

The Wild Side of Italy: Drink Sicily

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Sicily is one dynamic place. It is filled with abundant sunshine, rugged landscapes, expressive cultures, traditions, rituals, brilliant foods and contrasting flavors. It is Italy's largest and oldest wine growing region, dating back 4,000 years. Over these millennia, Sicily has certainly been through a lot. Tumultuous times, unflattering stereotypes, poverty, varied governance, cultural and political ups and downs. It takes a deep-rooted strength and pride of humanity to push through all this over countless generations. Sicilians, however, have done just that.

If there is one thing that has been at the essence of Sicilian culture for all these years, it's wine. Sicily is a Mediterranean island and has both a temperate and mountainous inland as well as a warm and sun-drenched coast-line. With both climates in such a small land mass, winegrowers can produce a wide range of styles of wine. Furthermore, individual wineries have developed unique winemaking techniques and philosophies over time. These factors make Sicilian wine especially fun to discover. From ancient traditional methods to ultra modern practices, and quite a bit of experimentation, you find it all here.

Since 1796 when Marsala was "invented," initiating a 150 year Sicilian reputation of fortified wine, and the later 20th century famed bulk juice production – today we see the final shift: the modern era boasts quality wines first and foremost.

We owe a lot to the producers who have played a key role in converting Sicily's international reputation from quantity into quality. They've helped inspire other winemakers in Sicily to lower their yields and go for quality first. The rest of the world has become quickly aware of this improved reputation, which is a big reason Sicilian wine is so popular today.

The world is curious. Today's Sicilian exports are showcasing versatility, full stylistic spectrums of reds, whites, sparkling, dessert and fortified wines, and unique indigenous varieties. In other words, Sicilian wine is growing rapidly as a category. It's fun, it's wild, and it's downright delicious.



The breadth of indigenous grape varieties in Sicily make its wine culture incredibly fascinating. There is so much to discover. We are lucky to have the opportunity to taste wines composed of these Sicilian grapes here in Oregon. Try some of these and your eyes will open to all that Sicily has to offer.

WHITES:

CARRICANTE: known for growing at high elevations, almost exclusively around Mt. Etna. This grape has high acidity, high mineral content and complexity which contribute to its longevity.

Murgo Etna Bianco #899974 \$7.69
(70% Carricante, 30% Cattanato)

Planeta Carricante #608007 \$25.19

CATTARATO: a classic and widespread grape in Sicily's central and western region. Used in Bianco blends and alongside Grillo and Inzolia to make Marsala. Robust texture with delicate flavor.

GRECANICO: (Greco, Garganega del Veneto): known for its Greek origins, Grecanico is the identical grape to Garganega which is used to make Soave in the Veneto. Grecanico is noteworthy for its rich, soft and supple texture with beautiful aromatics.

Planeta Segreta Bianco #610100 \$9.79
(50% Grecanico, 30% Chardonnay, 10% Fiano, 10% Viognier)

GRILLO: A grape of western Sicily, it is crisp and light in texture with moderate acidity and some sweetness. Also used in Marsala production.

Terre Grillo #200150 \$6.29

Feudi Maccari Grillo #105144 \$11.19

FIANO: Though this grape is originally from Campagna, it makes great wine throughout the south. It generally produces low yields, can be age-worthy and has floral and spicy aromas with honeyed, nutty flavors.

MandraRossa Fianoo #608515 \$5.59

MandraRossa Terretoriali Santanella #419914 \$12.59
(60% Fiano, 20% Viognier, 20% Chenin Blanc)

Planeta Cometa Fiano #610132 \$28.69

INZOLIA (ANSONICA): the most wide-spread grape in Sicily with good structure and nutty, citrusy flavors and refreshing acidity. Also the main component grape of Marsala.

Donnafugata Anthilia Bianco #635628 \$9.79
(Ansonica and Cattanato)

Donnafugata Chiaranda #635629 \$26.59
(Ansonica and Chardonnay)

ZIBBIBO (MOSCATO DI ALEXANDRIA): produced exclusively on the island of Pantelleria, Zibbibo is prized as fresh moscato and with any amounts of dried grapes. Only a small amount of vineyard land exists and the Passito version is rare and seductive - blending sun, sweet concentrated fruit and wild herbs. Amazing.

Donnafugata
Ben Rye Passito di Pantelleria (375ml) #635635 \$27.29

OTHER WHITES TO TRY:

MandraRossa Pinot Grigio #608518 \$5.99

Planeta Chardonnay #610126 \$28.69

REDS:

NERO D'AVOLA: Originally from the SE part of the Island, now it is widespread in Sicily and can produce everything from light fruitywines to rich and concentrated. A very popular grape for winemakers and wine drinkers both in Sicily and around the world. A smooth, deep and peppery flavor with lots of dark berry fruit.

MandraRossa Nero d'Avola #608517 \$5.99

Terre Nero d'Avola #200152 \$6.29

Planeta Segreta Rosso #610102 \$9.79
(50% Nero d'Avola, 25% Merlot, 20% Syrah, 5% Cab Franc)

Planeta Santa Cecilia #608006 \$28.69

Feudi Maccari Nero d'Avola #898663 \$13.29

Feudi Maccari SAIA 2008 #105128 \$22.29
2007 #898672 \$20.99

Feudi Maccari Maharis #884123 \$39.99
(Nero d'Avola, Cabernet, Syrah)

MandraRossa Terretoriali Bonera #419916 \$13.99
(50% Nero d'Avola, 50% Cabernet)

Donnafugata Sedara #635632 \$9.79

Donnafugata Tancredi #635634 \$26.59
(Nero d'Avola and Cabernet)

Donnafugata Mille e Una Notte #635630 \$55.99

FRAPATTO DI VITTORIA: Light and refreshing wine with bright cherry fruit, high acidity and low tannin. A very unique and refreshing wine and the main component of Cerasuolo di Vittoria along with Nero d'Avola. *Cerasuolo di Vittoria is still the only DOCG of Sicily.*

Planeta Cerasuolo di Vittoria DOCG #610128 \$14.69
(60% Nero di Avola, 40% Frapatto)

NERELLO MANTELLATO (CAMPUCCIO): Native to Etna, it is spicy and medium bodied and similar to Cabernet. Usually blended with Nerello Mascalese to make Etna Rosso.

NERELLO MASCALESE: A lighter clone of Nerello this is earthy and floral with tobacco notes and a more tannic structure. Dynamic, light and lively and even used to make sparkling wine.

Murgo Etna Rosso #896111 \$7.69

(Nerello Mascalese and Nerello Mantellato)

Murgo Brut #105550 \$17.49

Murgo Brut Rose #105559 \$14.69

OTHER REDS TO TRY:

MandraRossa Syrah #608516 \$5.99

Planeta Burdese #610118 \$28.69
(70% Cabernet, 30% Cabernet Franc)

Planeta Merlot #610120 \$28.69

Planeta Syrah #610130 \$28.69

DESSERT WINE:

Planeta Moscato di Noto (500ml) #608008 \$28.69