

SICILY

Etna DOC



The production area of the Etna DOC – which earned the denomination in the late 1960s, and exists for both reds and whites – is found on the Eastern side of the island of Sicily, located in the heart of the Mediterranean Sea. Here exists, precisely in the province of Catania, on the slopes of the still active volcano called Etna, an ancient viniculture, which dates back to the third century B.C. The climate is varied by the influence of the Mediterranean, which causes rainfall ten times that of other parts of the island. In addition, the vines grow at a high altitude, in some cases more than 1000 meters above sea level; a factor that causes radical temperature shifts between day and night.

The cohabitation with the volcano also carries a particular weight, not indifferent to the variety and quality of the terrains. Put more simply, the dominant structure linked to its volcanic origins – a geographical character that disintegrates over time to become sand – has prohibited the dissemination of phylloxera, in this area, resulting in vines of advanced age. It is typical to encounter a plant that is 100 years old.

The most widely used cultivation system is that brought from the ancient Greeks, called the alberello or “little tree” method. The lion’s share of the fruit produced are red varieties, while that of white grapes is about 20%.

The principal varieties cultivated here are the:

- **Nerello Mascalese:** red berry grape from late harvest, lacking color, but capable of producing a wine of excellent finesse. A minimum of 80% for the DOC title.
- **Nerello Cappuccio:** red variety that confers color and fruity sensations to the wine. A maximum of 20% in wines that bear the Etna DOC.
- **Carricante:** white grape whose name likely comes from its great yields. Widely used in wine production, bringing aromas, in particular floral, and finesse.
- **Minnella:** white grape that owes its name to the fact that its fruit subtly reminds one of woman’s breasts. Often vinified together with Catarratto. The taste recalls white-fleshed fruits.

Etna Bianco

GARDINI NOTES WINE RANKING

The targets are three: short (5-8 years), medium (10-15 years) and long (more than 15 years), which denote the aging potential of the wine.



SHORT (5-8 years)



MEDIUM (10-15 years)



LONG (more than 15 years)

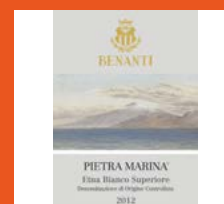
93



Etna Bianco DOC Superiore Pietra Marina 2012

BENANTI

One who does not recognize the aroma of bergamot, could use this label as an example. During the sip, all the possibilities of translating citrus are explored. The wine does not lack complexity or gustatory development thanks to suggestions of white-fleshed fruit, nuances of the sea, and star anise.



92



Etna Bianco DOC Superiore Il Musmeci 2013

TENUTA DI FESSINA

The Carricante grape is used exclusively, immediately revealing its typical aromatic and delicately floral dowry, based on the sweetness of the acacia and on an almost green tonality, which recalls lily of the valley. The sip is strong, but dynamic with an accomplice of a captivating acidity and an evident, sapid quality that appears in the finish.



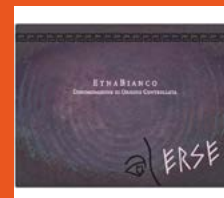
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Etna Bianco DOC Erse 2014

TENUTA DI FESSINA

A slightly more ample bouquet with respect to the riserva helped by a blend of Carricante, Minnella, and Catarratto grapes. Citrusy sip but never rabidly acidic, as demonstrated by the sensations of citron, mandarin, and lemon from the coast. In the mouth, it is slender, savory, and tends towards a citrus extension.



88



Etna Bianco DOC Archineri 2015

PIETRADOLCE

Carricante vinified in steel. Chiaroscuro wine as seen from the taste, after a well-marked catalog of citrus and white-fleshed fruit. It boasts evident, even if a bit intense, sensations of resin, powdery spices, as well as a sweet nuance that, in the end, recalls the Tonka bean.



88



Etna Bianco DOC Contrada Calderara 2014

COTTANERA

Once again, an acute Carricante. Aromatic departure of apple and peach, rendered more austere by bitter citrus sensations that evoke grapefruit. In the mouth, further expanding, thanks to citrus and savory notes. At mid-mouth, widening slightly, until a finish, dedicated in large part, to spices.



Etna Rosso

GARDINI NOTES WINE RANKING



SHORT (5-8 years)



MEDIUM (10-15 years)



LONG (more than 15 years)

93



Etna Rosso DOC Riserva Il Musmeci 2011

TENUTA DI FESSINA

Convincing mix of fruity aromas that unite sour cherry with warmer, rich nuances of yellow peach. Initially, the sip lengthens with decision thanks to the fruit, even though giving way, little by little, to a tri-dimensionality from a sweet and spicy complexity, which appears at mid-mouth and beyond. Acidic tannins.



93



Etna Rosso DOC Serra della Contessa 2012

BENANTI

Immediate and succulent on the nose with notes of wild strawberry and yellow raspberry. In the mouth, open but not too much. The spicy dowry is added to the fruit, without dark tones but with all the warm and spiciness brightness of cinnamon and red peppercorns. Flavorful tannins.



