



# WINE TOURISM MAG



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# WINE TOURISM MAG

**WINE TOURISM MAG**  
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# Editor's Note

## *The mother of all Grape*

I am aware that Romania is not the oldest wine producing country in the world, but the fact remains that the wine knowledge that the country has developed during its history still influences the way of doing things today. The vines of the Fetească family could well be at the origin of the cult that man has for wine. Romanians have been turning grapes into wine for over 6,000 years and this experience lives on in the bottle. The famous Black Maiden (Fetească Neagră) is the best known to the public, but several grape varieties produce particularly qualitative wines.

Some producers stand out for their qualities and know-how, such as Buduresca and Vinarte. International investments are coming from all over Europe into the country because the land is still affordable.

**NOROC!**

*M. McDuff*

**Editor-in-Chief**



I think it's now or never to introduce you to exceptional winemaking know-how. The question that remains unanswered remains: 'should we favor local grape varieties over international grape varieties?' The answer is far from simple. I believe local grape varieties have more character but international grape varieties produce exquisite wines. You decide! I hope that the following articles will allow you to immerse yourself in the Romanian culture and make you want to visit this magnificent country. Now is the time to pull out the plugs and make up your own mind.

FEATURED WINE REGION

# ROMANIA



Written by JOANIE METVIER

I gather that when it comes to Romania, wine is not the first thing that comes to mind. However, as insightfully dreadful a visit to Dracula's castle may be, we cannot generalize this large-scale country to a simple legend.

There are probably a lot of things you don't know or don't expect from Romania. From their Latin culture even when surrounded by Slavic neighbors, to the fact that they are one of the biggest wine-producing countries in the world. OIV statistics place Romania tenth in the world for the area under vine. Based on 2016 data, with an area under vine of 191k hectares, Romania was similar in size to Chile and Portugal.

This being said, the truth is only a small percentage of grapes grown is dedicated to quality wine production, the rest being either mass-market possibly reminiscent of communist times, or homemade production as it is common for Romanians to have their own few vines at home.

It's only recently, in the last 10 years, when European investments and demands brought in a new generation of producers, but also the interest in pushing the limits and seeking the true potential of Romanian climate, terroir, and identity. We can now find premium, high-quality wines from some top producers that stand out for their maintained efforts towards producing the best wines possible.

Between the recognition of the different wine regions, pronunciation of the very interesting local varietal, and understanding of the true Romanian wine identity, there's a lot to learn.

**Romanian wine is in a new world state of self-discovery, in an old-world historical time frame of production.**



## DELIMITED REGIONS

The grapevine area in Romania is very diverse, with geographical designations scattered all around this gigantic country, each region has essentially an autonomous climate, and it is all worth discovering. Local vineyards can generally be divided into seven geographical areas.

Legislatively, the viticultural areas in Romania are divided into three classifications: DOC, IG (or GI), and varietal wine. DOC wines (Denumire de Origine Controlată) or wines with controlled designation of origin present certain guarantees to the consumer. There is 33 DOC in total, although 38 DOP are recognized by European standards, some being separated between still and sparkling production. 12 IG are recognized also.

Besides these geographical legislations, some age-restrictive styles are also strictly defined. Designation Vin tânăr may be used on labels, meaning young wine. The term Rezervă may indicate a wine that aged a minimum of 6 months in barrels and 6 months in bottles. In addition, Vin de Vinotecă indicates aging of a minimum of 1 year in oak and 4 years in bottle.

# TRANSYLVANIA ●

The Carpathian Mountain range in central Romania serves as host to Transylvanian's highest vineyard sites. There are five DOC wine regions along three river valleys: Aiud, Alba Iulia, Sebeş-Apold, Lechința, and Târnave wine regions are characterized by their cool climate and hilly vineyards. Here, the traces of vine cultivation and wine production are more than 2000 years old. It is also said that Târnave DOC is the birthplace of Fetească Regală.

## ● MUNTENIEI - OLTENIEI

located in the South-west of Romania, Oltenia hosts several important vineyards. Surrounding Bucharest, spanning over 500 km from west to east. This is where most of the quality production takes place.

Crossed by the Olt river, one of the biggest affluent of the Danube, you'll find on the right bank the well-known area of Drăgășani DOC known for its calcareous, sandy, clay soils, as well as experiments on new varietals creations such as the white grape Crâmpoșie Selecționată and the red grape Negru De Drăgășani. On the left bank, you'll find more Terra Cotta soils, as well as pebbly soils, especially in DOLOVAN DOC. Better drainage and heavy moderating effect from the mirrored big body of water, created by the various hydropower dams along the Olt river.

