Etna Rosso DOC 2018

Alberto Graci's grandfather used to grow grapes and make wine in central Sicily. In line with the times, he produced quantity over quality. On his death Alberto returned from his life as investment banker in Milan to take over the vinous reins, but in his way. Alberto sold his grandfather's land, and bought vineyards on Etna thus returning to his Sicilian roots, but on a part of the island where the sun is tempered by altitude (600+ m.a.s.l.), the soils are volcanic (obviously!), and there are old, ungrafted vineyards.

Alberto Graci's main property, Arcuria, is in Passopisciaro, in the northeast of Etna. Of the 18 hectares planted to vineyards, 15.0 are Nerello Mascalese, 1.5 are Carricante and 1.0 is Catarratto. Alberto's top Nerello Mascallese vineyard is Barbabecchi, a 5 hectare plot planted with 2 hectares of pre-phylloxera Nerello on its own roots. At 1000 metres, it is not harvested until November.

'Etna is a special place,' says Graci, who today runs the estate with his sister Elena. 'We only cultivate traditional varieties indigenous to Mount Etna and aim to respect local traditions as well as the distinct characters of each vintage. The land decides, not us. We believe that only by listening carefully and responding to the expressions of Nature in our territory can great wines be born. Great because they are true.'

Technical Details

Grape Variety	100% nerello mascalese, harvested in the second half of October.
Vineyard area:	The fruit is sourced from a vineyard in the sub-zone of Passopisciaro in the Comune of Castiglione di Sicilia. The vines are bushed trained on the north-eastern face of Mt Etna at between 600 and 700 m.a.s.l. at a density of 6,000 to 10,000 vines per Ha.
Soils:	The brown soils are of volcanic origin, rich in fossils, iron and sand, with a high nitrogen content.
Method:	The wine is fermented and in large open top wooden fermenters (tini) with indigenous yeasts and no temperature control, with maceration on skins for 30 days. The wine is matured for 24 months in cement tanks, during which time the malo-lactic fermentation occurs spontaneously. The wine rests in bottle for two months prior to release.
Alcohol	14%.

Tasting Notes

Colour	Deep mulberry ruby red.
Bouquet	On the nose some violets and balsamic notes.
Palate	The palate is all about intensely black forest fruits - perfectly ripe, crunchy, minerally and spicy. The tannins are fine and chalky with good acidity and length.
Winemaker	Alberto Graci