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2016 Stefania Barbot Irpinia Campi Taurasini Ion

Here's a surprise hit from Campania and a new name that I am very excited about. The 2016 Irpinia Campi Taurasini Ion shows excellent balance and a beautifully shaped and polished bouquet that has a little bit of everything you should expect from the Aglianico grape. You get black fruit, spice, tar, licorice and campfire ash—all delivered with seamless integration. This is a beautiful wine and a gorgeous surprise from Southern Italy. Fruit comes from 15-year-old vines planted in limestone clay and sand. The wine is fermented and aged only in stainless steel, and the purity of the fruit is unmatched. It's great to uncover happy surprises such as this at this affordable price point. Some 11,000 bottles were made. Congratulations.

- Monica Larner (October, 2019)

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2015 Stefania Barbot Taurasi Fren

This is the higher-tier expression of Aglianico from this fabulous producer who is still under the radar outside of Campania. The Stefania Barbot 2015 Taurasi Fren is an expressive and beautiful vintage with enough inner tension and energy to ensure a long and happy drinking window of ten years or more. These offerings from Stefania Barbot are drop-dead gorgeous. That said, this wine is a bit more closed right now, but it will give a lot in the future with more bottle evolution. The Fren is made with fruit from 70-year-old vines, and the wine ages carefully in oak for 24 months. Only 4,000 bottles were made. I am excited by this terrific new discovery.

- Monica Larner (October, 2019)

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