In the same area, you'll also find the DEALU MARE DOC, probably the most recognized of all in Romania. In some areas, the soil has a high chalk content and even some sea shell deposits. The first written documents about the existence of the vine culture in this part of the country, date from the 14th and 15th centuries. This is Romania's premiere red wine-making region. The indigenous Feteasca Neagra grape is the local hero and makes resonant and elegant wines capable of aging. But other varieties including Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah are very well adapted to the region and make excellent wine.

## MOLDOVA ●

Moldovan hills are located in the eastern part of Romania, on the border with the Republic of Moldova. The region is home to indigenous grape varieties and famous sweet wine called Cotnari. This part of Romania is home to many orthodox churches, which had an important part in the history of winemaking as they owned many lands. This very prolific wine-producing region is highly continental, with beautiful terraced vineyards.

## ● DROBROGEA

Closest to the Black Sea, Drobrogea is home to the Danube Delta as well as Constanta Port and many wildlife reserves. Filled with sunshine and maritime influence, it stands out in style compared to other continental regions. Along with other usual grapes found in Romania, Babeasca Neagra takes its home in Drobrogea.

While producers seem to proudly focus a lot on international varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Chardonnay. The real interest in Romanian wines lies in their local, indigenous varieties. Highly aromatic and rustic, they make up the most interesting, unique wines of Romania.

## 01. Fetească Albă

The white Maiden is an indigenous grape variety representative of Romania, thousands of years old. It is planted in various areas, mainly in Transylvania, Moldavia, and north of the Greater Wallachia.

It makes dry, aromatic wines with a delicate character. Wines made from Feteasca alba have a natural gentle freshness and delicate aromas of white flowers, and citrus, stonefruit and tropical flavors. While it's primarily used for simple, everyday single-varietal wines, we also find it in blends and the production of sparkling wines or the once trendy Cotnari sweet northern Romanian wine.

## 02. Fetească Regală

The Royal Maiden is widely popular in Eastern Europe. It is recognized as the noblest local white varietal. It's most heavily concentrated in Romania's Dealu Mare and Transylvania regions.

Feteasca Regala yields dry, fresh, and aromatic white wines. They tend to be richer in flavor than Feteasca Alba wines with flavors of tropical fruits, green apples, roses, and delicate florals. These wines are typically light-bodied unless they've undergone oak aging.

# UNIQUE VARIETALS

## 03. Fetească Neagră

The Black Maiden is the most prized local varietal and wears its name perfectly. Seeds of Fetească neagră were discovered in ancient vestiges discovered in Romania, more than 2000 years old. It is closely linked to Romanian winemaking history and is the flagship varietal of the country.

Pigmented and robust, this wine is known for its spicy, rustic fruit character, as well as its firm tannic structure.





# BUDUREASCA

**[budureascawines.com](http://budureascawines.com)**

Budureasca is a winery located in Southern Romania's Dealu Mare DOC region. The vineyard covers an area of 275 hectares (680 acres). And it is one of the largest producers from the Dealu Mare Vineyard. The investment in production & technology made in Budureasca is impressive at every point. Modern, dedicated, Romanian-owned, Budureasca is preparing to be on the first row of the bright Romanian wine future.

The Budureasca vineyards extend over 275 hectares of vines and its giant winery was completed in 2013, thanks to an investment of more than 6 million euros.



With its 5200 m<sup>2</sup> built, it is the newest and largest wine cellar in Dealu Mare. It has one of the most modern wine-growing centers in Romania with a production and storage capacity of 3 million liters of wine per year.

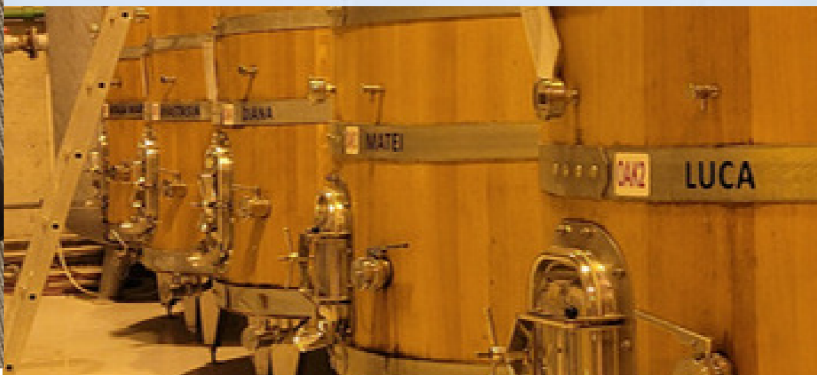
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Flying winemaker Stephen Donnelly is in charge of the production of the estate that is putting Romania on the wine Map. With his strong New Castle accent and even stronger vineyard management knowledge, he's pushing boundaries and proving that proper quality control and understanding of different varietal needs can lead to great results.

