WINE COLLECTIVE
selected by Jacqueline Pirolo

SEPTEMBER 2021: SICILIA (SICILY)

Sicilians are a proud people, and a singular people. They have their own dialect, their own food culture, and a wine scene all their own that is finally receiving the international acclaim it deserves. We aren't Sicilian, but we are proud AF that this box theme was by popular demand from you!

Europe's largest active volcano is Mount Etna, and this means a VAST variety of flavors. Up high, elevation brings acidity, while closer to sea-level it's gritty and earthy with salty breezes, and a day versus night temperature range that helps grapes to fully ripen. On the rest of the island, you're still getting that great salinity and minerality from the sea, with a drier, warmer climate, ideal for wine making. Sicily is a prime candidate for organic farming because of the moderate rainfall, since chemicals to combat rot and mildew are unnecessary.

Sicily has come into its own. Expensive, iconic wines from around the world are being compared to native Sicilian varieties, and to that we say cheers! A salutii!

Remember, there is always more. Shoot me an email if you'd like to purchase another bottle (or case) of something that you loved. jacqueline@macchialina.com. Thank you! #macchinmyglass

WINE 101

Sicilians have been making wine since 4000 B.C. explaining why the ancient Greeks called Sicily, "land of the vine."

Today, vineyards cover 250,000 acres of Sicilian land and produce 160 million gallons of wine every year.

Hot tip: Grillo is your new Sauvignon Blanc #macchinmyglass

KITCHEN NOTE

Pirolo's Eggplant Caponata

This is a repeat. We couldn't do Sicily without doing Caponata, you're welcome.

Traditional Sicilian fried eggplant, tossed with spicy anchovy, caper, oregano, and tomato sauce.

Eat right out of the jar with good bread or crackers, as a spread on a sandwich, or tossed in a pasta as a sauce.

#macchatmyhouse
**CENTOPASSI**

'Rocce di Pietra Longa' Bianco 2018

Producer: Centopassi  
Name: Rocce di Pietra Longa  
Variety: 100% Grillo  
Vintage: 2018  
Location: Terre Siciliane IGT, Sicily, Italy  
Follow: @centopassisicilia

These high elevation vineyards are certified and labeled all organic viticulture, but what makes them unique is their status as a member of the Libera Terra Co-op, an anti-Mafia movement. This producer grows their fruit exclusively in vineyards confiscated from convicted Mafiosi. 'I Cento Passi,' the Hundred Steps, is an anti-Mafia film made in 2000, and this estate is a standing renunciation of the Mafia, and of the terrible effect that the Mafia has had on the people of Sicily for generations.

The 'Rocce di Pietra Longa' is 100% Grillo from the Pietralunga vineyard, located near the town of Corleone. The vineyard can be recognized by a tall stone (the literal translation of pietra lunga), about 100 feet high, nearby. Vines were planted in stony alkaline clay soil with many rocky outcroppings. This wine is a delicious, mineral, serious white wine from an unexpected source. Maybe even age-worthy. This Grillo can stand with some of Italy's best white wines. Serve chilled.

**GULFI**

'Cerasuolo di Vittorio' 2018

Producer: Centopassi  
Name: Cerasuolo di Vittoria  
Variety: 70% Frappato, 30% Nero d'Avola  
Vintage: 2018  
Location: Cerasuolo di Vittoria DOCG, Sicily, Italy  
Follow: @gulficantina

Cerasuolo di Vittoria is the first and currently the only DOCG in Sicily dating from 1606 when the city of Vittoria was built by the founder Vittoria Colonna Henriquez who offered a hectare of land to the first 75 settlers, provided that they grow one with vine.

The name Gulfi, which is the name of the area, comes from the Greek. It's the southeast part of Sicily on the Iblei Mountains. The estate began there with Nero d'Avola and Frappato because historically these grapes are grown in the region and blended together. Gulfi's commitment is to produce indigenous wines that are reflective of Sicily. The vineyards have existed for more than 2000 years on their specific soil. They believe, "you need to know your grape, you need to know your land, you need to know your history, and everything about it. Then maybe you can see what is the best way to make that grape into a wine."
PIANOGRILLO
GRECANICO 2018

Producer: Azienda Agricola Pianogrillo
Name: Greca
Variety: 100% Greca Dorato
Vintage: 2018
Location: Terre Siciliana IGT, Sicily, Italy

For centuries a manor has towered above the "Pianogrillo" hill. During the Middle Ages the building was a watchtower, then, it was transformed into a manor house in 1700 with a family chapel and vaulted cellars, cypress trees, olive groves, and on the edge of the archeological site of an ancient Greek colony. Tales tell that the earliest settlers were Neolithic, and to this day Pianogrillo is home to an ancient oil mill in lava stone, dating from the third century A.D. The manor was an ancient feud of the barons Piccione di Grassura and del Molino d'Immezzo, from Acireale and today has been transformed into a modern farm from the baron Lorenzo Piccione di Pianogrillo, the last descendant in a straight line.

Greca Dorato is a mainstay in the vineyards of Sicily. This lovely, bright wine comes from vines planted in 1990 to chalky soils at 1,000 feet. All hand-harvested, it exhibits light tropical notes on a mineral driven frame that ends with a long cleansing finish.

