

CERBAIONA

Cerbaiona: A No Points Zone

I kindly request that journalists and critics who taste wines with me at Cerbaiona **refrain from using scores** in reviewing and expressing their opinions about the wines.

It is nearly unbelievable that a numerical score is the single most used descriptor found in wine reviews; that people actually refer to a wine, for example, as “a 97 point wine”. Yet the meaning of these numbers - what the number actually refers to - is completely vague and imprecise.

I’ve never met a grower or winemaker who uses scores to conduct her work. Valuations and descriptions, of course, but a 100 point system? Not. This alone should be cause for reviewers and their readers to ponder, and explain exactly to what they are referring with scores.

The greatest use of these scores, obviously, is for marketing purposes which **benefit** those selling wines and **increases the influence** of those writing about them. This is a very unhealthy and misleading situation.

Sadly, it is a system that **instead of deepening the understanding and respect** for viticulture and artisan wine production, has created a parallel universe in which the critics and consumers become further and further detached from the beauty and real nature of wine, and moreover, removed from the work and insight of those who grow grapes and produce wine.

These same concerns were expressed candidly* by the late Teobaldo Cappellano more than three decades ago, when the use of scores was only in its infancy.

I believe Teobaldo said something very profound about the social impact that scores have on **the integrity of craftsmanship**, as well as expressing concerns about the **autocratic risks** that an unfounded belief in **numerical certainty** might breed.

A softer and more inquisitive form of journalism and criticism might be better than the score bazooka, with all its collateral damage and the one man on top approach. After all, viticulture and wine production require significant humility and patience.

A wine should instill wonder and curiosity - and remain free of hubris.

Welcome to Cerbaiona.

Matthew Fioretti

Cerbaiona Srl Società Agricola di G. Rieschel, M. Fioretti & Co.

**Nel 1983 chiesi al giornalista Sheldon Wassermann di non pubblicare il punteggio dei*

CERBAIONA

miei vini. Così fece, ma non solo, sul libero "Italian Nobel Wines" scrisse che chiedevo di non fare parte di classifiche ove il confronto dagli ignavi reso dogma è disaggregante termine numerico e non condivisa umana fatica.

In 1983 I asked the journalist Sheldon Wasserman not to publish scores for my wines. Not only did he not publish the scores; in his book, "Italian Noble Wines", he also wrote that I had asked not be included in "classifications" in which a comparison belies a divisive numerical term rather than expressing shared human toil.

Teobaldo Cappellano