



primavera

– S E L E C T I O N S –

TERRAZZE DELL'ETNA



LOCALITY: Randazzo,
Etna

WINEMAKER: Riccardo
Cotarella

terrazzedelletna.it



SICILY

TERRAZZE DELL'ETNA

THE ESSENCE OF AN ANCIENT LAND

Palermo architect Nino Bevilacqua and his partner, Alessia, didn't relocate quite as far as some, with so many from around Italy and further drawn by the magic of Etna. Over a decade later, these adoptive 'Etnians' have devoted themselves to the renovation, replanting and refurbishment of the old vines and their terraces. Plots were bought in diverse parcels and drawn together in their beautiful amphitheatre-like estate in the premier commune of Randazzo. They have created a remarkable property, acknowledged in equal measure for the look and style of the estate as for the regional authenticity of the wines. Terrazze dell'Etna has gone over and above the signature (and expected) Etna Rosso to produce a cache of wines that display a unique personality.



The Terrazze dell'Etna winery buildings on the edge of the Etna National Park

A THOUSAND VIEWS

Speaking of personality, the stark black volcanic terrain capped by a vivid blue sky perhaps enhances the mystique of this region – wherever you look, there is a stunning and dramatic view! This vista serves to add richness and a visual backdrop to a story catching on all over the world.

The best Etnas are wines that reflect their locales. These varied characters are dictated by site, aspect... that special something we call terroir – which is strongly impacted by Mt Etna itself. The volcanic activity that still occurs today multiplies the number of personalities these vineyards can express.

Two key ingredients for Terrazze dell'Etna are the lean volcanic soils in their Contrada, Bocca d'Orzo, and, equally, the altitude of the vineyards, which lie within Randazzo between 650 and 950 metres – some of the highest in the region.



Nerello Mascalese vines averaging 80–100yrs

THE FRUIT OF THESE 'TERRACES OF ETNA'

In starting the vineyards, Nino asked close friend and famed oenologist Renzo Cotarella to supervise aspects of TDE's viticulture and winemaking. The intention was always to maintain a low-intervention approach to working with the vines. These sloping, terraced vineyards contain vines of great age diversity, starting with the new plantings of 2008 to those dating back to the 1840s. Cotarella is gifted and intuitive, and has produced benchmark wines from this wealth of material. Wines that have layers, nuance, energy and clear regional personality expressed as classic Etna minerality, with a savoury, food-friendly nature.



'Terraces of Etna'

THE WINE — A UNIQUE WHITE AND METODO CLASSICO SPUMANTE

Terrazze dell'Etna are at the forefront of innovation with the most famous local variety, Nerello Mascalese, and make curios in two forms, firstly a stunning metodo classico brut made partially from Mascalese, and a still white wine made from the same variety.

2016 Metodo Classico Brut Rose

A blend of 85% Pinot Nero and 15% Nerello Mascalese coming off the highest vineyards on the property, at 950 metres. The grapes spend 8–10 hours on skins to get a 'stain' of colour. Disgorgement happens by hand after a minimum of 36 months, and is generally finished around 40 months with around 4 grams of residual sugar. Think blood orange and wild strawberries but with that underlying Etna mineral note that makes the overall feel more complex and savoury. Delicious enough that this might easily fill the space for an alternative sparkling at the higher end of the category.

2018 'Ciuri' Blanc de Noir — STILL

The fascinating 'Ciuri' is one of very few examples of a white still wine made with the black Mascalese grape. The fruit is picked from two very different sections of their vineyards. The first portion comes off in early to mid-September (versus the Rosso's late October harvest) at around 650 metres, while a second portion comes off one of their highest sites, sitting just under 950 metres, a few weeks later. At this level, Mascalese won't ripen properly, but this portion adds real acid drive and minerality to the blend. This is an intriguing dry white, with a faint beeswax ...

... note, subtle green tropical characters and a racy spine of acidity. Even with a very light crush before fermentation (to avoid colour), 'Ciuri' still has a touch of tannin, slightly grippy, almost powdery, like a whisp of the tannins of red versions, and they work well in this wine. This pithy phenolic texture partners well with the high acid.



2016 'Carusu' Etna Rosso

'Carusu' in local dialect means little brother – in this case, to their 'Cirneco'. A wine with smaller, less-prominent shoulders structure-wise and lower in body in general, but delicious, with ripe juicy fruits that typify the Etna Rosso style. It's blended with a relatively large portion (20%) of the more fragrant, less tannic but darker-skinned Nerello Cappuccio. The remaining 80% is Nerello Mascalese grown in vineyards as high as 850 metres. Both varieties thrive here and work well together. In this case, they result in a wine with ample spice notes and graphite minerals that carry through on the palate, while being padded by rich red fruits and soft, rounder tannins.

2012 'Cirneco' Etna Rosso

'Cirneco' is considered by TDE as their flagship wine and is certainly textbook Etna. 100% Mascalese from wines averaging around 100 years in age, with layers of complex spice, cherry skin, flowers, minerality and trademark sappiness. A bold and muscular wine with loads of power and rustic texture with broad tannins that are supported by a savoury and dense palate that is packed with dark blue fruits. With a lengthy maturation before release (18 months in toasted 500-litre French tonneaux, then 5 years in bottle), this recently released 2012 is a vintage that could be parked away for many years or tackled now with vigour.