JUNE 2021: CAMPANIA

This month is near and dear to our hearts, firstly because Campania is the region the Pirolo’s are from, but also because it represents some of Italy's 300 indigenous vines. Full of unparalleled beauty and history, from the Amalfi coast to Mount Vesuvius, lemons the size of your head, and ancient vines that have never been influenced by non-indigenous varietals. Were it not for these farmers grabbing these vineyards and holding on tight, we would not be tasting this juice today.

Volcanic soil is a large influence, but there are many microclimates as well, and the stylistic approach is shifting, so the grapes can shine for themselves. With cooler winters, warmer summers, and mountainous regions, Calabria provides excellent conditions to grow wines capable of standing up with the most celebrated Italian wines. Cheers!

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

#macchinmyglass

The sound GLI in Italian does not exist in English, which means your mouth is unfamiliar with making this sound. Try to start making a L sound, but then press your tongue to your palate which stretches your mouth wide so the air can come out.

GLI = lyee

The ancient, indigenous Calabrian wine Aglianico is pronounced ah-lyee-AH-nee-co.

KITCHEN NOTE

Ceci Bean Salad:

In Italian, ci or ce is pronounced like CH, while co, cu, ca is pronounced like a K.

This salad is pronounced Ch-eh-ch-ee.

To remember, think of Ciao! (chow)

Imported ceci beans, onions, celery, dehydrated tomato powder, red wine vinegar.

#macchatmyhouse
Montesolae Greco Brut

Producer: Montesole
Name: Montesolae Greco Brut
Variety: 100% Greco
Vintage: N.V.
Location: Montefusco, Avellino, Campania, Italy
Style: Sparkling White

Greco is a white grape variety grown mainly in Campania in Southern Italy, and particularly associated with the Greco di Tufo DOCG. The best wines can vary from fresh and herbal, to full-bodied with hints of stone fruit.

Giovanni DeSantis, owner of Montesole, based in Montecucco not far from Tufo, has created a Greco Sparkling with thin elegant bubbles.

The high elevation and the volcanic soil have made Giovanni and his Greco Brut a competitive alternative to Prosecco from Veneto region. Fruity and floral, straw-yellow with green highlights, the wine is dry and well balanced, with good acidity provided by the northeast exposed vineyards.

Serve chilled.

Donnaluna Aglianico 2017

Producer: Viticoltori de Conciliis
Name: Donnaluna
Variety: 100% Aglianico
Vintage: 2017
Location: Cilento Aglianico DOC, Campania, Italy
Follow: @viticoltorideconciliis

Aglianico (AH-LEE-AH-NEE-CO) has been called the "Barolo of the South", and is thought to have been planted in this region as early as the seventh century B.C. by the Greeks that settled Southern Italy.

The philosophy of Viticoltori de Conciliis is three parts. First to respect the land, no chemicals. Second, to respect the culture - what Bruno De Conciliis calls "the rhythm of life," and they continue it with the naming of their juice. The name "Donnaluna" is a play on the Charlie Parker / Miles Davis bebop jazz standard "Donna Lee". Third, is to respect the people who do the work. De Conciliis is located in one of the poorest areas of Campania, but they pay their workers a real wage, and guarantee them year-round work.

This Donnaluna Aglianico exhibits great balance, with subtle fruit flavors and earthy, tarry, and chocolaty characteristics. The close proximity to the Mediterranean creates a more accessible wine.

Serve slightly chilled.
Ciro Picariello
Greco di Tufo 2018

Producer: Ciro Picariello
Name: Greco di Tufo
Variety: 100% Greco
Vintage: 2018
Location: Greco di Tufo DOCG, Campania, Italy
Follow: @ciro.picariello

The Greco di Tufo grape is a clone of Greco Bianco and is partly named for the ancient people who brought these from Greece. The Tufo part represents the village where this varietal is grown, and also the rock that it stands on, made of ash ejected during an eruption which then compacts.

The best Greco di Tufo vineyards are found on the volcanic hills of the Avellino province in central Campania, where the cooler temperatures allow grapes to enjoy the persistent summer sunshine without overheating or having their photosynthesis shut down.

After their late October harvest, the grapes are fermented in stainless steel with indigenous yeasts, then aged 6 months in stainless steel, followed by 3 months in bottle with no fining or filtration.

Serve chilled.

