

ITALIAN POT ROAST BRAISED IN BARBERA

by Georgeanne Brennan

Every region of Italy has its own version of Stracotto, also called Brasato, pot roast slowly simmered with vegetables in a local red wine. The vegetables, sometimes pureed with the cooking juices, as they are here, create a thick sauce for the sliced roast. When served with creamy polenta or mashed potatoes and a bottle of Barbera, like the one from Fantino, the result is pure comfort food. Like many dishes cooked with a substantial amount of wine, this dish is even better the second or third day. Although various cuts of beef can be used, I like a chuck roast best because it is sinewy and marbled with fat, which makes for juicy meat and a rich sauce.

One 3-pound boneless chuck roast, rolled and tied with butcher string, at room temperature	2 carrots, peeled and cut into ½-inch pieces
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	2 stalks celery, cut into ½-inch pieces
1 teaspoon sea salt	2 cloves chopped garlic
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper	1 bottle Barbera or similar dry red wine
1 medium onion, chopped	1 bay leaf
	2 sprigs fresh rosemary
	3 sprigs fresh thyme

Rub roast all over with half the olive oil. Season with salt and pepper, rubbing them all over the roast.

In a heavy-bottom Dutch oven or pot, heat remaining 1½ tablespoons of olive oil over medium-high heat. When oil is hot, sear roast for about 2 minutes on each side, 8 minutes total. Remove roast to a bowl and set aside.

Add onions to the same pot, reduce heat to medium, and sauté until translucent, 2 to 3 minutes. Add carrots, celery, and garlic, adding a little more olive oil if needed. Sauté until vegetables are soft, stirring often, about 5 minutes. Increase heat to high and pour 1 cup of the wine into the pot, scraping the bottom with a wooden spoon to dislodge any clinging bits. Add the remainder of the wine. Return the roast to the pot, and add bay leaf, rosemary, and thyme and bring to a boil. Cover the pot, reduce heat to low, and simmer until meat is fork tender, 2½ to 3 hours.

Remove roast to a bowl or, if serving immediately, to a cutting board.

Remove bay leaf, rosemary, and thyme from the pot and discard. With an immersion blender, puree vegetables into a thick sauce and taste for seasoning, adding more salt and pepper if desired.

Let roast rest for 10 minutes, then slice and arrange on a platter, drizzled with the sauce and the extra sauce served alongside. Or the roast and sauce can be left to cool to room temperature to serve later the same day or refrigerated to serve the next day. For this option, the roast can be sliced, then gently placed in the sauce, and the whole dish reheated. Any leftovers make an excellent sauce for pasta.

Serves 4-6



The James Beard award-winning cookbook author Georgeanne Brennan is also the author of the best-selling food memoir *A Pig in Provence*. She continues to write about food and cooking from her longtime homes in Provence and in Northern California, where she co-owns an aperitif wine bar. You can find more of her recipes at www.georgeannebrennan.com.

OCTOBER 2025







ROUGE



2023 BARBERA D'ALBA SUPERIORE
A. & G. FANTINO

ONE OF ITALY'S MOST WIDELY planted grapes, Barbera is grown up and down the country, but it reaches its highest heights along the slopes of Piedmont. Hailing from Alessandro and Gian Natale Fantino's village of Monforte d'Alba, this Barbera benefits from an exceptional terroir and the expertise of two veteran, traditionalist *vignaioli*. In the case of the Barbera grape, tradition means a zealous pursuit of the grape's fruit-forward purity and exuberance. After all, the *raison d'être* of this grape is to produce bright reds all about conviviality and food friendliness. While the terroir certainly shines through in the Fantinos' rendition—Monforte d'Alba comes with a little more heft and density—the brothers age it in stainless steel for a year and a half to preserve as much of the charming fresh fruit as possible. Brimming with notes of brambly berries and blood orange, this Barbera is one of the first bottles I'll be reaching for this fall as I make pots of ragu, mushroom risotto, and, of course, Georgeanne's pot roast braised in Barbera. —Tom Wolf

\$26.00 PER BOTTLE \$280.80 PER CASE

					
2023 Barbera d'Alba Superiore A. & G. Fantino	Barbera	Vines planted in 2015 Gray marl, clay	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62°F Decant optional	Cherries, cranberries, blood orange Charming, fragrant, versatile	Drink now through 2030
2021 Chinon "Le Clos Guillot" Bernard Baudry	Cabernet Franc	Vines planted between 1993 and 2000 Yellow limestone, clay, silica, sand	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62°F Decant recommended	Blackberries, earth, a faint salinity Elegant, lithe, floral	Drink now through 2036

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2021 CHINON "LE CLOS GUILLOT"
BERNARD BAUDRY

ALONGSIDE CHARLES JOGUET, the Baudry family was one of the early pioneering forces in the Loire Valley to realize that Cabernet Franc expressed terroir incredibly well and therefore was worthy of single-vineyard bottlings showcasing the differences between one plot and another. Named for a very old vineyard, which likely dates back to the Middle Ages and used to be enclosed by a stone wall—a few remnants can still be found around the vineyard today—Le Clos Guillot counts among Matthieu Baudry's trio of benchmark Cabernet Francs and among the best expressions of this grape in the world. Le Clos Guillot is distinct from Matthieu's other two best sites by its soil of yellow *tuffeau* and densely fossilized limestone, which he points out shows how shallow the sea here once was. The vineyard is also clay-heavy, and the vines never suffer from drought. That was not an issue in 2021, a relatively cool and wet year, which produced a remarkably elegant Clos Guillot redolent of blackberries, cherries, earth, and a faint salinity. This gorgeous Chinon is already very much ready to go but will also evolve beautifully over the next ten to fifteen years, so I recommend grabbing a few more bottles for down the road! —Tom Wolf

Pairs well with steak au poivre, pan-seared pork chops, and grilled tuna with olives and herbs.

\$43.00 PER BOTTLE \$464.40 PER CASE



ABOVE Bernard Baudry (center) with his son Matthieu (right) and grandson Maxime (left). © Jimmy Hayes

COVER Monforte d'Alba, Piedmont. © Joanie Bonfiglio