



Winemaker: Giacomo Spanò
Generation: 3rd



Sibiliana Roceno Nero d'Avola Sicilia DOC

Historically, Nero d'Avola had a reputation in Italy for being hard to drink - with its wild bramble and rustic tannins, it was often what they described as "spigaloso" or "edgy". In the past decade especially, that reputation has rapidly been changing thanks to wines like this one. Low in yield and high in quality, this unoaked Nero d'Avola from western Sicily showcases loads of Amarena cherry, tobacco, and round, balanced tannins, making it easy to advance to the next glass! Perfect with zesty pasta, roasted meats, and Napolitana-style pizza.

WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

Founded by a group of local farmers in 1962 in what is today the town of Petrosino, Cantine Europa is now one of the largest cooperatives of small growers in western Sicily. That established, all members are committed to sustainable farming (including picking by hand and dry-farming) and nearly all of the Cantine's offerings are DOC.

ENOLOGIST

Giacomo Spanò

TASTING NOTES

Color Ruby

Nose Blackberry, blueberry, cherry, tobacco and vanilla

Palate Amarena cherry and wild berries with a hint of black olive

Finish Clean, medium



VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

Vineyard Location Sicilia DOC, Sicily

Varietals List 100% Nero d'Avola

Farming Practices Non-certified organic, with no chemicals used; dry-farmed; vegan; picked by hand

Elevation 50-200 m

Soils Argilla (clay)

Maturation Summary Bottled for 3 months

Alcohol 13.0 %

Acidity 3.45 g/liter

Residual Sugar 5 g/liter

Annual Production 180,000 bottles



REGION

SICILY

A Mediterranean crossroads and Italy's largest autonomia, Sicily has been home to winemaking for some 6000 years. In the 8th century BC, the Greeks brought more advanced viticultural techniques to the island, and a brisk trade with Phoenicians and Romans ultimately followed. In more recent centuries, Sicily has been known mainly as a bulk provider of wine grapes – with the focus primarily on quantity – but that reputation is swiftly changing. In the 1980s and 1990s, Sicily's unusual terroir and potential for fine wines finally began to garner attention. Much of the acclaim was initially directed at international staples like Chardonnay and Syrah, but starting in the 2000s, natives like Nero d'Avola and Nerello Mascalese began taking their rightful place center-stage.

A trio of red grapes in particular are driving Sicily's growth today: Nero d'Avola, with its brambly fruit, juicy acidity, and softer tannins, is the most widely planted and wines are often fresh, unoaked, and affordable; Frappato, another easy-drinker with supple tannins, is mostly used as a blending grape; Nerello Mascalese, the powerful, elegant, and sometimes spicy or mineral-driven baseline for Etna reds, is second in volume to Nero d'Avola, but has been rising along with the DOC's popularity. White varieties of note include Cataratto, the most widely planted and often a starting point for Marsala; Grillo and Insolia, a pair of medium-bodied grapes that provide dry but substantive wines; and Carricante, the lush but zippy force behind Etna Bianco. With its dry, Mediterranean climate, Sicily affords its 23 DOCs and single DOCG abundant sunshine, moderate winter rainfall, and constant coastal breezes. As a result, the island's also well-suited to organic farming and the natural wine movement.

SICILIA DOC

Spanning the entirety of the island, the Sicilia DOC was upgraded from the original IGT in 2011, with the primary goal of promoting Sicily's native varieties. Although internationals like Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon are technically permitted, there is an unspoken agreement amongst many producers that the appellation be applied to Sicilian natives like Nero d'Avola, Frappato, and Grillo (to name a few). For better or worse, the DOC Sicilia doesn't supply nearly as much information on terroir as the island's other, smaller appellations. For example, because producers may include grapes from anywhere in Sicily, there's no way to know offhand where they were harvested; on the windswept coast, up a volcanic mountainside, or Sicily's scorching interior? Further, winemakers are allowed to collect fruit from multiple zones and then blend, so grapes may not have come from a single area. Because it's so open-ended and inclusive, this DOC has been called a "wild west" appellation, although to be fair, it's also helped to reduce maximum yields and encourage quality over quantity on the island. Currently, the zone includes over 56,000 acres of vineyards (out of Sicily's total 261,000).

To qualify for the DOC, a bianco must contain a minimum of 50% Ansonica (Insolia), Catarratto, Chardonnay, Grecanico Dorato, and/or Grillo. Rossi and rosati must include a minimum of 50% Frappato, Nerello Mascalese, Nero d'Avola, Perricone, and/or Syrah. Along with a lengthy list of other authorized grapes, any of these may also display the varietal given a minimum of 85% in the bottle. There are no aging requirements, and both sparkling and sweet wines are also permitted.



CANTINE EUROPA

While Cantine Europa may, in true Sicilian fashion, be a large cooperative, what they bottle onsite is proportionately small in terms of production, and their entire outfit is wholly devoted to organic and sustainable farming. Located in what was once part of Marsala and is now the coastal town of Petrosino, the co-op works with over a thousand small farmers who span the province of Trapani and own an average of 4 hectares each. (A minority of grapes are also grown in the environs of Agrigento and Palermo). Whether certified organic or not, all fruit is DOC, picked by hand, and sustainably grown, without the use of chemicals or irrigation. The winery is managed by a board of directors elected each year by its members, and the current president is Nicolò Vinci, a young, forward-thinking agronomist. He works with lead winemaker Giacomo Spanò to oversee production of all bottled wines for the Cantine.