Winemaker: Alfio & Rosario Maduado
Generation: 3rd & 4th

MADAUDO

Barone di Bernaj Cerasuolo di Vittoria DOCG

A traditional blend from Sicily's lone DOCG, this fresh and friendly wine weaves together the dark fruit of Nero d'Avola with the freshness and aromatics of Frappato. 6 months in French barriques help to elevate the wine without detracting from its lighter style (or affordable price point). Vineyards are planted at 500 m just east of the Mount Etna DOC, sharing in its sun-drenched clime and pure volcanic soils. The perfect pairing for vibrant Mediterranean fare!

WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

With all hands on deck, Cantine Madaudo is a true Sicilian family affair: 4th generation winemaker Rosario Madaudo works beside his father, Alfio, and uncle, Andrea, along with his younger brother, Giuseppe and two cousins, Maria Pia and Cristina. Together, they have transformed a small family tradition into a serious estate with vineyards in both Sambuca di Sicilia and the north slope of Mt. Etna.

ENOLOGIST

Vito Giovinco

TASTING NOTES

Color	Light ruby
Nose	Dark orchard fruit,
Palate	Medium-bodied with flavors of dark plum, chocolate, and tobacco leaf
Finish	Clean, with hints of earth spice and herbs

VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

	12
Vineyard Location	Cerasuolo di Vittoria DOCG, Sicily
Vineyard Size	3 ha
Varietals List	60% Nero d'Avola 40% Frappato
Farming Practices	Organically farmed (non-certified), dry-farmed, grapes picked by hand
Elevation	500 m
Soils	100% volcanic
Maturation Summary	Bottled for 1 month
Alcohol	13.5 %
Acidity	5.6 g/liter
Residual Sugar	1.6 g/liter
Annual Production	20,000 bottles

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MADAUDO

CANTINE MADAUDO

Rosario Madaudo's legacy of wine started with a small farm back in 1945, when his great-grandfather began working their first vines in Villafranca Tirrena, a small, coastal commune on the Thyrrenian side of Messina in the northeast corner of Sicily. Today, the young winemaker assists his father, Alfio, and uncle, Andrea, oversee a thriving business that includes 20 hectares on the north slope of Mt. Etna (some 90 km away), 40 hectares in the Agrigento (on the other side of the island), and a hip wine bar devoted to bubbly attached to the winery in their hometown. What impresses Rosario the most is what happened in the years he went away to school in Milano, studying first economics and then getting a masters in food and wine communications. Upon returning home, he was amazed at how his elders had taken a small family business and added an exponential, expanding production far beyond the previous generation. He speaks excitedly both of their accomplishments and of his own desire to bring the business full circle one day by adding a small, single estate to the equation. In the meantime, he remains humble and industrious in the cellar, working alongside his younger brother, Giuseppe, cousins Maria Pia and Cristina, and also his wife Alda, whom he met in school in Milan.

A mainstay in Messina (also a mecca of Sicilian street food), sparkling wine remains a center of gravity for the Madaudo family - they produce a wide array of bubbles, spanning both traditional method and charmat. For their Grillo Cuvee, grapes are grown in the high, warm hills of the the Agrigento region. (The base wine is then transported to their bottling facility in Messina.) This first love also influenced their choice of enologists: extremely well-known in Sicily, Vito Giovinco specializes in Sicilian sparkling wine and, as it happens, himself owns vineyards in the same two areas as the Madaudo's: Sambuca di Siclia and the Contrada San Lorenzo cru on the north slope of Etna. Coincidence? Possibly... or perhaps they all know something the rest of us do not!

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, Sicliy 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 varietals 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.

CERASUOLO DI VITTORIA DOCG

A reference both to the cherry-like aroma of the wine and to the Countess Vittoria Colonna who founded her namesake city in 1607, Cerasuolo di Vittoria has a history extending back over 400 years. To encourage production, the countess gifted a single hectare of land to each of 75 founding colonists, on condition they plant it (along with an additional hectare) with vines. Today, Sicily's lone DOCG is quite large, extending well beyond the town proper. To the north and south, the Erean Mountains and Mediterranean Sea form natural boundaries... from east to west, the appellation canvasses the province of Ragusa, bordered by the Iblei Mountains and hills of Caltanisetta, respectively. (In total, the DOCG spans 45 miles across, with vineyards spilling over into both Catania and Caltanisetta.) Identified as a DOC in 1973, this high, warm sub-region was elevated in 2005 and involves a single red wine. The blend must include 50-70% Nero d'Avola and 30-50% Frappato. While the Classico version must be aged for a minimum of 18 months, the basic DOCG (typically unoaked) can be released as early as June after the harvest. Unlike the powerhouse tannins of Etna Rosso's and fruit-driven Nero d'Avola's produced elsewhere on the island, wines from this area are lauded for their nuanced nose and lighter, graceful palate. The integration of Frappato, fragrant and lighter-bodied than the most robust Nero d"Avola, is therefore key to success. In addition to cherry aromas and flavors ("cerasa" in Sicilian dialect and "kerási" in Greek), orange zest, red berries, black olive, fresh herbs, and Mediterranean scrub are often discernible on both nose and palate.