



Our messengers from Etna...

Aglaea – the youngest of the Three Graces or Charites as they were also known the three sisters, and daughters of the God Zeus. Aglaea was the goddess of beauty, splendor, glory, magnificence and adornment. At times she acted as messenger for Aphrodite, the goddess of love.

Aglaea is significant with all our sentiments for Etna; with what our wines try to express, and how they do so. In that sense, our wines, the wines of Tenuta di Aglaea act as our messengers from Etna.

The Vine & the Vineyards

An absolute unique terroir makes the vineyards – a direct consequence of Etna and its numerous eruptions since its volcanic activity began more than half a million years ago. The lava flows hardened layers upon layers, and ashes filled on top. The result today is a very porous soil that is abundant in minerals and extremely fertile. The vineyards are

cultivated in terraces held up and apart by ancient stone walls 3-4 feet high.

The vineyards are located at the North side of Etna 2300-2700 feet above sea level providing for a relatively cool climate but with lots of sunshine, and light not least from the reflections coming from the sea, and the surrounding mountains with their characteristically high proportion of chalk. All the vineyards are planted with Nerello Mascalese, and trained by the Alberello system. The plant density is approximately 3,200 vines per acre, and yields at a very low 1.65 pounds grapes per vine.

Three Unique Locations

The miniscule and excellent vineyard Bocca d'Orzo (.75 acre) in the zone of Randazzo combined with Passo Cannone (2.5 acres) and Santo Spirito (1.2 acres) in the zone of Passopisciaro make up the 4.5 acre production site for our wines.

Nerello Mascalese is considered most likely to be an indigenous Sicilian varietal, and is found in a large variety of clones. In our vineyards, due to old customs, we find also a few of the white carricante vines. These, however are harvested separately, and the grapes sold off.

Nerello is a grape with unique characteristics and is genuinely capable of expressing its background. It ripens late and slowly – how slow depends on the altitude that automatically provides for a cooler climate hence longer maturation period. The consequence is a grape that can offer a very distinctive and elegant nose - a very refined and aromatic profile all together.

The grapes are harvested by hand at the peak of maturity – when phenolic ripeness reaches climax, when sugar levels are perfect, and when we taste the grapes and they tell us that it is time.



Anne-Louise Mikkelsen



“I was programmed from early childhood to prefer the ‘adult life’, “” Anne-Louise Mikkelsen explains, “I would rather work than go to school and I always worked my holidays. I couldn’t wait to conclude my studies.”

After secondary school in her native Denmark, she studied a year in the United States, then went to high school in Denmark and continued to Copenhagen Business School where she studied International Business while competing in kickboxing and developing her interest in wine. “I got so enthusiastic about wine – I couldn’t get it out of my head. And one morning I woke up, and wrote an unsolicited application to [wine merchant] KB Vin.”

She got a student job at KB Vin with owner Kim Bulow, a specialist in Burgundy, which became the first region she got to know in depth.

During the summer holiday of 2003 she departed for Meursault in Burgundy, and worked for Jacques Thevenot-Marchal. In her spare time, she drove around to taste with as many producers as she could, and she was often offered to taste the better bottles once she took out her notebook and her sincere interest became obvious.

In 2004 she got a consultancy job in Connecticut where she investigated new distribution channels for a Swedish wine company. Completing that, she moved to Grenoble, France, to study more business and once more spent the weekends tasting wines in Burgundy.

Early in 2007, Anne-Louise read an account of the Italian Count, Gelasio Gaetani d’Aragona Lovatelli in the Financial Times. He had been a wine consultant to George Clooney, Michael Douglas, Don Johnson and Sharon Stone. Her interest piqued, she sent him a letter that led to an invitation to join him in Tuscany. They bonded immediately and spent several days tasting wines and discussing the industry. Upon her departure, Gaetani exclaimed, ““You need to stay here and work - you get it: you understand our challenges!”

Later in the year, Anne-Louise again met Gaetani at a wine auction in Rome where he announced that he had a job for her at Castello di Terriccio, and she became responsible for the estate’s wine export and website in January 2008. “I felt really good – I felt at home in Italy culture-wise and lifestyle-wise. It was where I wanted to live my life.”

