Sardinia is an island in the Mediterranean known to mainland Italians for an August getaway filled with snow white sand, characteristic coves, and emerald waters. However, the local lure of this large island, roughly the same size as Sicily, speaks to the interior. Old traditions and wild mountain ranges of territory that has belonged to various empires and kingdoms over the centuries has resulted in a unique portfolio of native grapes.

Monica is lighter in style with a complex rusticity that stands up to suckling pig or paella, traditional food of the island left from the Catalan invasions. Vermentino is one of the more serious white grapes which does incredibly well on the island. Then there's Cannonau, the more serious older brother to Monica, with tobacco notes. The combination of hills and plains, coastal regions, and inland areas offers a handful of high-quality wines being produced in quantities that allow for their full complexity to shine.

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

According to Ian D'Agata's comprehensive Native Wine Grapes of Italy, the country cultivates roughly 2,000 native grape varieties. Although just under 400 are used to make wine in commercially significant volume, that number totals more native grape varieties than France, Spain and Greece combined.

#macchinmyglass

Pistococcus or Savoiardi
An elegant vanilla cookie dusted with powdered sugar.
The cultural tradition of the Sardinian cookie known as either Pistococcus or Savoiardi is to savor them with a good coffee on festive occasions.

#macchatmyhouse
Producer: Antonella Corda  
Name: Vermentino di Sardegna  
Variety: 100% Vermentino  
Vintage: 2018  
Location: Serdiana, Sardinia, Italy  
Follow: @cantina_antonella_corda

The area of Serdiana, nestled in the southern part of the island of Sardinia, has a long agricultural tradition that is immediately evident today from its olive groves, vineyards, and fields of grain. Antonella Corda’s vineyards stand in these enchanting surroundings, taking the best from the land and bringing all the quality it offers to the final product. Of all the crops raised here, the grape is the one that finds its greatest expression: the characteristics of the soil, the presence of water, and the mild climate all contribute to giving the wine a unique character that can't be replicated elsewhere.

Antonella Corda took the reins of this winery in 2010 after attending school to become an agronomist. She grew up in a family of winegrowers that spans generations, and founded her own winery with vineyards she inherited from her grandfather. She has been inspired to succeed in this business by her father, but her love for the land comes from her mother.

Serve chilled.

Producer: Cardedu  
Name: Bucce  
Variety: Vermentino, Cannonau, Nasco  
Vintage: 2020  
Location: San Vito and Cardedu, Sardinia, Italy

The Cardedu [car-DAY-do] vineyards are located on ragged-dry cliffs in the island's sparsely populated Southeast, where soils are crumbling granite near the coast. Cardedu balances on the edge of being traditional but thoughtful. In the last few vintages – extremely hot and dry – Cardedu has made lower alcohol wines by picking earlier and with careful vineyard management.

Sergio Loi is a 4th generation traditional Sardinian producer, whose family winery from the early 1900s has always practiced no chemical farming and minimum intervention in the cellar.

Bucce means skins, as in macerated on the skins - macerato sulle bucce. This macerato / orange wine is very drinkable, with hints of sour Mirabelle plums, sea salt, and dried white flowers that float on bass notes of coastal wild rosemary and myrtle.

Serve chilled.
CARDEDU  
'NÙO' VERMENTINO 2018

Producer: Cardedu
Name: Nùo
Variety: 100% Vermentino
Vintage: 2018
Location: San Vito, Sardinia, Italy

Sergio Loi is a 4th generation traditional Sardinian producer, whose family winery from the early 1900s has always practiced no chemical farming and minimum intervention in the cellar. These days Sergio says he just wants to make wine that tastes more like the cool vintages he enjoyed in the '70s.

The vineyards of Cardedu (car-DAY-do) are in the area of Ogliastra, the most mountainous and least populous province on the island, in a land of turquoise oceans and ragged-dry cliffs. Here on the southeast coast of Sardinia the Loi family grows and makes wines from native varieties.