Enodelta
Lacryma Christi del Vesuvio Rosso 2019

Producer: Enodelta
Name: Lacryma Christi del Vesuvio Rosso
Variety: 65% Piedirosso and 35% Aglianico
Vintage: 2019
Location: Lacryma Christi del Vesuvio Rosso DOC
Follow: @enodelta_cantine

Enodelta's vineyards are found on the slopes of the still-active volcano Mount Vesuvius, east of Naples. Aglianico Piedirosso is a uniquely Italian blend of the two most prominent indigenous red wine grapes of Campania. Blends made from these two grapes showcase their capability on the slopes of Mount Vesuvius, specifically in the Lacryma Christi wines of the Vesuvio DOC. Here the red wines are weighted in favor of Piedirosso.

Wines which qualify for the DOC, carry the name Lacryma Christi del Vesuvio, meaning "the tears of Christ of Vesuvius". One myth about the name of this wine, tells that when Jesus ascended into heaven he wept tears of joy which fell upon Mount Vesuvius causing vines to grow. Another says Christ wept onto the land over the casting out of Lucifer and the fallen angels, angry that they were forced to leave, the fallen angels took a piece of heaven with them which landed on Mount Vesuvius, leading to tears of sadness from Jesus. An earlier version attributes the tears of joy to the Roman god of wine, Bacchus.

Serve slightly chilled.
SAN SALVATORE
"CERASO" 2020

Producer: Azienda Agricola San Salvatore
Name: Ceraso
Variety: 100% Aglianico
Vintage: 2017
Location: Paestum IGT, Campania, Italy
Follow: @sansalvatore1988wines

In Italian, when a G is followed by LI it is silent, and in the absence of an accent mark, the emphasis is placed on the third syllable. Therefore, Aglianico is pronounced ah-lee-AH-nee-co.

This ancient, indigenous Calabrian grape is known to produce full-bodied red wines, and despite the misplaced reputation of southern Italian wines, it has good aging potential. Even in hot climates, Aglianico can retain acidity.

"Ripe blackberry, wild herbs, peppery overtones, and sweet spice waft from this Campanian red, as it gains richness and further cherry-berry depths over time. It's cool-toned finish echoes violet florals with a mineral tinge. Enjoy this as a pure glass of zesty, youthful Aglianico."
- Eric Guido

Serve slightly chilled.

GUIDO MARSELLA
FIANO DI AVELLINO 2018

Producer: Azienda Vitivinicola Guido Marsella
Name: Fiano Di Avellino
Variety: 100% Fiano
Vintage: 2018
Location: Fiano di Avellino DOCG, Campania, Italy

Fiano, once considered one of Italy's great white varieties, ballooned to boost the export market and the increased strain on yields diluted the grape's personality. Guido Marsella founded his winery in 1995 with a nostalgia for Fiano's glory days and a drive to produce the greatest expression of the grape possible.

Fiano shines when grown and vinified carefully in a high altitude and mountainous zone as it does here, at the highest point in Avellino. Fiano is grown in various other parts of Campania, however it flourishes in this area thanks to Avellino's close proximity to the Apennine Mountains. The benefits include a mild microclimate, diurnal temperature variations and mineral-rich, volcanic and calcareous soils. The wine is fermented and aged in stainless steel with some fine lees contact. Marsella bottles after twelve months and lets it rest in bottle for another year before it is released. Fiano ages very well, showing some of the same bottle-age characteristics as Loire Chenin Blanc.

Serve chilled.
Producer: Azienda Agricola Vestini Campagnano
Name: Kajanero
Variety: 40% Pallagrello Nero, 10% Pizzutella, 30% Casavecchia, 20% Aglianico
Vintage: 2017
Location: Terre del Volturno IGT, Campania, Italy

In 1990, the Vestini Campagnano project began with an idea to elevate the indigenous, almost-extinct vine Pallagrello back to its noblest days. By 2000, the Barletta family and their in-house scientists were producing 6,000 liters of Pallagrello Bianco and Pallagrello Nero, and Casavecchia, all Terre al Volturno IGT, an appellation of Campania where great wines have been made since Roman times.

This family's passion for historical grape varieties has helped change the region's reputation as the first winery to develop research on the almost extinct Pallagrello, red and white, and Casavecchia clones.

Kajanero means 'the dark wine from Caiazzo', the town where these grapes are grown. This indigenous mix creates a medium weight red wine of clear southern Italian character. Serve slightly chilled.

Serve chilled.