GULFI
'CERASUOLO DI VITTORIO' 2018

Producer: Centopassi
Name: Cerasuolo di Vittoria
Variety: 70% Frappato, 30% Nero d'Avola
Vintage: 2018
Location: Cerasuolo di Vittoria DOCG, Sicily, Italy
Follow: @gulficantina

Cerasuolo di Vittoria is the first and currently the only DOCG in Sicily dating from 1606 when the city of Vittoria was built by the founder Vittoria Colonna Henriquez who offered a hectare of land to the first 75 settlers, provided that they grow one with vine.

The name Gulfi, which is the name of the area, comes from the Greek. It's the south-east part of Sicily on the Iblei Mountains. The estate began there with Nero d'Avola and Frappato because historically these grapes are grown in the region and blended together. Gulfi's commitment is to produce indigenous wines that are reflective of Sicily. The vineyards have existed for more than 2000 years on their specific soil. They believe, "you need to know your grape, you need to know your land, you need to know your history, and everything about it. Then maybe you can see what is the best way to make that grape into a wine."
I CUSTODI
'PISTUS' ETNA ROSSO 2017

Producer: I Custodi delle Vigne dell Etna
Name: Pistus
Variety: 80% Nerello Mascalese and 20%
Nerello Cappuccio
Vintage: 2017
Location: Etna Rosso, Sicily, Italy
Follow: @icustodidellevignedelletna

Mount Etna is a darling of the Italian wine scene, and
I Custodi is among the 21st-century Etna Renaissance producers making compelling wines with the Nerello Cappuccio / Nerello Mascalese blend of two very Sicilian grape varieties. The two often grow side-by-side, most commonly in the volcanic soils around Mount Etna and the pair are in fact two mutations of a single indigenous variety.

The I Custodi founder, Mario Paoluzi, teams with Etna guru Salvo Foti and I Vigneri - the local vineyard workers who tend the ancient albarello vines and volcanic terracing. The Etna Rosso 'Pistus' comes from Etna's north slope, where the wines are known to be structured and savory. In 1774, the Florentine scholar Sestini called them 'navigable' or ship-worthy, keeping after long voyages. Wines made from the two Nerellos in combination tend to have earthy flavors, which have earned them a reputation as being slightly Burgundian.

GURRIERI
'DONNA GRAZIA' BIANCO 2016

Producer: Giovanni Gurrieri
Name: Donna Grazia
Variety: 60% Nero d'Avola, 40% Frappato
Vintage: 2016
Location: Sicily, Vittoria D.O.C., Italy
Follow: @cantinagurrieri

Giovanni Gurrieri continued the dream of his father and grandfather officially in 1997, but generations of the family had already been treating wines with passion, emotion, commitment, care & quality. The aim has always been to produce grapes and wines that express the quality and character of the vineyard in harmony with nature, and to tell the story of the pure Hyblean Mountains rich with clay, red sand, and limestone. The vineyards are cooled by breezes from the Mediterranean, and the combination adds gorgeous freshness to their Frappato and Nero d'Avola, but the 2016 Donna Grazia is a completely unique wine. Using red fruit, but vinified like a white wine, pressed immediately off of the skins so that no red color is in the final wine. The juice drinks wonderfully fresh, but has a texture and weight to it that sets it apart from a typical Sicilian white. Plenty of floral and bright aromatics lead to a palate that is balanced between fruit and a mineral driven focus.
MORTELLITO
'VIARIA' TERRE SICILIANE 2020

Producer: Mortellito
Name: Viaria
Variety: 100% Moscato Bianco
Vintage: 2020
Location: Terre Siciliane IGT, Sicily, Italy
Follow: @mortellito_vini

Mortellito is next to the Ionian Sea. It is said that Dario Serrentino's wines have an elegant finish, that's cool and salt-dusted, like diving into the sea on a hot day. The vineyards lie at the same latitudes as North Africa's arid desert climate, and are a mile from the coast. Dario calls his growing area 'a desert next to the beach.'

Over the years, he has learned to grow notable wines from this receding coast of limestone, with skills he gained working the family farm. The ancient heirloom almond groves that protect the vines from the wind off the sea were actually his first love, but his first bottling as a vignaiolo was in 2014.

Viaria is Moscato from five year old bush vines, two days on the skins, and after a racking it's left for another 25 days without any temperature control. There's never been any chemical interventions in the vineyards, and there's an intentional hands-off approach in the cellar. Serve chilled.

LAMORESCA
'NEROCAPITANO' FRAPPATO 2020

Producer: Azienza Agricola Lamoresca
Name: Nerocapitano
Variety: 100% Frappato
Vintage: 2020
Location: Catania, Sicily, Italy
Follow: @lamorescavini

Filippo Rizzo and his wife Nancy met in Belgium, where he was among the first to be talking about and serving natural wines. After years in restaurants, he felt the call of his family and their ties to Sicily. Passionate about the preservation of land and the importance of wine free of additives, Filippo and Nancy have built the boutique Lamoresca estate high on the slopes of Mt. Etna from the ground up. Filippo and his farm-hand Gaetano work the land endlessly by hand.

Nerocapitano is what the locals in Filippo's village call Frappato. The grapes are hand harvested from twenty year old vines planted over clay and limestone 1,400 feet above sea level. The grapes were fermented on the skins for seven days, before being pressed off to concrete vats for eight months of rest. This is a light and bright version of this wine, an inviting shade of cherry in the glass, with gentle notes of wildflowers and bitter herbs. Serve slightly chilled.