Winemaker: Nini and Michele Palamà
Generation: 3rd and 4th

PALAMÁ

Verdeca Salento Bianco IGP

Verdeca is a fascinating, ancient white varietal from Puglia, and its origins are shrouded in mystery. It is thought through clonal research to be distantly related to both Verdicchio and Rueda's Verdejo, and one sip of this beauty from Palamà, and you'll know why. Bright, taut, and surprisingly "cool climate" in its complexion, this Verdeca succeeds in part because it is handmade by one of Southern Italy's greatest makers of rosato (so Nini' Palamà understands "crystalline" wines). With notes of lime, pomelo, and mint oil, it has a gravelly under-girding that provides terrific structure. Lovely!

WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

Surrounded by three seas, father and son Nini and Michele work side by side on the Salento Peninsula, the sun-drenched heel of the Italian boot. As they could achieve ripe fruit in their sleep, the family's real artform lies in control – watching, waiting, and harvesting before grapes overripen, allowing them instead to showcase Puglia's spectacular terroir.

ENOLOGIST

Teodosio d'Apolito

TASTING NOTES

Color	Straw yellow with greenish hues
Nose	Lime leaf, lemon blossom, tangerine, and a hint of mint oil
Palate	Pithy and bold, with layers of warm citrus
Finish	Refreshing, fun medium finish

VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

	12
Vineyard Location	Salento IGP, Puglia
Vineyard Size	8 ha
Varietals List	100% Verdeca
Farming Practices	Sustainably farmed; dry-farmed; grapes picked by hand
Elevation	80 m
Soils	Calcareous clay
Maturation Summary	Bottled for 3 months
Alcohol	12.0 %
Acidity	5.8 g/liter
Residual Sugar	3.5 g/liter
Annual Production	21,600 bottles

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PALAMÁ

PALAMÁ

A winemaking family of ancient Greek origins, the Palamà's are also beloved and accomplished restaurateurs, icons in their hometown of Curtofiano, just south of Lecce. For 70 years, they only sold their wines in their own restaurant – until Small Vineyards came knocking at the door. Today, the winemakers are Ninì Palamà - son of Arcangelo, and a gregarious, larger than life character – and his son, Michele. Every year, even coming from one of Italy's warmest climates, their wines provide a study in poise and restraint. With a backbone of Negroamaro and Primitivo, they are of course full-bodied, intense and unctuous, but thanks to a watchful eye, the wines are never overripe, with low alcohol (for the region) and carefully measured tannins. In many ways, the wines of Palamà capture the power of Italy's south, together with the elegance of the north.

Centered on the Salento Peninsula, Nini's 18 hectares of vines lie less than 1 hour from 3 different seas (the Adriatic, Ionic and Mediterranean), and the lifestyle is warm and relaxed. A far throw from places like Tuscany and Piedmont, Puglia is home to fishing villages, Greek ruins, and azure waters as far as the eye can see. All around are sub-tropical flora such as cacti, fig and persimmon trees, and the local, agro dolce cuisine reflects the multi-cultural (including Spanish and Phonecian) origins of this slow-paced paradise. Food pairings need not be complicated. Together with one of their wines, for example, something as simple as an oil-cured olive or sundried tomato can awaken the palate and make it sing! In addition, one thing we love about Palamà's reds is their ability to pair as readily with seafood as with meat. In a maritime community such as theirs, it's just as common to see Negroamaro paired with octopus or scampi as with pizza, or Primitivo served with char-grilled tuna over lamb.

REGION

PUGLIA

The famous heel of the Italian boot, Puglia has a wine history dating back over 2000 years, when the Greeks first arrived on the scene. Surrounded by 3 seas (Adriatic, Mediterranean and Ionic), there are over 800 kilometers of coastline, and their marine breezes are critical for viticulture in this hot and arid location. Puglia's winemaking zones correspond directly to its provinces: Foggia in the north, Bari and Taranto in the middle, and Brindisi and Lecce to the south. While olive groves are omnipresent (the region is responsible for almost half of Italy's total olive oil production), Puglia's provinces diverge when it comes to wines.

Beyond their history and geography, the delineation between north and south can be observed directly in their wine varietals. The upper extremity of Puglia shares the same latitude as Rome, and that area produces grapes (ie Montepulciano and Sangiovese) more commonly seen in Abruzzo or Tuscany. The south, on the other hand, is a world all its own, with a separate culture (including a Greek-influenced dialect), and varietals exclusive to those latitudes – most notably the thick-skinned Negroamaro and Primitivo.

Over the past few decades - and following a postwar period that saw a marked decline in quality winemaking - Puglia has gone through some major changes thanks to investments by the EU, a generation of conscientious producers, and a host of new regulations. Once focused only on quantity, the region now has winemakers bent on showcasing the unique terroir of Puglia, including the peninsula's fascinating terra rosa soils. While it remains Italy's largest volume producer of wine grapes (with less than 10% finished in the bottle) fresh investments from influential producers and a new generation of young, artisanal winemakers have helped boost Puglia out of Europe's cellar and into the global spotlight.

SALENTO IGP

Italy's heel is essentially a long, flat peninsula, with the Salento zone at its southern extremity. With brick red soils (terra rosa), subtropical palms, and even cacti dotting the landscape, it is truly one of Italy's most unique and Mediterranean landscapes. With several DOCs governing the production of more traditional wines, the Salento IGP gives producers the flexibility to grow additional varietals and create unprecedented blends. The designation covers a wide array of white, sparkling, rosato and red wines, and encompasses a long list of grape varieties (over 50 combined, at last count). These include native Puglians, like Verdeca and Primitivo, northern Italian classics, from Garganega to Barbera, and international varietals like Cabernet Sauvignon and Sauvignon Blanc. A fairly recent appellation, the Salento IGP was established in 1995, and covers over 11,000 hectares (28,000 acres) spanning the 3 provinces of Lecce, Brindisi, and Taranto.