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More tasty Rose to beat the heat, and a rare Barolo closeout on Sandrone!

About a month ago we brought you a great Rose from Northern Italy. As the weather started to warm up I got several inquiries for more. Unfortunately that great inventory reduction price we were offered was no longer available. I started looking for alternatives and was surprised to see that even in this tough economy Rose prices have been going up (sometimes dramatically). I guess that as these wines are getting their due recognition the demand is resulting in increased prices. I was thrilled to find one of our favorite selections Forte Canto -a wine we have offered in years past. The distributor loaded up and was offering a major price concession. Keeping a tight control on margins I managed to keep the price at the same level as last year's special offer. If you haven't stocked up on your Rose for the summer here is another chance.

Here is a recap of what I wrote on Rose and the Forte Canto in May of 2008 (at the time we featured the 2006 and of course since freshness in Rose is key, we are now offering the new excellent 2007):

NFTC May 2008: "This is the time of year when at my house we start bringing out the Rose - and if at this point you are about to quite reading, you may be missing out on some of the most food friendly refreshing wines on the planet.

Unfortunately most Americans first experience with rose was with some nasty sweet cheap junk.

Spend time soaking up a sunny afternoon on the Mediterranean coast, from a local sea food

restaurant in the Harbor of Barcelona, to a swanky cafe watching strarlet wanna be on the French Riviera and more often than not, the bottle in the ice chiller will be a nice cool Rose. The locals know something...

I try to feature a few nice roses over the summer months - Since this is the first one of the season, I will elaborate a bit on this type of wine. First a word on price. Rose is great value wine; uncomplicated, tasty, refreshing and inexpensive - wine for quaffing not meditation. There are a few notable exceptions mostly from Bandol and Tavel which tend to be more complex; yes they are great to pair with very special dishes but these are a topic for another day.

Some new world wineries especially in the US have tried to capitalize on the success that Rose is enjoying here in the US by introducing their own versions - Unfortunately the more is better theory fails miserably when it comes to the pink juice -to date, I

have tasted countless over extracted \$35 -40 American Rose that frankly I wouldn't drink if they were offered to me for free. Big overpowered mess.

Look for Rose from places they have been a staple for generations -the Mediterranean countries and some South American ones. Expect to pay from low to high teens for an excellent bottle.

The Challenge: Like most good wine the secret is in the balance. A good rose will walk that fine

line between crisp refreshing fruit flavors yet retain a certain dryness that makes it so diverse with food. The worse are the over fruity ones; they will taste cloying and sweet, At the other end of the spectrum are the ones that can be so dry or sour that they can make you mouth hurt. The other element that is paramount is the right amount of acidity -If it's balanced it will be counteracted by the fruit in the wine -something thats not going to jump out front but will be there and help pair the wine so nicely with bold flavors such as grilled meats and veggies. Try it with fish, or salads . Marinated veggies, even olives or cured meats and salami. It's that diversity that makes roses some of my favorite picnic wines or afternoon sipping when the weather heats up.

A quick word about color -they range from yellow copper to pink and even red

-Interestingly the

color has no relation to the taste or how heavy the wine appears (color is mostly determined by

the grape variety and the amount of skin contact during the wine making). To show off the

wonderful color Roses are mostly packaged in clear bottles, so it's important to store them in a dark cool place. These are not wines to age - drink them young to enjoy the bright fruit."

\$\$\$ Today's Wine Deal \$\$\$

FORTE CANTO Negroamaro **Rosado- Puglia Italy**

2007 \$12.60/bottle, (save more with 5% cash discount \$12.00/Bottle).

Case price: \$136.50/12 bot.

Our best deal: 130.00/12 bot. (with cash discount)

-that's only \$10.83/bot. !

The Deal: At the regular price of \$ 15-16 this is unquestionably one of the finest Rose values in

the marketplace. This is an artisan wine made in small quantities which we discovered several

years ago -imported by our friends at Small Vineyards we have drunk and sold tons of this every summer . Walk into your average wine store and they never even heard of this stuff. So we got an opportunity to purchase remaining stock at a very attractive discount. I wanted to start the official BBQ season with a special deal. We kept margins super tight and are passing the deal to you just in time for summer. I often pour this at wine tastings to folks who never had a good rose -this is a big crowd pleaser
The Wine:is made from the dark and spicy Negroamoro grape in the very Southern East end of Italy (the heel of the boot) the result, a very dark colored and very flavorful wine. This is as big a profile you want in a rose without going overboard. Because of the rich mouth feel, this is the one I usually recommend to even die hard red wine drinkers. There is good underlying acidity here to work well with most summer party food., Not sweet, just ripe red fruit balanced with a slight dryness and hint of spice. A favorite on my front porch I particularly enjoy this served nice and cold with a Cesar salad heavy on the Anchovies and Parmesan topped with a freshly grilled chicken breast Yumm...

