

Barolo legend dies

23 Feb 2009 by Walter Speller

The legendary Teobaldo Cappellano, one of the very few truly traditional, and in that context, controversial, winemakers from Barolo, revered throughout Italy, died last weekend in a hospital in Alba at the age of 65.

Cappellano, whose uncle, a pharmacist in Serralunga d'Alba, invented the Barolo Chinato liqueur, was one of the pioneers and founders of the Vini Veri movement, promoting organics and biodynamics at a very early stage, and whose president he was until his demise. He achieved notoriety when he openly condemned the now ubiquitous wine scoring system, as he believed it divided the Barolo community and he allegedly refused journalists access to his estate if they planned to judge his wines by allocating points.

A fierce traditionalist, Cappellano remained faithful to classic winemaking and eschewed barriques. His minuscule production of Barolo includes a version of ungrafted Nebbiolo of the Michet clone which, according to him, would give an idea of what Barolo must have been like before phylloxera devastated Piedmontese vineyards.

One of Cappellano's last public appearances was during the [Brunello debate last October](#) organised by Franco Ziliani, in which he defended all- Sangiovese Brunello as a historic wine against the likes of Banfi's oenologist Ezio Rivello, who argued for the legal inclusion of international grape varieties.

The image here is taken from the website of the Rare Wine Co, which sells Cappellano Barolos in the US.