They offer modern wines using both international varietals such as Chardonnay, as well as presenting the potential and strong identity of local varietals such as Feteasca Regala and Feteasca Negra.

For Donnelly, while the current production and quality surprise many and surpass his expectations, the winery still has a lot more potential and growth ahead of it.





## BUDUREASCA PREMIUM FUMÉ 2021

This white blend is comprised of Chardonnay, Sauvignon, Blanc, and Pinot Gris. The smoky & Exotic profile, the partial malolactic fermentation, and additional battonage give it a good textural advantage. Oak is well integrated and leaves room for interesting basil and lemon aromas.

## BUDUREASCA ORGANIC CHARDONNAY 2020

Floral and delicate Organic Chardonnay with rich, ripe lemon taste. Fermented in Inox tanks, to preserve freshness and simplicity, it has fresh acidity,

## BUDUREASCA NOBLE 5 2019

A blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Feteasca Neagra that shows a balance between power and suppleness. Opening up on aromatic spice character, cumin, cardamom, and chili powder, as well as deep dark fruits, the blend successfully brings complexity and harmony. Well-structured with more volume and concentration than tannins.

## BUDUREASCA ORIGINI FATEASCA NEAGRA 2018

Aged in a mix of french and Romanian oak, this plummy wine is rich and warm with cassis, earth, and spices notes. There's a rustic side to its character with a good tannic presence and a rounded, heavy mouthfeel.

## ROMANIAN WINERY

# VINARTE



Vinarte is one of the few Post-communism pioneer wineries established in 1998 from Franco-Italian investments. From the start, the winery's goal was to produce quality wines with careful viticulture practices, a sharp selection of vine plantings, and meticulous, modern winemaking techniques.

1999 was the first vintage for Vinarte, in their magnificent location & unique terroirs sourcing fruit from three of the best locations: Samburesti, Starmina, and Zoresti. In Sâmburești, Vinarte owns a domain called Castel Bolovanu with a total area of 60 hectares. The wine region where the Castel Bolovanu vineyard is located is one of the oldest and most beautiful in Romania, and recent archaeological discoveries lead us to believe that its history stretches back at least 2000 years.

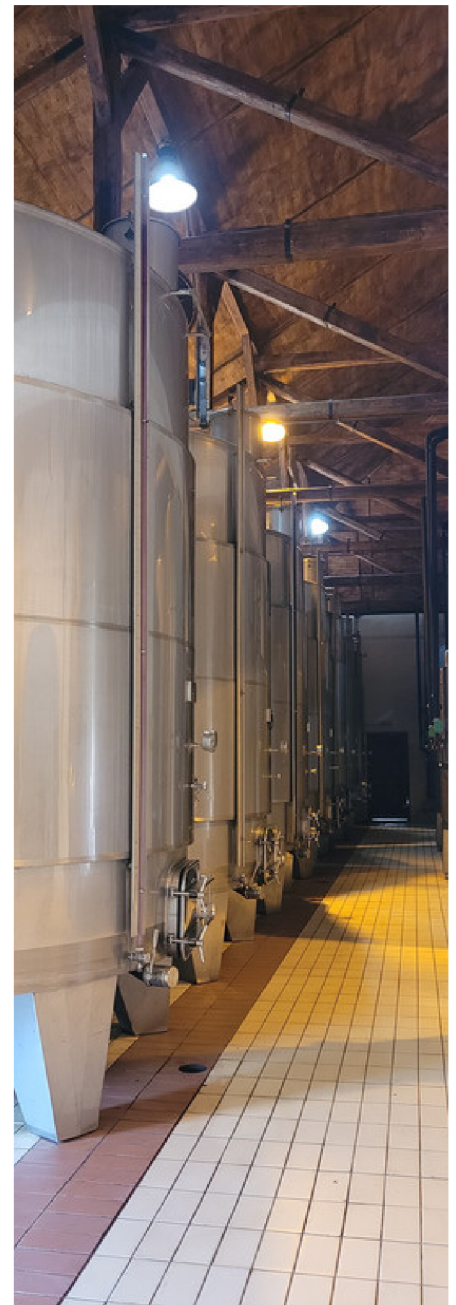
Vinarte has developed a portfolio in which the native grapes are blended with international ones: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot & Cabernet Franc are the most planted, but they also highlight the unique character of Fetească Neagră, as well as some experimental grapes created in the Drăgășani research facilities on the Other side of the Olt River, the unique varieties called Novac and Negru of Drăgășani





New investments from Switzerland, have also brought a lot of Innovation and structure. Since 2019, the winery is under the ownership of Tim Brockman, and the winery took a turn towards a diversification of the portfolio with the addition of 9 hectares of white varietals, as well as Wine tourism development and a new market expansion. Canada, France, Luxembourg, Belgium, Poland, China, Korea, and Japan already embrace Vinarte products.

