



Maria Cristina Oddero

(Serralunga d'Alba).

Since taking the helm, Maria Cristina has been making small changes in the vineyards as well as in the maceration and aging of the Barolos. Overall, there is a move toward organic viticulture. The maceration times for the top cuvées—Brunate, Bussia Soprana, Vigna Monduca and Vigna Rionda—have been reduced by about a week, and they employ more submerged cap than pump-overs for gentler extraction. Only older oak is used, both barriques and 2,500- to 10,500-liter casks of Slovenian and Austrian origin.

These efforts have taken the Barolos to new qualitative heights since the excellent 2010 vintage. The textures are suppler without sacrificing the wines' complexity or longevity. Prices are reasonable given the quality. —B.S.

Oddero Barolo Bussia Vigna Monduca Riserva 2013 | **\$5** | **\$110** | 150 cases made

This comes from a single plot in the Monduca vineyard (Bussia MSA). A minimum of four years in oak lends savory aromas of leather, mushroom and spice to the cherry flavors.

Oddero Barolo Brunate 2012 | **\$2** | **\$125** | 180 cases made

The homogeneous south-to-southeast exposure of this vineyard allows Nebbiolo to ripen well in most vintages, lending richness and ripe fruit to the wine. Supported by dense tannins.

Oddero Barolo Rocche di Castiglione 2012 | **\$2** | **\$79** | 40 cases made

The most refined and perfumed of the Oddero lineup, Licorice, cherry, leather and spice flavors show density, richness, complexity and length.

Oddero Barolo Vileas 2012 | **\$2** | **\$75** | 500 cases made

Generally more structured than the Rocche, and often austere in its youth, this 2012 is linear and firm, with savory notes of fresh herbs, tobacco and dried cherry.

Oddero Barolo 2012 | **\$5** | **\$42** | 4,000 cases made

The basic Barolo is a blend of Nebbiolo from Brico Chiesa around the winery, Capaiot, also in La Morra, and Brico Flasco from Castiglione Falletta. Rose, cherry, licorice and spice flavors are matched by an elegant yet structured profile.

Tabarrini

A Passion for Sagrantino

A hilltop town in Umbria, smack in the middle of Italy, is the source of Montefalco Sagrantino, the best Italian red you've never heard of. And while other producers are the more visible faces of Montefalco, the vivacious Giampaolo Tabarrini is its heart.

Owner and winemaker Tabarrini transitioned his family's 54-acre estate in the mid-1990s, ending sales of the winery's grapes and bulk wine to bottle his own. The area's distinctive indigenous grape, Sagrantino, had experienced a revival, thanks largely to the efforts of local producer Marco Caprai of Arnaldo Caprai. In 1992 the Montefalco Sagrantino appellation (then labeled as Sagrantino di Montefalco) achieved DOCG status.

Tabarrini set to work exploring the potential of the grape and his family estate, improving vineyard management of the

vigorous Sagrantino vines and starting construction of a new winery in 2000 (completed in 2004).

In 2002, Tabarrini made a radical decision: He would bottle single-vineyard Sagrantino. Tabarrini was the first in the area to do so, and it's still a rarity today. In the past, Tabarrini vinified each vineyard separately and then blended them into one wine. But he became increasingly convinced that the soil, altitude and exposure of the particular sites resulted in dramatically different expressions, each of which warranted its own aging regimen and appreciation.

Tabarrini runs the property with his wife, Federica, and a small team, including consulting enologist Emiliano Fubini, whose technical know-how allows Tabarrini's ideas to take shape.

In addition to the three single-vineyard bottlings—Colle Grimaldesco, Campo alla Corqua and Colle alle Macchie—the winery exports three wines to the United States: a Sangiovese-based Montefalco, the white Adamando from Trebbiano Spoletino and a dessert wine from Sagrantino, the Passito. —A.N.

Tabarrini Montefalco Sagrantino Colle alle Macchie 2011 | **\$4** | **\$79** | 250 cases made

The most muscular of the single-vineyard wines, with a dense core of minerality from the clay- and limestone-based terroir.

Tabarrini Montefalco Sagrantino Campo alla Corqua 2011 | **\$2** | **\$80** | 150 cases made

An elegant version, with sculpted tannins and a sanguine edge to the ripe fruit and savory herb flavors. Sourced from soil with abundant river stones and pebbles.

Tabarrini Montefalco Sagrantino Colle Grimaldesco 2011 | **\$2** | **\$45** | 1,150 cases made

A rich and burly red from the oldest vineyard, which marries clay, silt, sand and stone. Abundantly aromatic.

Tabarrini Montefalco 2012 | **\$0** | **\$29** | 1,990 cases made

A juicy red blend of Sangiovese, with Sagrantino and Barbera, this shows well-spiced black cherry, tar and herb notes.

Tabarrini Umbria White Adamando 2014 | **\$0** | **\$29** | 750 cases made

Rich glazed nectarine and lemon parfait notes are brightened by snappy acidity in this creamy white made entirely from the local Trebbiano Spoletino grape.