92



Etna Rosso DOC Vigna Barbagalli 2013

PIETRADOLCE

Exclusively Nerello Mascalese from 100-year-old plants. Attacks with fruity notes of cherry rendered airy and balsamic thanks to undertones of geranium. Direct and energetic taste dominated by cassis and salt. In the finish, a balsamic note of star anise insists, without masking the fruit. Marked tannins.



91



Etna Rosso DOC Tornatore 2014

TORNATORE

Citrus, whether sweet like mandarin or sharp like bitter orange, conquers the nose. The taste passes from the citrusy to fruity, in particular those of the woods – strawberry, currant, and raspberry – that do not erase the acidic vein, which characterizes the backbone of the sip. The flavorful tannins augment the extension in this label.



88



Etna Rosso DOC 'a Rina 2014

GIROLAMO RUSSO

On the nose, a shy hit of dog rose followed by more intense berry notes, accompanied by mentholated and balsamic sensations. The sip never becomes ample, focusing rather, on the dynamism played by acidic notes of cassis and currant, rendered less sharp by touches of oak. Evident tannins.



Grillo

Notwithstanding the fact that today, this white-fleshed grape is cultivated all over Sicily, it was initially particularly diffuse in the western part of the island. Its origins, however, are presumed to be in Puglia, probably brought over from the first Greek expeditions.

By the middle of the last century, more than 50% of the wine's production occurred in Sicily.

Generally compatible with the geological structure of the terrains on which it is cultivated, the grape reveals a gustative profile rather predisposed to flavor. Moreover, the Grillo is utilized as the fundamental grape in the production of Marsala, from which the wine derives its alcohol content.

In the past, it was often processed alongside other varieties such as Inzolia and Catarratto, but today it is usually vinified by itself.

GARDINI NOTES WINE RANKING



SHORT (5-8 years)



MEDIUM (10-15 years)



LONG (more than 15 years)

91



Sicilia DOC Grillo 2015

FEUDO MACCARI

Sharp sip of grapefruit, bergamot, and lime, though not biting, due to a constant and yet, never invasive undertone of anise that leaves the freshness intact and even adds a touch of softness. Good persistence and even better drinkability.



89



Sicilia DOP Bianco Maggiore 2015

RALLO

All neroli and citrus; a more Sicilian takeoff is not possible. The taste begins where the aromas leave off; the citrus stamp guarantees the sip, a development and a gustatory extension that are the hallmarks of this label. Very good persistence.



89



Sicilia DOC Lalùci 2015

BAGLIO DI CRISTO DI CAMPOBELLO

Delicate perfumes that alternate between suggestions of jasmine and those succulent ones that recall lime and mandarin. The mouth has a bit of roundness, primarily focused on impressions of lime, caper, and salt that result in a lengthening that is in some cases, boundless.



88



Sicilia DOC Timeo 2015

BAGLIO DI PIANETTO

Cold aromas of bitter citrus and mint with accents of ginger. In the mouth, the amount of fruit slowly increases and by consequence heightens the pleasant complexity of the sip. The length of the finish, characterized by light tones of lemongrass, remains the best quality of this label.



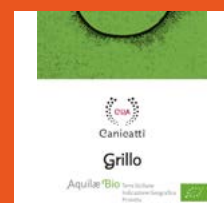
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Terre Siciliane IGP Aquilae bio 2015

CVA CANICATTI

Delicately floral on the nose, thanks to notes of jasmine and neroli. Not lacking are those citrus aromas, which in the mouth assume the guises of lime, bergamot, and iodine. On the finish, a softer suggestion of green almonds peeks out.



Nero D'Avola

The symbol of Sicilian viniculture, the origins of this red berry grape are rather uncertain, even if it comes from, as the name implies, the area of Avola. In the past, it appears that this variety was also called Calabrese.

The Nero d'Avola is now found all over Sicily, from its historic production zone to its presence in the Eastern part of the island.

Complicit in its proliferation are its good adaption to the climatic conditions and the thick skin that allows it to

resist different parasites. The Nero d'Avola exemplifies the strong character of Sicily, giving life to a wine with body, structure, and even an elevated alcohol content.

It is because of this last characteristic that the Nero d'Avola was often used in the past, as a blending wine. Today in order to conserve this predisposition during the production process, the Nero d'Avola is often vinified alone, thus expressing the qualities of the different wine-producing areas, in which it grows.

GARDINI NOTES WINE RANKING



SHORT (5-8 years)



MEDIUM (10-15 years)



LONG (more than 15 years)

92



Sicilia DOC Saia 2014 FEUDO MACCARI

The typical generosity of this variety is supported by a rich fruity bouquet, heavy in blackberry, strawberry, and cherry. In the mouth, it is strong but never monolithic or static, thanks to an ample fruitiness that expands to favor primarily spices. Flavorful tannins.