This is very innovative as Romanian wines are often considered a curiosity or an exotic choice on International markets, but Vinarte is providing proper communication & education on their products & Romanian winemaking history.



# SOARE

Soare Cabernet Sauvignon brought the company the recognition as a specialist in red wines that they still enjoy today. With a 24 month of Barrel aging, about 25% new oak, these wines are the ultimate expression of Romanian potential. The winery still keeps wines in vinoteca wines since the very first vintage in 1999. An intense wine, that shows incredible suppleness & complexity even after 20 years.



## Nedeea Cupaj Roșu

NEDEEA label is promoting blends of local grape varietal. For this red wine, it's a unique blend of Feteasca Neagră, Negru de Dragășani and Novac. Strong in taste with intense red fruit aromas and a lovely rusticity. It's a wine that is easily identifiable as Romanian in style.

## Soare Blanc de Noir

One of the new white wines added to the Vinarte portfolio, this Cabernet Sauvignon-based white Blanc de noirs shows lovely red fruit aromas of red currant and cherries, with a texture that reminds white tannins and a strong freshness. Very original wine.

## Prince Mircea Fetească Neagră - Rezervă

Concentration and rusticity would best describe this wine. Rich and bold, with deep black fruit aromas and a wild game nature, it has great complexity. Dark chocolate, aniseed, black currant & blueberries blend in a rounded and intense taste.

## Q - Ediție Unică Riesling

Produced only once since the opening of the winery, this sweet and decadent Late-Harvest Riesling is the result of years of experiments. Sweet & peachy with vibrant acidity, this is a sweet wine that can compete with world-class levels. While Romania's production does include many sweeter, aromatic style wines, not many are made as proper, complex dessert wines like this one.



# MEXICAN WINE

## AN IDENTITY TO BE CONFIRMED

ARTICLE BY ANA GALLEGOS

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You may be one of the fortunate ones who has planned to spend your next vacation in Mexico. Beyond all the wonders that the country abounds, there may be one that you do not suspect. These are the vines found across the country whose history dates back to the 16th century.

Pre-Columbian populations already used the vine pre-existed to make a beverage mixed with honey. We could say that Viticulture in Mexico began in the times of colonization since the Spanish imperialists sent *Vitis Vinifera* for the first time to the American continent.

It was Hernán Cortés who brought vine shoots to Mexico, and on March 24, 1524, he ordered that for five years, 1,000 vines should be planted per year for every 100 natives at his service, thus establishing the first vineyards in the mid-16th century. The missionaries of the Catholic Church took advantage of this order to use it at mass. The influence of the missionaries on the Mexican wine industry is such that a grape bears its name: the mission grape, today better known as Pais o Criolla.

The significant and rapid expansion of wine production created competition for Spanish wines, leading King Felipe II to request the destruction of Mexican vineyards in 1595. The Catholic Church became the last beacon of viticulture in the New World and that, of course, all but wiped out the Mexican wine industry.

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In the same period, some bodegas benefited from special authorization so clergy members could continue to have wine for mass. This is how the king authorized 1597 the Bodega San Lorenzo (today Casa Madero) to continue to produce wine. This makes it the oldest wine estate in America and one of the oldest in operation worldwide.

Finally, after the Mexican Revolution, viticulture and Mexican wine production regained a foothold in the country. Rich in a long history, Mexican wine did not regain a certain dynamism until the 1950s to 1970s. However, damage to the world market has been significant, and the export of Mexican wine is now almost impossible because of the high taxes.





# Where does Mexico produce wine?

Baja California (a tongue of land in the extension of American California) concentrates a large part of national production today. However, other popular Baja wine spots such as the Valle de Santo Tomás, the Valle de San Vicente and Ojos Negros produces 90% of Mexico's wine.

Other regions have been counted as Coahuila or Aguascalientes, and the grape varieties are all international, from Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc and Sauvignon Blanc for the whites to Cabernet-Sauvignon, Merlot, Nebbiolo or Carignan for the reds.

The gigantism of Mexico (nearly four times larger than France) explains why there is a wide variety of soils (rolled pebbles, sand, gravel, granite, red clays, brown clays, etc.). However, a recurring problem arises in the cultivation of vines and the production of wine: the lack of water. The climate is indeed often Mediterranean, not humid. Therefore, irrigation is essential in the country's ten wine-growing regions.

In the fields, 37,000 hectares are cultivated, producing almost half a million tons of all kinds, but only 12.5% divided between 200 estates is used for winemaking. The wine industry generates jobs for 500,000-day laborers, which makes it the second source of employment in the agricultural sector after the fruit and vegetable sector. Although large groups invest significant resources to enable the production of quality wines, there is still considerable room for advancement. Mexican wine has excellent potential, but its identity is yet to be confirmed.



