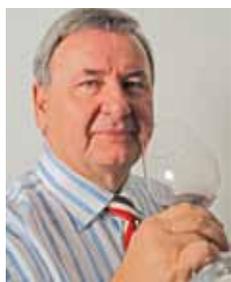


# nebbiolo

## IS BAROLO AND BARBARESCO



I am often asked about the Italian grape variety known as Nebbiolo. For the novice this is a red grape variety grown in the Piedmonte region of North West Italy. It is the variety used to make the highly regarded Barolo and Barbaresco wines, named after the villages of their origin. Nebbiolo thrives in these two villages producing

majestic Italian DOCG wines coming from two appellations barely 20 kms apart. Barolos and Barbaresco must have 100% Nebbiolo to get the DOCG appellation.

I was recently in both Barolo and Barbaresco as a guest of the Italian Government Tourist Office where I was invited to taste the best Nebbiolos in the world including those of Negro, Fontanafredda and many more such as Conterno, Bruno Giacosa, Bruno Rocca, Luciano Sandrone, La Spinetta and Voerzio. Not only are the Barbaresco's and Barolo's excellent but the Barbera's and Dolcetto's are great too. It is worthwhile noting that Barbera is a red Italian wine grape variety that, as of 2000, was the third most-planted red grape variety in Italy (after Sangiovese and Montepulciano).

Whilst in Piedmonte I stayed at probably the most beautiful Villa in all of Piedmonte with a view to take your breath away. Situated in Montforte D'Alba the villa is Agriturismo La Torricella ([www.latorricella.eu](http://www.latorricella.eu)) and almost overlooks the whole of Piedmonte wine regions.

Nebbiolo makes wine with a distinct brownish colour and is sometimes off-putting for the new comer to Nebbiolo. They are usually long lived and often reward cellaring for a decade or so and in some ways Nebbiolo wines resemble Pinot Noirs in the way that they age into wines with soft rich tannins. The wines have rich flavours with a nose most often described as 'tar and roses'. Some other flavours and aromas to look for are spicy, chocolate, leathery and earthy flavours or think of a forest floor. Nebbiolo has the reputation of being a difficult grape to grow. It is a variety that needs to be matched closely with the appropriate microclimate.

Barolo is produced in the heart of the Langhe hills in 11 different municipalities/towns, the more important being Barolo, La Morra, Serralunga



d'Alba and Monforte d'Alba. Other comunes included are Roddi, Cherasco and Diano d'Alba. Barbaresco, on the other hand, also consists of Neive, Treiso and a very small proportion in Alba. Neive produces more DOCG Barbaresco than the town of Barbaresco. Interestingly, as in Burgundy, the terroir is quite different in different vineyards giving wines a different character from different sub-vineyards.

Giovanni Negro, owner of Negro estate in Roero ([www.negroangelo.it](http://www.negroangelo.it)), and the President of the local wine promotional group in Roero, explained the need to respect the village names for appellation purposes. Likewise, Ornella Gallo, the Export Manager at Fontanafredda ([www.fontanafredda.it](http://www.fontanafredda.it)) explained that for quality purposes cork was a requirement for their premium Serralunga d'Alba wines.

In Australia this variety, like many other Italian wine varieties, is attracting some interest. Those growers and winemakers who have persisted have been rewarded with some excellent Australian Nebbiolo wines. There have been some excellent Award winning Australian Nebbiolo wines at the Alternative Varieties Wine Show (AAVWS) but two wines that may be worthwhile hunting down are 2006 Belebula Nebbiolo and the 2008 Brokenwood Nebbiolo.

*Greg Bondar*

Food and Wine Editor

## FEATURED WINES



**2006 Belebula Nebbiolo** from a boutique winery which has a medium brick red colour, typical of the variety, and an aroma of tar and rose petals. The palate is firm with slightly astringent tannins that will soften over the next 3-4 years. Belebula Vineyard, planted in 1999, is located on Old North Road in Pokolbin or visit [www.pokolbinestate.com.au](http://www.pokolbinestate.com.au).

**2008 Brokenwood Nebbiolo** from Beechworth. Again the widely accepted, if a little romantic expression for Nebbiolo is 'tar and roses' - an interesting mix of earthy tar and lifted florals. This 2008 has a mid density colour with some purple tints on the edges. Like Pinot Noir, depth of flavour is quite separate to colour. Good mouth filling, savoury palate. Sweet red cherry fruit and briar wood characters. Sufficient balance and length as often the drying tannins can dominate. Visit [www.brokenwood.com.au](http://www.brokenwood.com.au).



# roberts

## RESTAURANT – A GASTRONOMIC EXPERIENCE

Set in Australia's Hunter Valley, Roberts Restaurant is the perfect choice when seeking out the best that the Hunter Valley has to offer in fine food and wine. Here is the opportunity to combine a unique dining experience with a wine tasting at the renowned Tower Estate or, if preferred also take up the accommodation package at Tower Lodge. The National Heritage Pepper Tree Cottage dated 1876, filled with Australian and European antiques, can accommodate a small party of up to 14 guests.

Without a doubt this is Australian food at its best! Roberts Restaurant is the perfect choice when seeking out the best that the Hunter Valley has to offer in fine food and wine. Robert Restaurant at Tower Estate is the Hunter Valley's most celebrated restaurant with both rave reviews and prestigious awards. The food is prepared by Head Chef, Daniel Hunt.

The cuisine is European and modern Australian and only the finest, freshest and highest quality produce is served in Roberts Restaurant which is located amongst the vineyards. The meals are lovingly cooked, simply presented and professionally served at Roberts Restaurant which serves Australian contemporary cuisine, using the freshest of Australian produce and complemented by a thoughtfully selected wine list of Australian and international vintages. Though the menu changes seasonally including new and innovative recipes, they delight in featuring:

- Sashimi Yellow Fin Tuna
- Gorgonzola Stuffed Potato Gnocchi
- Atlantic Sea Scallops

There is also an eight course degustation menu available on request. Degustation Menus are a great way to taste cross sections of Roberts Restaurants delightful dishes but please phone ahead to organise Degustation menu (02) 4998 7330. At Roberts Restaurant they also take pride and pleasure in ensuring that your wedding day runs perfectly,

and that you and your guests will savour the day with wonderful memories. The Chapel is for true romantics, ideal for groups of between 20 and 45 people. Originally built in 1888, this Welsh Baptist Chapel has been lovingly restored. Although not consecrated or intended for wedding ceremonies, it is often used as the venue for a beautiful wedding breakfast. Fully equipped, air-conditioned and separated from the Restaurant by rows of vines, the Chapel is surrounded by beautiful gardens, with a spacious open area ideal for pre-dinner drinks and canapes.

**Roberts Restaurant is located on Halls Road**

**Phone: (02) 4998 7330**

**Website: <http://roberts.wakefield.net.au/>  
or [www.towerestate.com](http://www.towerestate.com)**

**Open for Lunch Thursday – Sunday.**

**Open for Dinner 7 days.**

*Greg Bondar*

Food and Wine Editor