91



Terre Siciliane IGT Siccagno 2013 ARIANNA OCCHIPINTI

Aromas a bit rustic, but tight and lively, characterized by blackberry, juniper, and other variations on the Mediterranean slant. Enters the mouth horizontally, thanks to notes of black cherry, but widens decisively to the point of being profound, by virtue of spicy and balsamic sensations. Excellent drinkability.



91



Sicilia IGT Duca Enrico 2011 DUCA DI SALAPARUTA

Noble in name and in gustative quality, notwithstanding a rich nose, a bit conditioned by the wood. The sip takes off with notes of red fruits both fresh and macerated. The oak in this phase seems better integrated, thanks to a refreshing, flavorful note. Spicy finish. Powdery tannins.



90



Monreale DOC Vuarìa 2012 FEUDO DISISA

Power under control whether on the nose or in the mouth, in this wine that explores the elegant side of the variety. During the taste, fresh, fruity, and evident sensations are highlighted, and in some ways rendered more dynamic by impressions that recall red peppercorn and cloves. Drink with very good qualities.



90



Sicilia IGT NeroMaccarj 2010 GULFI

Born in Pachino and aged in wood of varying dimensions. Strong character, manifested in the sip that translates red fruit into both a sweetness of cherry and strawberry, and a more acidic impression, which is today predominantly reminiscent of sour black cherry. Long, flavorful, and persistent finish. Well-integrated tannins.



Top Five Mix



In this category, the best wines from autochthone varieties or from those blends that do have a category of their own.

Frappato

Sicilian autochthone variety cultivated particularly in the southern part of the island, specifically around Ragusa. The name Frappato is likely a reference to the term fruttato or fruity, which turns out to be among the aromas and flavors of the wines obtained from this variety.

The Frappato favors sand-rich terrains with good amounts of limestone. Generally, the cultivation system most used for this variety is the alberello, or little tree method.

When not vinified separately, the Frappato makes up between 30-50% of the Cerasuolo di Vittoria DOCG composition.

Zibibbo

White grape belonging to the Muscat family, better known as the Moscato d'Alessandria. The name Zibibbo is derived from the Arabic word for dried grapes. Zibibbo can be vinified into a dry version, but is prevalently utilized for the dried, sweet wine varieties, in particular for the production of the passiti or raisin wines of Pantelleria.

Inzolia

White variety, also called Insolia, grown with success all over Sicily. Present also in Sardinia, Calabria, and in Tuscany, where it is known as Ansonica. A rather thick skin. Usually ripens quite early.

L'inzolia is vinified alone or in the assembly with Catarratto and Grillo.

Top Five Mix

GARDINI NOTES WINE RANKING



SHORT (5-8 years)



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DOC Faro 2014

LE CASEMATTE

The poker of vine varieties in which the Nerello Mascalese prevails. The finesse of this variety wins the "hand," thanks to aromas of rose and oriental spices. The mouth expands thanks to a mix of red fruit and spices, to which a pleasant touch of alcohol is added, giving depth and texture to the sip.



90



IGT Terre Siciliane SP 68 rosso 2015

ARIANNA OCCHIPINTI

Blend of Nero d'Avola and Frappato. The nose opens with a character that is impulsive for its type: notes of red fruit and blood. In the mouth, despite its sharpness, the taste penetrates profoundly, thanks to a dynamic drinkability. The bottle should rest in order to be at its best.



89



Inzolia DOC Sicilia il Giglio 2015

MASSERIA DEL FEUDO

At times, this seems a Nordic wine for the salty austerity revealed in the mouth. The sip opens on a bitter citrus that, in this phase of the wine, does not concede anything to its smoothness. Lengthens with a nice progression, even if the palate is rocked by spicy whips of horseradish, white pepper, and ginger. Very good drink.



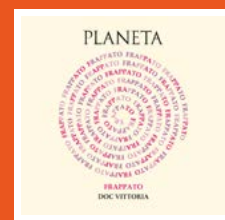
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DOC Vittoria Frappato 2015

PLANETA

The immediacy of the strawberry note one perceives both on the nose and in the mouth, does not distinguish this monotonous and overly simple label. This is reflected in the gustatory details of the taste that recall rhubarb, pink peppercorns, cinnamon, and mace. Acidic tannins.



88



Zibibbo DOC Sicilia Lighea 2015

DONNAFUGATA

Delicate aroma of rose followed by equally floral but balsamic notes that recall the geranium. In the mouth, the floral take-off is repeated, even if the horizontal dimension that characterizes the sip is fruity from the duo of quince and candied ginger. Balsamic and somewhat savory finish.



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12

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MARCO TONELLI
ALL THE WINES WERE TASTED ON
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ORGANIZED BY **ASSOVINI SICILIA**

TASTING PERIOD
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