XOLO NEBBIOLO-CABERNET  
SAUVIGNON 2020



# TOP WINES FROM VALLE DE GUADALUPE



F. RUBIO, MEZCLA ITALIANA 2019

34% NEBBIOLO  
33% MONTEPULCIANO  
33% SANGIOVESE

RUBER CARDINAL MERLOT 2018

VINO TINTO CAVA MACIEL PERIGEO  
100% PETITE SIRAH 2014, EDICION LIMITADA



→ 13

→ 13 A

FILM NEGATIVE

FILM NEGATIVE



CASTA DE VINOS PITAYA 100% GRENACHE VINO ROSADO



→ 14

→ 14 A

FILM NEGATIVE



CASTA DE VINOS #INCLUSION 2020  
EDICION LIMITADA MERLOT NATURAL



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## DISCOVERING THE WINE SECRETS OF THE SOUTH EASTERN SICILY

Article by Filippo Magnani

There are two things you can be sure of when taking a food and wine itinerary in Sicily: you will always learn something new and you will always leave a piece of your heart there when you leave. From the 13th to the 15th of July a well-organized press tour by Assovini Sicilia, led a handful of international journalists in three intense days discovering the South Eastern part of Sicily. First in the area around the village of Noto from the Baroque splendours, to the promised land of Nero d'Avola; and then in the territory of Vittoria, the area of the now unique Sicilian DOCG, with the homonymous Cerasuolo name. Many estates were visited, dozens of wines tasted together with producers, and a combination of cuisine specialties of the island that were interpreted by local cooks or starred chefs. A continuous temptation, and indeed, an inexhaustible discovery.



## SICILY'S SOUTHEAST,

## THE HEART OF THE ISLAND IN THE CENTER OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Sicily is in the heart of the Mediterranean Sea and the largest under vine area of Italy. An area that counts a multitude of appellations that are slowly becoming more and more famous thanks to the success of productions able to clearly express the combination of Sicilian microclimates. From the vineyards on the island of Pantelleria to the extreme fields on the slopes of Mount Etna, Sicily is an island of unparalleled beauty and diversity. South-East Sicily certainly embodies the essence of Sicily and embraces some of the most important wine areas among the dense web of appellations of the island. Noto DOC was created in 1978 to protect the local historical passito of Moscato. Recently the regulation has been expanded to include red wines based on Nero d'Avola, which today covers up to 84% of the vineyards. The area has been under vines for thousands of years. It is a sun-kissed, warm territory but it benefits from the mitigating effect of the coastal proximity. From these hills the view of the island is open, the sea breeze envelops the atmosphere, and the lively green of the vineyards is matched with the dark soil. Surrounded by beautifully restored ocher-colored farms. The neat geometry of the vine rows is organized by dry stone walls, sometimes alternated with monumental plants of prickly pears, and finally some small, sparse patches of trees that almost seem to wonder what they are doing there...The scenario around the wine district of Vittoria is different. The territories of production include the municipalities of Ragusa, Vittoria, Comiso, Acate, Chiaramonte Gulfi, Santa Croce Camerina, Niscemi, Gela, Caltagirone, Licodia Eubea, Riesi, Butera, Mazzarino and Mazzarrone (five in the Ragusa province, two in the Caltanissetta province and two in the Catania province).

The area is delimited to the north by the Erei mountains and to the south by the Mediterranean Sea. The inland is occupied by the majestic Iblei mountains from which many waterways descend. The streams have dug through the land and shaped valleys on which the vineyards climb, and through the thermal breezes coming from the coast, which can deeply affect the climate, creating abnormal temperature excursions close to twenty degrees. On Vittoria's hills, the soils are differentiated by Millennial stormwater runoff, producers can use this to produce red wines characterized by structure and sapidity versus tremendously drinkable wines with splendid fruity notes. To visit the vineyard estates, it is necessary to go down into these valleys completely submerged by cultivations.



The possibilities are endless. The variability of climatic conditions with the multiplicity and succession of the soil (clay, sandy-loamy, limestone soils) allow producers to interpret their personal and intimate Sicily in their bottles of wines. The finesse of the Cerasuolo by Vittoria Docg is expressed in blends composed of the only two native vines allowed by the disciplinary: Nero d'Avola and Frappato, in 50 to 70% and 30 to 50% respectively. The two contrasting varieties prove to be extremely complementary. The fragrance of Frappato goes perfectly with the more meditative aspect of Nero d'Avola, creating unique wines. These styles of wines are neither light nor heavy, they go beyond any concept on the seasonality of wines. The depth and structure of Nero d'Avola is lightened and harmonized by the fresher aromas and elegance of the fantastic Frappato. Wine has to speak for the territory as much as it can give a little hint of the soul of its inhabitants. Vittoria's wines are bright and exuberant, just like the people there.

