, in bond UK





16

Looking across at Arione with the Francia vineyard in the top left



MONFORTINO

17

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 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 oak cask/s (*botti* as they are called) which are selected to be “Monfortino”, are tasted over time. If they are sufficiently high in quality and, importantly, sufficiently different in character from the Barolo Francia, then a Riserva Monfortino will be “declared”.

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 bottled separately, it is blended with the Barolo Francia 6 months to a year before it is bottled.

Recent vintages in which Monfortino was not made were 2012, 2011, 2009, 2007 and 2003. So far 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. This will also be the case in 2013 and 2014. For 2015, it looks as though there will be both a Barolo Francia (released next year) and a Monfortino for later release.



WHEN, HOW & WHAT TO DRINK NOW?

This is not me telling you what to do, it is my refined view on how you might approach drinking these wonderful wines.

BARBERA

In most vintages the Barbera wines show best at 3-7 years of age. They become more savoury over time and continue to age (a 2001 with Roberto was superb) but, as you would expect, have a less defined character and energy. The 2011, 2012 and 2013 vintages are very good now. As these are unfiltered and Barbera is a thick-skinned grape variety, I would recommend standing the wines up for a few hours and decanting 15-30 minutes before serving. The perfect wine to have at home for when you just want something delicious without breaking the bank and knowing you'll get a great wine.

BAROLO

The warmer vintages drink very well when younger and served a shade cooler (13-14 degrees). The recent 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. The wines from 2001 and before are ready to drink, though 2001 and 1999 continue to be youthful and are 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 (i.e. drunk!) or decant gently before serving. I far prefer the wine to warm gently and develop aromas in the glass so I, personally, do not advocate extended decanting, although some people do.

BAROLO RISERVA MONFORTINO

This 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 the decanter.

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