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RENATO RATTI



BATTAGLIONE®
2012

BARBERA D'ASTI
DENOMINAZIONE DI ORIGINE
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BOTTLED BY - IMBOTTIGLIATO DA
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CISA ASINARI DEI MARCHESI
DI GRESY

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RED WINE - PRODUCT OF ITALY



Spurrier's World

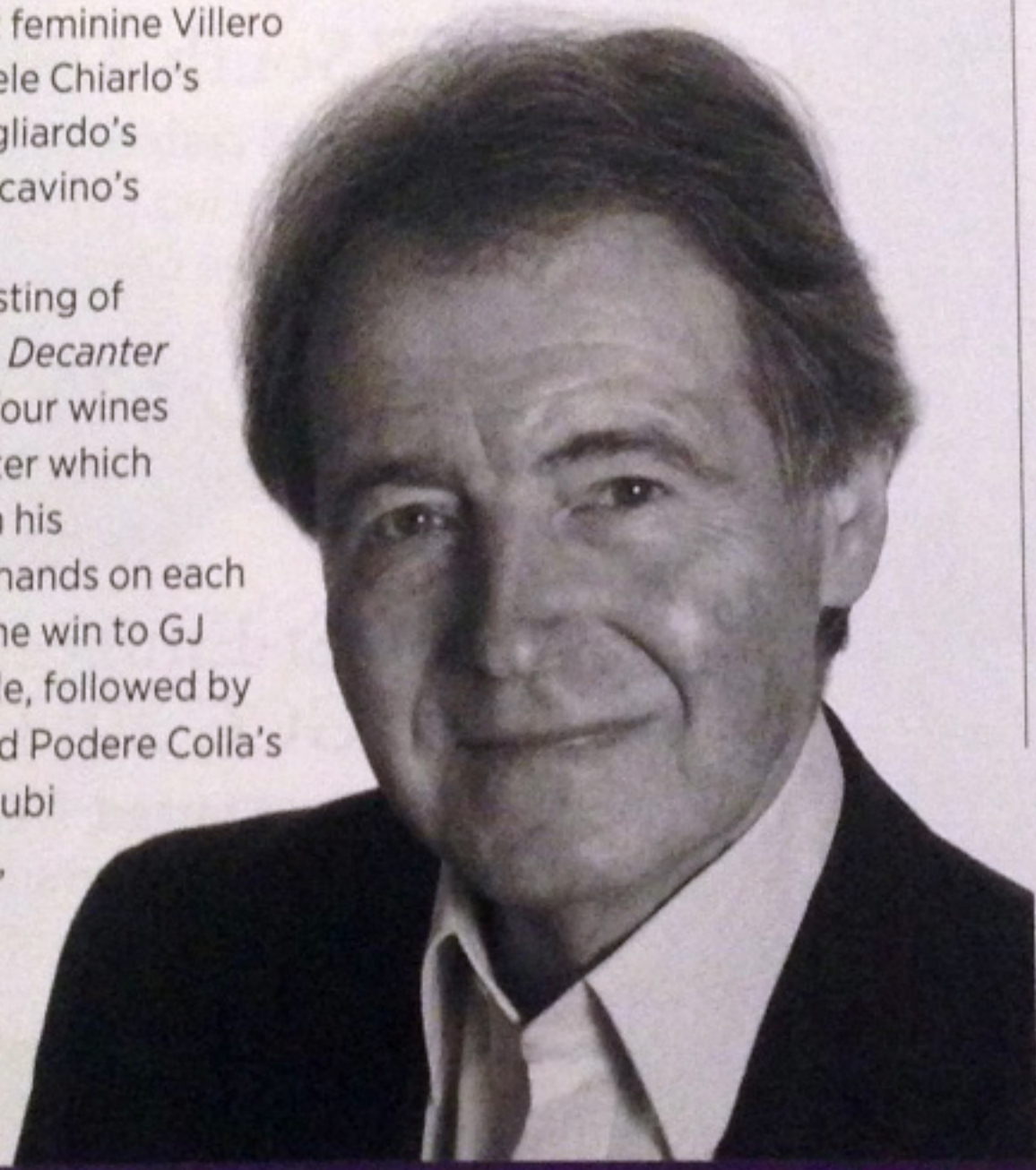
Decanter's globetrotting consultant editor gives us a round-up of recent tastings, his views on current issues in the wine world and top bottles to drink or keep

