



Robert Parker's
Wine Advocate

Closing Date: 2-28-13
Issue 205

The Independent Consumer's Bimonthly Guide to Fine Wine

RATING SYSTEM

Robert Parker's rating system employs a 50-100 point quality scale. It is my belief that the various twenty (20) point rating systems do not provide enough flexibility and often result in compressed and inflated wine ratings. THE WINE ADVOCATE takes a hard, very critical look at wine, since I would prefer to underestimate the wine's quality than to overestimate it. The numerical ratings are utilized only to enhance and complement the thorough tasting notes, which are my primary means of communicating my judgments to you.

- 96-100** An **extraordinary** wine of profound and complex character displaying all the attributes expected of a classic wine of its variety. Wines of this caliber are worth a special effort to find, purchase, and consume.
- 90-95** An **outstanding** wine of exceptional complexity and character. In short, these are terrific wines.
- 80-89** A **barely above average to very good** wine displaying various degrees of finesse and flavor as well as character with no noticeable flaws.
- 70-79** An **average** wine with little distinction except that it is soundly made. In essence, a straightforward, innocuous wine.
- 60-69** A **below average** wine containing noticeable deficiencies, such as excessive acidity and/or tannin, an absence of flavor, or possibly dirty aromas or flavors.
- 50-59** A wine deemed to be unacceptable.

PASSOPISCIARO	2011	GUARDIOLA	CASTIGLIONE DI SICILIA	(unknown)	WHITE	91
PASSOPISCIARO	2010	PASSOPISCIARO	CASTIGLIONE DI SICILIA	(unknown)	RED	94
PASSOPISCIARO	2010	CONTRADA RAMPANTE R	CASTIGLIONE DI SICILIA	(unknown)	RED	93+
PASSOPISCIARO	2010	CONTRADA PORCARIA P	CASTIGLIONE DI SICILIA	(unknown)	RED	95+
PASSOPISCIARO	2010	CONTRADA SCIARANUOVA S	CASTIGLIONE DI SICILIA	(unknown)	RED	94
PASSOPISCIARO	2010	CONTRADA CHIAPPEMACINE C	CASTIGLIONE DI SICILIA	(unknown)	RED	94
PASSOPISCIARO	2010	FRANCHETTI	CASTIGLIONE DI SICILIA	(unknown)	RED	95+

Andrea Franchetti describes 2010 as a cold year on the Etna that yielded wines of energy and cut. That is certainly the recurring theme in this set of new releases. Once again, Franchetti has produced a number of wines that set the bar for what can be achieved on the Etna. This is a stunning set of new releases.

The **2011 Guardiola** (Chardonnay) boasts impeccable richness and class in its juicy peaches, lemon, white flowers and spices. Insistent veins of minerality frame the long, finish. The 2011 is a gorgeous, totally pure expression of Chardonnay from the slopes of the Etna. I would not be surprised if the 2011 opens over the next 6-12 months, as it had just been bottled at the time of my tastings. Anticipated maturity: 2013-2016.

The **2010 Passopisciaro** is deceptively mid-weight, but behind the light color and seeming fleeting structure lies a deeply expressive core of perfumed red berries, crushed rocks, flowers and mint. A burst of deep salinity frames the bracing finish. Quite simply, this is a stunning wine. Think of the Passopisciaro as a cross of Chambolle-Musigny and Gevrey-Chambertin and Gattinara. The Passopisciaro bottling is made from parcels in Guardiola and smaller pieces that aren't large enough to be bottled separately. Anticipated maturity: 2013-2020. The **2010 Contrada Rampante R** emerges from the highest parcel on the property. The soils have a higher percentage of sand, and this is the last vineyard to be harvested. Dark red cherries, flowers, mint and licorice are all finely knit. Here, too, persistent saline notes frame the long, vibrant finish. The Rampante R is all about energy, and there is no shortage of that here. The 2010 opens up beautifully in the glass. Hints of licorice and tobacco are layered into the finish. Anticipated maturity: 2013-2020. Constantly changing in the glass, the **2010 Contrada Porcaria P** (from the Feudo di Mezzo vineyard) is the most complete of these 2010s. Layers of dark fruit

continue to sweep across the palate as this generous, deeply satisfying Etna red opens up in the glass. The Porcaria P is arguably the richest of these 2010s, but at the same time, underlying veins of minerality keep the wine vibrant and beautifully delineated. There is a level of pure unbridled energy in the 2010 that is hugely appealing. This is a dazzling showing from Andrea Franchetti. Anticipated maturity: 2013-2020. A totally striking wine, the **2010 Contrada Sciaranuova S** opens with a deep, intriguing bouquet redolent of orange peel, tar, licorice and exotic spices. Dark berries, minerals and rose petals add further complexity on the generous, silky finish. This is a texturally brilliant, poised wine endowed with tons of class and nuance. Striking pretty much sums up it all up here. Anticipated maturity: 2013-2020. The **2010 Contrada Chiappemacine C** reveals a more immediate expression of fruit. Dark red berries, tobacco and mint flesh out on the radiant mid-palate. This is still an energetic style because of the vintage, but the Chiappemacine C is a bit richer than some of the other 2010s as this site sits on the lower end of the slope. Like all the Passopisciaro reds in this vintage, the Chiappemacine C is impeccably refined and harmonious. Anticipated maturity: 2013-2020. Violets, tar, asphalt, black cherries and plums all come alive in the **2010 Franchetti**. Wonderfully alive and vibrant in the glass, the 2010 shows an unusual level of ripeness and juiciness for the year. Ideally, the 2010 needs a few years to shed some of its baby fat, as it is almost too intense today. Still, it is impossible to miss the wine's detail, nuance and transparency. This blend of Cesanese and Petit Verdot should be a stunner in another few years' time. The flagship Franchetti remains one of the most distinctive wines of the Etna, although in spirit and interpretation it is quite far from every other wine I have tasted. Anticipated maturity: 2014-2025. Importer: T. Edward Wines, New York, NY; tel. (212) 233-1504.