



A Lebanese Cypress tree at the top of the hill overlooking Cordero di Montezemolo.

Beautiful Barolo

AFTER OUR VISIT TO CASCINA LANGA, we visited the winery Cordero di Montezemolo in La Morra. This winery is famous for having been in existence since 1340. It has been in the same family for 19 consecutive generations and is currently run by Giovanni Cordero di Montezemolo and his children Elena (our guide) and Alberto. The winery is famous



Jim Bryant and Elena Cordero di Montezemolo

for the quality of its wines, as well as for the very large and visible Lebanese Cypress tree on the hilltop overlooking the winery and vineyards. The weather was perfect and the outside setting for the tasting provided a life memory. The Alps in the background put us 'over the top'. And then came the wines!

We began with the Cordero di Montezemolo Arneis which was fresh and thirst quenching in the warm weather. We had several wines which were all true to the respective grape characteristics, but I will focus on only two. These wines are special in many ways but principally because they represent the finest fruit from the vineyards and are only made in the highest quality vintages. Furthermore, they are limited to one thousand 1.5-liter bottles (magnums) and are sold only at the winery.



Wines sampled at Cordero di Montezemolo.

Several of us bought multiple bottles of these gems and I had a chance to try some of each that had been left by a visitor, 36 hours before. The 1998 Cordero di Montezemolo Barolo Reserva Gorette had a beguiling nose of strawberry, rose petals, and tobacco. The color of intense garnet hid the soft sweet tannins and produced a rich mouth feel. This wine will complement beef or lamb, and be at home when drunk with bianchi tartuffi on risotto or tagliatelle. Enjoyable now, it will drink well to 2030.

The other impactful wine was the 2001 Cordero di Montezemolo Reserva Barolo Gorette.



A 2010 Barolo Mascarello with panna cotta and fruit dessert.

This wine is similar to the 1998 version of the same wine but is bigger. This is a result of the more masculine vintage (2001), but both are typical of the vintage. The 2001 also has a confounding nose, but while the tannins are sweet and soft, they are in relative infancy versus the 1998. The nose was redolent of tar, tobacco, and rose petals and should be served with flavorful lamb or beef or accompanied by white truffles served on tagliatelle or risotto. This wine has a long 60-second aftertaste and will continue to mature for a de-

cade and should be drunk from 2020-2040. Both wines, while available only for purchase by winery visitors, are similar to one of the wines we tasted while visiting the winery. It was the Cordero di Montezemolo Barolo Enrico VI 2012.

If you have to leave this Unesco World Heritage Status site, it helps to be heading to the great restaurant I Rebbi. We had lunch near my favorite village of Monforte d'Alba. We ate outside in the perfect fall weather. It was a "pinch me" perfect moment and the food was great. Time permits me only to mention two things. One of our guests was not very adventurous regarding food and some of us were fortunate to be watching him when, with a mouth full of meat, he was told that the dish was 'donkey'. I'll never forget the moment! On a lighter note, I saw that we could order magnums of one of my favorite Barolo producers Bartolo Mascarello. The 2010 vintage is widely regarded as one of the finest wines from this historic property. It reflects the decision of Bartolo to not produce single vineyard wines. In fact, this is a blend from his four vineyards in Barolo and La Morra. This is a quintessential Barolo, an iconic wine with alluring perfume, great depth, and perfect balance. This wine was produced by his daughter, Maria Teresa, who continues the great tradition of her father and as a result, this Barolo will age effortlessly for 20-40 years (more in magnum) after improving over the next decade. It provided the perfect conduit from the kitchen of the I Rebbi restaurant to the great food served outside on the patio near the Alps. What a magical moment! A vôte sant ! U

PHOTO: THOMAS BALSAMO



Barrington resident Jim Bryant is pursuing his passion and love of wine as an international wine consultant. This follows a 30-year career in senior financial and general management positions at two Fortune 100 companies. He is the owner of James R. Bryant L.L.C.; contact him at profwino@comcast.net.