Vermentino grows in many places, including Abruzzo, Lazio, Tuscany, Umbria, Sonoma, Corsica, and more. It is a grape that can be grown anywhere but adapts and changes to the places that it's grown. These particular vines are 10 years old and this bottle comes through as dry, high acidity, low alcohol and with a medium, savory body.

Serve chilled.

CARDEDU  
'ASTILI' 2020

Producer: Cardedu
Name: Astili
Variety: 50% Cannonau, 50% Bovale Sardo/Muristeddu, Monica and Pascale
Vintage: 2020
Location: Mount Astili, Cardedu, Sardinia, Italy

The vineyards of Cardedu (car-DAY-do) are in the area of Ogliastra, the most mountainous and least populous province on the island, in a land of turquoise oceans and ragged-dry cliffs. Here on the southeast coast of Sardinia the Loi family grows and makes wines from native varieties, as they have done for 4 generations.

Astili is a co-fermented field blend that comes from Sergio Loi's oldest and highest altitude vineyard, perched just above the town of Cardedu on the slope of Mount Astili. The Cannonau, Bovale Sardo/Muristeddu, Monica, and Pascale varieties are all planted there.

The blend is juicy and bright with ample acidity to make it a perfect chillable red. In the glass, Cannonau's familiar red plum fruit and Monica's herbal notes get charged with Bovale's electric acidity and fractal tannins.

Serve slightly chilled.
ORGOSA
'NERO' 2019

Producer: Orgosa
Name: Nero
Variety: Cannonau, Carignano, and Sangue di Cristo
Vintage: 2019
Location: Sardinia, Italy
Follow: @cantinaorgosa

Nero di Orgosa is a red wine made from mostly Cannonau, as well as native grapes Carignano and Sangue di Cristo, resulting in a wine of great elegance. The Orgosa vineyards are located in the valley of Locoe, along the Nuoro-Orgosolo road, and are located on land composed of sand from granite debris. Orgosa is run by Musina Giuseppe and was founded in 2002 as the first company to produce bottled wine in Orgosolo.

Cannonau is the local name for Grenache - one of Sardinia's most successful wine grapes. In the past few years, Italian researchers have uncovered evidence suggesting that Cannonau, and therefore Grenache, may well have originated on the island of Sardinia.

PALA
'MONICA I FIORI' 2019

Producer: Pala
Name: Monica I Fiori
Variety: 100% Monica
Vintage: 2019
Location: Monica di Sardegna D.O.C., Sardinia, Italy

The name Monica comes after the grapes original cultivation in monasteries. Uva dei monaci (the monk's grape) became uva monaca and then monica. This grape is native to Sardinia, and is the third most planted variety on the island. In the past it was more often seen as a blending grape, however it is now starting to be recognized as a varietal that can stand on its own. This "I Fiori," or of the flowers, has an intense clear ruby red colour with violet hints, and is a chillable, crushable red.

The Azienda Agricola Pala, or Pala estate, was founded in 1950. From father to son the Pala family has always focused on terroir, tradition, and respect for the environment. Their credo is rooted in the passion to make wines that are able to express the family character and the terroir of the extraordinary island of Sardinia.
Producer: Vigne Rada
Name: Riviera
Variety: 100% Cannonau
Vintage: 2019
Location: Alghero, Sardinia, Italy
Follow: @vignerada

Luigi "Gino" Bardino was a banker by trade who long entertained a dream of devoting his life to wine. After years of studying oenology in his spare time, Gino finally quit his desk job and with the support of his family, he planted his own vineyards and built a small winery.

The city of Alghero lies on the northwest coast of Sardinia, surrounded by stunning beaches and breathtaking limestone cliffs on either side. Conquered by the Catalans in the 14th century, it enjoys a unique culture with notable Catalan influence in its architecture, cuisine, and even the local dialect. Conditions here are ideal for growing high-quality grapes, and in 2012 Vigne Rada saw its first harvest.

Gino chose only grape varieties traditionally found in the region. The farming is sustainable, by hand, with help from the whole family. The bright, plush Cannonau emphasizes freshness over extraction, showcasing a lovely purity of fruit. Serve slightly chilled.