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## LAND OF TALES WITH A WIDE ARRAY OF BEAUTIFUL WINE ESTATES TO VISIT.

South-East Sicily is one of the most coveted wine destinations for wine lovers and wine connoisseurs. Wine tourism has become a key factor for territorial promotion. There is an increasing number of tourists who visit these lands just to discover the wine traditions. While visitors discover the mosaic of small and large wineries hidden in every corner of those lands, the protagonists of the Sicilian wine scene have understood the infinite potential of their land and they are moving towards the future, offering a more and more impeccable travel proposal, starting from unique experiences in the cellar, through food delicatessen, to beautiful retreats. The “blend” of ancient traditions and modern cultivation practices with market strategies and investments for hospitality and tourism has made Sicily one of the most interesting wine destinations in Italy. The pulsating center of the area is Syracuse. The City of Syracuse combines works of the Greco-Roman era, spectacular squares, artisan boutiques, and of course the breathtaking shores and a crystal-clear sea. To the Southwest lies Val di Noto. The rolling hills or the valley frame a few beautiful late-baroque towns such as Noto, Ragusa, Modica, and Scicli. Perfect places to enjoy gastronomic delights in small Osterie, Taverns, or Michelin-starred restaurants, surrounded by works of art and monuments that exude the history of man. The rest of the land is wild with luscious green vineyards, rocky ravines and prehistoric tombs, a thread woven between nature and man that runs from the hills to an uncontaminated rugged coastline. A wide array of properties with great wine production and hospitality proposals for wine enthusiasts and wine professionals. Here are the wineries we visited during the magnificent tour.





## Donnafugata

Donnafugata in the territory of Acate boasts 36 hectares, divided into 3 districts (Biddine Soprana, Biddine Sottana, and Isola Cavaliere). The grapes grown are Nero d'Avola and Frappato. Nero d'Avola, king of the Sicilian red grape varieties, is the most widespread in Sicily, thanks to its strong ability to interact with the environment. In the Vittoria area, it expresses itself with the wine of medium structure and particularly fine tannins. Frappato is one of the oldest Sicilian varieties, which loves the typical climate of the DOC Vittoria area, it makes fragrant and floral wines, extremely pleasant on the palate and delicately tannic. The Vittoria winery has a wine shop and enoteca dedicated to visitors who are welcomed all year round for tastings and guided tours

## Terre di Giurfo

The company was founded in 2001 by Guglielmo Alessi and his wife Giuseppina Giusino. The Cantina is located in Contrada Giurfo in South Eastern Sicily, in the Province of Ragusa, in the magic, silent, and old Dirillo river valley. It is spread over 90 acres of precious land that has given for years fine and tasteful grapes. Presently 35 acres are cultivated by espalier system. To assure the quality of their wines, Terre di Giurfo counts on the experience of a qualified oenologist and a professional staff, on the use of thermo-controlled wine-making techniques, and the constant overseeing of the whole wine-making process, from harvest to bottling. Giurfo's estate also falls in the territory of the DOCG to the Controlled and Guaranteed Denomination of Origin (D.O.C.G) for the Cerasuolo di Vittoria.



## Valle dell'Acate

All of the 175 acres (70 hectares) of vineyards, property of the Jacono family for six generations, are definitively certified as biological. Characterized by seven soil types of a different nature and structure, they extend all around the "Palmento Alla Dispensa". Seven different zones which offer a unique character and identity of the wine, unmistakable in their pure expression, one sought with constant integrity. Through the cultivation of the finest native grape varieties, the employment of technologically advanced winemaking plants, and the experience acquired by a solid tradition, Valle dell'Acate produces elegant expressions of this DOCG territory: Cerasuolo di Vittoria Classico and the Cerasuolo di Vittoria Cru Iri da Iri, the DOC Vittoria Il Frappato, the DOC Sicilia Bidis-Chardonnay, Zagra-Grillo, the Moro-Nero d'Avola and Tané.







## Santa Tresa

Santa Tresa: where nature, tradition, and culture meet. The name comes from the contrata, or tiny hamlet where the estate is situated. It is a colloquial abbreviation of Santa Teresa, one of the best-loved religious figures in Sicily. From 1697. Santa Tresa and its wines tell the story of Vittoria, which is a very Sicilian story! Stefano and Marina Girelli have let themselves fall in love with Santa Tresa, which has now developed into something even more beautiful. Santa Tresa, the soul of Sicily, has been brought back to life by a brother and sister from Trentino.