Collisioni in Barolo

Having lived for many years in France, the habit of taking the whole of August off is ingrained; this year was no exception. My last working visit was to Barolo for Collisioni, a popular weekend event described as a festival of literature and music. Accompanied by *Decanter's* Sarah Kemp, her husband Brian St Pierre and Stephen and Maria Brook, we didn't pay much attention to literature nor music as the wine tastings were so captivating. The first dinner on the roof terrace of the restored Barolo Castle, which houses a brilliant museum, was hosted by the 12 producers who make up the Accademia del Barolo: Azelia, Cordero di Montezemolo, Damilano, Franco Martinetti, Luciano Sandrone, Michele Chiarlo, Paolo Scavino, Pio Cesare, Gianni Gagliardo, Luigi Einaudi, Prunotto and Vietti. The wines were impeccable, my stars being Franco Martinetti's textured Marasco 2009, Pio Cesare's robust Ornato 2004 and Vietti's almost feminine Villero Risvera 2004, followed by Michele Chiarlo's floral Cerequio 2009, Gianni Gagliardo's elegant Preve 2008 and Paolo Scavino's grippy Bricco Ambrogio 2006.

The next morning was the tasting of 2010 Barolos, chaired by regular *Decanter* contributor Ian D'Agata. Thirty-four wines DOCG wines were presented, after which D'Agata gave the crowded room his comments, asking for a show of hands on each wine. General agreement gave the win to GJ Vajra's beautiful Bricco della Viole, followed by an impressive range that included Podere Colla's Bussia, Luciano Sandrone's Cannubi Boschis, Ceretto's Bricco Rocche, Chiara Boschis's Cannubi, Paolo Conterno's Ginestra, Giuseppe Rinaldi's Brunate, Marchesi de

'The habit of taking the whole of August off is ingrained; this year was no exception'



Barolo's Sarmassa, Oddero's Villero and Rivetto's Serralunga d'Alba. 2010 seems a fine vintage with a fascinating stylistic range across the communes: superb fruit already there and great complexity to come.

Later that morning we were treated to a range of nine Barberas that focused on the excellent 2011 vintage, my favourites being Brezza's Barbera d'Alba Superiore, Boroli's Quattro Fratelli, Barbera d'Alba and Vigne dei Mastri's Galileo, Barbera d'Alba Superiore.

In case one thought Piedmont was only known for the three Bs - Barolo, Barbera and Barbaresco - there were further tastings of indigenous grape varieties such as the red Ruchè and Pelaverga (see a few of them on p22). The day finished with an uplifting tasting of 2013 Moscatos and finally an astounding range of vermouths from the house of Riserva Carlo Alberto, founded in Turin in 1837.

On the road

In late July, Bella and I left for our holiday, the first stop being Epernay for a tour and tasting at Pol Roger. The cool vinification cellars under the family house off the newly named Rue Sir Winston Churchill have emerged from a three-year renovation where many dozen small stainless steel and cement vats have replaced bigger fermenters, while the kilometres of ageing cellars remain the same, every single bottle undergoing *remuage* by hand. The three just-released wines were of supreme quality: Chardonnay 2004 - from the four grands crus of Avize, Cramant, Le Mesnil and Oger, broader and less tight than expected, delicious now; Rosé 2006 - a blend of 60% Pinot Noir, 40% Chardonnay, red fruit and a creamy texture with a bone-dry finish; and Cuvée Sir Winston Churchill 2002 - disgorged December 2013, both rich and superbly fresh with wonderful presence and power that will develop in a marvellous way, the base being grand cru Pinot Noir.

Steven recommends... (for full details of UK stockists, see p102)



Raventos i Blanc, La Finca, Penedes, Spain 2009

£26.95 **Berry Bros & Rudd**

The Raventos family has recently left the Cava DO, concentrating on the purity and individuality of its 100% estate sparkling wines. Tiny bubbles, quite yeasty nose, broad flavours, good acidity, perfect with food. **Drink 2014-2017 Alc 12.5%**



Samuel Billaud, Les Fourneaux 1er Cru, Chablis, Burgundy France 2013

POA **Charles Taylor Wines**

From a small south-facing chalk-soil 1er cru just north of the better-known Mont de Mileu: fine floral/mineral nose, quite broad and still tight, very good fruit, weight and structure for the future. **Drink 2016-2020 Alc 13%**



Luigi Maffini, Kratos Fiano, Paestum, Italy 2012

£15.75 **Lea & Sandeman**

100% Fiano from three separate vineyards on the coast south of Naples: mid-yellow colour, lively yet rich nose of yellow summer fruits, smooth texture and lifted finish, very pure with more complexity to come. **Drink 2014-2016 Alc 13%**