Collector's corner :

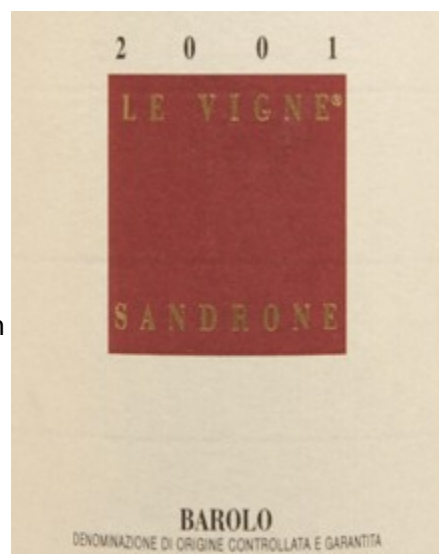
**LUCIANO SANDRONE Barolo le Vigne 2003 \$83/bot.
or just \$79 (with your cash discount)**

also avilable :

**LUCIANO SANDRONE Barolo Cannubi 2003 \$94/bot
or just \$89 (with your cash discount)**

(note image from 2001 vintage)

Overall 2003 will not go down in history as one of Piedmont best vintages. The heat & dryness cased many wines to have roasted flavors. By the time these wines were maturing word was already out on the exceptionally great vintage of 2004. Yet a handful of wine makers such as Rocche Dei Manzoni with their Rocche and Conterno with his excellent Cascina Francia -hit the bulls eye. Draconian selection and talented cellar management resulted in beautiful wines that will offer pleasurable drinking early, while you age wines such as the 2004's, which after all will require 20 + years to show their finest. Another classic Barolo produced in 2003 came from one of Italy's most Iconic wine figures: Maestro Luciano Sandrone -his 2003 Le Vigne has garnered the same great ratings as his exceptional classic



2001.

Due to the just "Good vintage " in 2003 vs the following great vintage stigma I had a feeling that patience will be rewarded with some potential discounting. Indeed we were offered a small stash at an unheard of price. Quantities were so limited that I was reluctant to offer it here but, we just got notification of an additional small stash - at this price I would act quickly.

From Antonio Galonni writing in **The Wine Advocate** :

"Luciano Sandrone is one of the leading lights in Piedmont. No grower has managed to so brilliantly reconcile modern and traditional approaches in making wines that are soft, supple and approachable when young, but also capable of aging beautifully. I have been following Sandrone's 2003 Barolos since just after the harvest. Over the last few years they have developed remarkably, and today are among the most successful Barolos of the vintage, particularly for the softness of their tannins, something which few producers were able to achieve. Both the Cannubi Boschis and Le Vigne were perfectly fresh and intact when I re-tasted them after 48 hours had passed. "Clearly 2003 was a challenging vintage. We used less of the fruit from our warmer microclimates for Le Vigne, although obviously we didn't have that luxury with Cannubi Boschis. In a sense it is a return to the past in that multi-commune Barolos had an advantage over single-vineyard wines. We did everything we could to maintain as much freshness as possible in the wines. We fermented using lower temperatures and bottled earlier than normal."

Wine Advocate # 173

Oct 2007 Antonio Galloni **93 points release price \$142:** The **2003 Barolo Le Vigne** may have a slight edge over the Cannubi Boschis in this vintage, as the ability to blend fruit from various microclimates was a big advantage. It is a full-bodied, soft-textured Barolo with lively color and plenty of ripe red fruit, menthol and spices. This is an especially fresh, vibrant wine for the vintage, with tannins that are particularly refined. A recent vertical of Le Vigne back to 1995 found the 1995, 1997 and 1998 drinking well and the 1996, 1999, 2000 and 2001 approachable, but still with additional upside potential. Anticipated maturity: 2009-2015.

Sandrone's **2003 Barolo Cannubi Boschis** reveals smoke, tar, licorice and dark plums with superb balance and a vibrant, engaging personality. Made in a sweeter, richer style than Le Vigne, its notable depth and well-integrated tannins make it one of the vintage's successes. I have a slight preference for Le Vigne over Cannubi Boschis today but both wines are among the finest in this vintage. Anticipated maturity: 2009-2019. **92 points release price \$155.**

Events:

Denver Botanic Gardens Health and Wellness

Stroll the Denver Botanic Gardens on Saturday, June 27 from 7am - 2pm. Enjoy yoga, meditation and T'ai Chi classes. Learn about eco-friendly gardening and composting from the Garden's Green Team and browse dozens of green living exhibitors. [Visit](#) for more information

The **Telluride Wine Festival** has gained a good reputation over the years as being one of the more laid back fun events in the Colorado mountains. Check them out: [Telluride Wine Fest](#)

Thanks for all your support and referrals.

Tell your friends, share the wine, & spread the good vibe. Cheers!

Paul David, Chief Fermented Grape Taster.

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