## Planeta- Buonivini Estate

After establishing the first winery at Ulmo in 1994 Planeta's 'Viaggio in Sicilia' took off, in other words, the search for the best-known areas of the island to create independent wineries and produce what would be considered the best wines in each area, working with indigenous vines while continuing to experiment with international varieties. Planeta has also devoted increasing investment and resources, under the guidance of Francesca, to the development of property activities and particularly to high-profile hospitality. The estate Buonivini became a center of hospitality linked to wine tourism ( Tastings, events, experiences, wine sales) and fully represent the synthesis of Planeta's activities and their vision.



## Feudo Maccari

In front of you the great Leptis Magna, to the left the Peloponnese, to the right Carthage, on the hills behind you the vineyards of Feudo Maccari look out over Capo Passero and the Island of Correnti. At Noto, on the cliffs and beaches at the most southern edge of Italy, is found the new personal challenge of Antonio Moretti Cuseri. The challenge of Feudo Maccari continues. The ascent to the highest of Sicilian wine makes a stop among the whites. Not just any, but a great interpreter of classic grape varieties of the island, faithful and versatile companion of many styles.

## Peter Vending

Established in 2005 by Peter and Susie Vinding-Diers, Montecarrubo is a small estate situated on the remains of a volcano in Sicily. Montecarrubo is certified organic. The wines are made in limited quantities and are available in a number of markets around the world. The company consists of 5 hectares in the Melilli property and another 5 hectares in the one in Noto. In the first (Melilli) the two most prestigious wines are produced: Vigna Grande and Vignolo. In the second (Noto) Cuvée Suzanne and Il Carrubo are produced.



## Zisola

Tenuta Zisola lies in south-eastern Sicily, the birthplace of the Nero d'Avola grape. It's just a stone's throw from Noto, a UNESCO world heritage site famous for its Baroque architecture. It was here, in 2003, that the Family Mazzei began their wine-making project: 52 hectares of family-owned land extending around three Bagli (traditional farmhouses), the largest of which enjoys splendid views across to Noto and the Giardini of vines, olives, citrus fruits and almonds that surround it. Tenuta Zisola is currently being converted to organic production; it will be certified fully organic by 2023. The winery is small but efficient, with vinification in temperature-controlled stainless steel vats for and some 350 oak barrels in which our wines are aged. In addition to wine, we produce extra-virgin olive oil.



## Assovini

Assovini was founded in 1998 and it is the organization that most supported and carried out the territorial development project in the last 25 years for wine production and wine tourism. Today, along with 90 producers and nearly 900 labels produced, they are aiming to bring the fantastic value of Sicilian wines worldwide. In this direction, Assovini in 2004 created the event Sicilia en primeur: A Yearly itinerant event where the producers and the members of Assovini, lead a selected international press through tastings, tours, masterclasses, and conventions.



# AMARONE

AMARONE OPERA PRIMA, A SPECIAL  
EVENT TO DISCOVER THE TERRITORY  
AND WINES OF VALPOLICELLA.

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ARTICLE BY FILIPPO MAGNANI



The body and intensity of Amarone is traditionally associated with winter, wonderful if enjoyed in front of a warm, cosy fireplace. Infact, the anteprime dedicated to Amarone della Valpolicella has always been held in the early, frigid months of the year.

The 2022 edition was unique in every aspect. It was held in the summer from 17th to 20th June. The objective of the Consortium of Valpolicella was to demonstrate and enhance the versatility of the wines of this area, aiming to reimagine Amarone from a 'challenging' wine that is mostly paired with game dishes to a more contemporary styled wine, balanced with less concentration and more fitness. On this concept the first exclusive masterclass "Amarone 4wd, off the beaten track" scheduled for June 18th at Palazzo Verità Poeta, opened the programme for Amarone Opera prima. It shed a spotlight on pairings with cuisines from four corners of the earth accompanied with 4 different expressions of the territory of Valpolicella. The challenge was assisted by Nicola Portinari, a chef with two Michelin stars at the restaurant La Peca in Lonigo.

In this extraordinary event of the previews of the 2017 vintage of Amarone, the Consortium of Valpolicella wanted to mix the masterful wine production from this area with the other flagships and absolute attractions of the Italian territory: history, art, culture, and music. On the night of the 18th, the 100 wine writers from 20 different countries, present for the occasion, were invited to attend the Aida Opera by Verdi in the beautiful frame of the Roman Arena di Verona. An amazing moment that everybody enjoyed, before getting ready for the grand tasting of Anteprima Amarone the following day in the Palazzo Della Grand Guardia in the heart of Verona.



