



Winemaker: Donato Gentile
Generation: 3rd



Terre di Orazio Dry Muscat Basilicata IGP

With a palate that tastes like "summertime" this fascinating take on dry Muscat hails from the volcanic soils famous for Aglianico del Vulture. At times, Muscat can be driven by ego... but not here! The nose is gentile, with soft aromas of tangerine peel and Meyer lemon laced with just a touch of sweetness. 30-year-old vines on average lend the palate a beautiful, balanced acidity along with concentrated flavors of lemon pith and oil. 10-15 families contribute to this wine each year, with yields coming in at just 1.2-1.5 bottles per plant!

WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

No ordinary co-operative, the Cantina del Vulture sits in the shadow of Basilicata's most famous (extinct) volcano and focuses on sustainable, low-yield Aglianico. Case in point, the "Terre di Orazio" DOC, which serves as a mirror for the area's prehistoric terroir and hits on all cylinders with its deep concentration and typicity.

ENOLOGIST

Donato Gentile

TASTING NOTES

- Color** Golden straw with green and copper highlights
Nose Gentile, with tangerine peel, Meyer lemon, and just a touch of sweetness
Palate Medium-light, with flavors of lemon pith and oil, and a nice, balanced acidity
Finish Refreshing and long-lasting



VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

Vineyard Location	Basilicata IGT, Basilicata
Vineyard Size	50 ha
Varietals List	100% Muscat Basilicata
Farming Practices	Non-certified organic and vegan; dry-farmed; grapes picked by hand
Elevation	500 m
Soils	Volcanic
Maturation Summary	In Steel for 3 months
In Steel	3 months
Alcohol	13.0 %
Acidity	6 g/liter
Residual Sugar	0.5 g/liter
Annual Production	200,000 bottles



REGION

BASILICATA

With two small corridors that extend to the Ionic Sea on one side and on the other to the Tyrrhenian, Basilicata is primarily a small, sparsely populated, mountainous region in southern Italy surrounded by Campania to the north, Puglia to the northeast, and Campania to the south. With mountains and hills covering over 90% of its surface, arable land is relatively scarce, and vineyards only cover about 2000 hectares in total... By far, the best-known area for wine production is the Vulture sub-region, spread throughout the hills at the base of the long-extinct volcano after which it's named. In the Aglianico del Vulture DOC, volcanic soils, high altitudes, long ripening periods, and large diurnal swings ensure well-developed wines with good complexity and bold structure. 3 other DOCs (Grottino di Roccanova, Matera, and Terre dell'Alta Val d'Agri) and 1 IGT also allow a departure from Basilicata's superstar, with modest amounts of Montepulciano, Sangiovese, and Primitivo peeking out from behind the Aglianico curtain. Overall, red wine comprises over 80% of the region's total, with native varieties accounting for the lion's share and only tiny amounts of Cab and Merlot planted. Although white wines have always been in the minority, Malvasia della Basilicata in particular is yielding some fantastic results, with worthwhile biotypes of Falanghina and Moscato also beginning to make a name for themselves.

BASILICATA IGT

Although the production of Aglianico-based wine eclipses all others in Basilicata, the region's lone IGT allows for no fewer than 43 varieties, planted over a wide swathe of territory that includes the region's beautiful and remote, mountainous interior and the provinces of Matera and Potenza. Grapes as varied as Barbera, Ciliegiolo, Garganega, Refosco, and Verdeca are permitted, with few restrictions in the cellar, giving winemakers ample latitude to play and experiment. Red, white, rose, sparkling and sweet wines - including passito - all come under this banner. In the past, the IGT dominated production, however the advent of a small number of DOCs has recently reduced the number of overall cases - down to about one third of wines made in Basilicata (with table wines also representing some 40%). While less known (after all, Basilicata produces less than half of 1% of Italy's wine!) this IGT represents a fantastic, unexplored horizon for most wine drinkers - the region and its output remain remote, enigmatic, and increasingly full of potential.



CANTINA DI VENOSA

Located in the heart of the southern Italian peninsula - equidistant from Salerno to the west and Bari to the east - the town of Venosa is beginning to experience a bit of a renaissance. For years, young people moved away in favor of bigger cities and opportunities, leaving an aging population and fields that often went neglected. Fortunately, that trend has started to reverse itself as more and more people seek the peace and safety of the countryside, and as those same young folks return to the nest. Among them is 35-year-old enologist Donato Gentile, who worked in Abruzzo for a number of years, then decided to come back home and assume the helm of the Cantina di Venosa. Founded by 27 growers in 1957, today the co-operative boasts some 350 small growers who average just 2 or 3 hectares apiece. Don't be fooled by the word co-op, however, as this group is ultra-dedicated both to the environment and to producing wines of true quality. The monovarietal wines in the "Terre di Orazio" line, for example, have 0 residual sugar, demonstrate great typicity, and average just 1.2 - 1.5 bottles per plant, rivalling some of the best estate wines on the market. Nearly all farmers use the Guyot system of vine training, limiting the number of clusters per vine, and Donato keeps tabs on everyone's ripeness levels, personally deciding when and where to begin the harvest.

With an altitude averaging 500 meters, Venosa lies some 20 km due east of the extinct volcano Vulture, from which the Aglianico DOC derives its name. The "Terre di Orazio" line of wines, in turn, was named after the town's most famous son, the poet Orazio Flacco (aka Horace) credited with coining the phrase, "Seize the day". (In fact, the frame of his house still stands and can be visited today.) Beyond this, Venosa is a food and wine town, surrounded by vineyards and fields of strawberries, peppers, and rapini greens, all woven into the local cuisine. Decidedly, Aglianico is the primary variety grown in this sub-region (accounting for 95% of the co-operative's vines), and is known here for its bold structure, earthy tannins, and volcanic spice. When asked to compare the results to those of Taurasi, locals confirm that the climate is much hotter in Vulture, with higher humidity also contributing to somewhat softer, more integrated tannins and wines that are a touch more fruit-driven and ready to drink sooner... Any way you slice it, Aglianico del Vulture is its own destination and one of southern Italy's ancient rock stars!