## AN OVERVIEW ON AN ICONIC WINE TERRITORY

In the centre of northern Italy, located in an extraordinary and unique microclimate is the wine district of Valpolicella. Home of masterpieces including Amarone, Recioto, Ripasso, Valpolicella and Valpolicella Superiore. This wine region is a jewel of the Italian wine tradition. The area is characterised by a moderate continental climate. Many factors maintain this extraordinary pedoclimatic balance\*. The northern border is occupied by the Monti Lessini plateau, probably the most important area from which the most valuable grapes of the DOC are harvested and shielded against cold currents from the Alps. Going south, the land assumes flatter features, a luminous valley that reaches the banks of the river Adige. To the west the borders of the DOC touch the famous “neighbouring” wine district of Bardolino, on the shores of the fascinating lake Garda that has major influences on the entire climate of the area. It maintains mild winters and ensures excellent ventilation. To the east, the city of Verona rises: the cultural and historical centre of this bright area. The Valpolicella Classica, it is located in the northern area of the wine district and includes the towns of Marano, Fumane, Sant’Ambrogio, Negrar and San Pietro in Cariano.



### VALPOLICELLA WINE REGION

MAP WITH GEOGRAPHICAL SPECIFICATIONS



- VALPOLICELLA DOC
- VALPOLICELLA DOC CLASSICO
- VALPOLICELLA DOC VALPANTENA

On the beautiful rolling hills, we can find soils with poorer characteristics with a major presence of limestone, clay, and volcanic soils as well. Preferred areas for the production of wines with great balance and complexity, longer growing season, and more concentrated wines with high acidity. To the east of the classic area the doc enclaves the territories of Valpantena, and Valpolicella DOC.

## VALPOLICELLA, THE ELDORADO OF THE WINE TRAVELLING

With its 240 km<sup>2</sup>, the Valpolicella has an ancient heritage, the name itself may refer to “the valley of the many wineries”. Viticulture and winemaking have been rooted here for centuries. A charming valley with stretches of vineyards framed by traditional marogne (dry stone walls). Historic territory, precious, where the interweaving of autochthonous varieties gives life to incredible high-end wine production, the result of traditional techniques settled over time. Wines are linked to a territory that every year attracts wine lovers, professionals, and collectors eager to know and deepen themselves into the different interpretations of Valpolicella, in particular its Amarone. The rolling hills are decorated by orchards and olive groves, small family-run wineries, and famous wineries in the elegant Venetian Villas, now converted to wine resorts for an immersive experience. This place is a precious piece of Italian history.

Heading southeast, Verona rises at the heart of the wine area. In the hometown of Vinality, the yearly wine fair at the beginning of April where more than 4,000 producers gather from every region of Italy, trying to impress wine lovers from all over the world with tastings, seminars, and talks. The City of love and the scenario of the intense passion between Romeo and Juliet. The City of the Arena and its Opera, home of the famous Piazza Delle Erbe, and undisputed flagship of Italian life. To the east you can choose the enchanting Verona; the west side opens up to Lake Garda. A lake destination that can be chosen by those who want to visit the charming hamlets and small villages on the shores, alternating days of tastings with boat rides, long walks of different intensities, water sports and sensational fish meals. In order to help the guests in this extraordinary territory, a mobile app has been developed that has the task of directing the oeno-curious towards the experience that is adduced more, being able to choose from a wide range of options.

# Amarone

## OPERA PRIMA



## TASTINGS AMARONE DELLA VALPOLICELLA DOCG 2017

2017 showed lovely ripe fruit and good aromatic intensity. In general, I tasted great wines rich in structure, with persistent fruit, well balanced with firm tannins. A sufficient level of acidity guarantees freshness to almost all wines. This shows the hard work of the producers during an uneasy season.

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### BERTANI - AMARONE DELLA VALPOLICELLA DOCG VALPANTENA 2017

Colour ranging from ruby core to light garnet rim. Intense flavour of ripe plum with balsamic notes of mint. A hint of vanilla. Rich in structure, with persistent ripe fruit, well balanced with soft tannins. Fresh long finish. A great wine.

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### CA' LA BIONDA - AMARONE DELLA VALPOLICELLA DOCG CLASSICO 2017 "RAVAZZOL"

Deep ruby colour. Rich bouquet of blackcherry with hints of violet. Round, full body and warm. Good structure with quite delicate tannins and long length. Lovely wine.

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### CA' RUGATE - AMARONE DELLA VALPOLICELLA DOCG 2017 "PUNTA 470"

Ruby core with narrow light rim. Great nose with ripe plum, spicy notes of liquorice and rhubarb. Slight notes of leather. A full body wine with good freshness. Present delicate tannins and quite a long aftertaste. I like it.

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### GERARDO CESARI - AMARONE DELLA VALPOLICELLA DOCG CLASSICO 2017

The colour is medium ruby with a compact rim. Pronounced intensity of ripe red fruit mixed with notes of chocolate and tobacco. Medium body with ripe red fruit and freshness. Moderate coarse tannins. Quite a long finish. I really appreciated it.