Later that year, Anne-Louise met the celebrated Italian winemaker, Paolo Caciorgna, (who counts musician Sting as one of his many clients), who had been making wine on Etna’s northern slopes. The volcanic terroir, and the old pre-phyllloxera Nerello Mascalese vines fascinated him. In 2005, he bought his first parcel, Passo Cannone, which was a little over one acre in size, and made the wine *N’Anticchia* which in Sicilian dialect means ‘little’. That ‘the little’ can become something big he expresses like this: “Even miniscule vineyards have their very own identity; an identity we seek to understand in the vines, and express in our wines.”

After their encounter at Etna, she left her post at Castello di Terriccio in the fall 2008 and collaborated with Caciorgna in making Etna wines as well as an independent consultant for smaller producers advising on pricing, sales strategy etc. Their partnership lasted several years.

But the old friend Gelasio was still lurking in the background. He suggested that she take a job at Tuscany’s Tenuta di Argiano, which is owned by his ex-wife, Countess Noemi Marone Cinzano. In January 2009, Anne-Louise Mikkelsen was appointed to the Commercial Director chair at Argiano, and spent 3 ½ productive years there, until her resignation in 2013 in order to devote herself to her own projects.

As of now she lives in a forest in Tuscany. From here she commutes to Etna where she now owns a couple of acres herself, aside from what she tenants and buys from other growers.

Anne-Louise observes: “The direct way doesn’t exist – you can only do something at Etna if you have the right connections and people want to help you. You have to be part of the local community to work there. Several wealthy people have invested at Etna because it got trendy. But for many it became a backlash because they aren’t present. [Wine] is a live product – incredibly faceted, you shouldn’t produce it just for fun, so to speak. To many it has become a drag; a smaller fortune that has turned into red figures. It must be something you really care for, and you have to be present yourself.

“In Sicily, life is lived in an almost melancholic way, very simple but also very present and real; very alive and intense as it was lived 60 years ago. You live the moment, every instant. Etna has its own unique rhythm – there is just something in the air. You live, just live. Life is what it is; simple pleasures, and in Sicily—and especially Etna—we breathe it every day. There is a gratitude, a friendliness and joy. For me it is paradise: To watch the dusty vines being able to produce so beautiful wines – the yearly- if not to talk life cycle that a vine goes through is absolutely fascinating. The workers who work in the vineyards have hands the size of my thighs. Tough work, rough hands, and yet it delivers such elegant wines. It is about basic life conditions where all the unnecessary is eliminated. It is the weather that counts; everything depends on that. We are small human beings when we watch and consider the old vines that were planted in the beginning of the 1900. We are basically just passing through, whereas the vines produce grapes every year, and will still be standing there when I will be here no longer.”

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TENUTA DI AGLAEA

Società Agricola Semplice



Vineyard Comune	Contrada	Altitude Meters / Feet above sea level	Grape varieties	Training system	Size Ha.	Year of planting	Expected/ Common use Intentions
1 Castiglione di Sicilia	Marchesa	707 / 2154	Nerello Mascalese	Spalliera (Cordone)	1,16*	2016 & 2017	'Thalia'
2 Castiglione di Sicilia	Santo Spirito	767 - 790 2338 - 2407	Nerello Mascalese & Bianco mix**	Alberello	0,56	1983	'Ctr. Santo Spirito' exclusively
3 Randazzo	Pianodario / Bocca d'Orzo	782 / 2386	Nerello Mascalese	Spalliera Guyot	0,33	1984	'Annacare' / single contrada
4 Randazzo	Sciara Nuova	773 / 2356	Nerello Mascalese / Bianco & Rosso mix**	Cordone doppio & singole	1,10	1984 Dates back to 1920'ties	To be tested 1. harvest 2018
5 Randazzo	Chiusa Politi	842 / 2566	Nerello Mascalese	Spalliera Guyot & Alberello	0,26	1987 to be confirmed	Potentially single contrada
6 Bronte	Nave	1.002 / 3054	Nerello Mascalese	Spalliera Cordone & Alberello	0,64	1984 dates back to 1940'ties	IGP 'Aglaea'

* Still not in production. Expected first harvest – 2020

** White grapes to be vinified separately to produce Bianco IGP Terre Siciliane. It consists of Catarratto, Carricante, Inzolia, Minella, Greganico

'Year of Planting' has to be taken with a grain of salt in that this is the 'official' i.e. when a piece of paper was made to officially document the existence of a vineyard. In most places there were vines many years prior to the official recognition. Good example is the vines at Santo Spirito.

A few words on the new vineyards...

4. Schiara nuova

An excellent position and not far from Bocca d'Orzo – a very good zone no doubt. It will be exciting to see what comes about during harvest in that it is not clear yet how much and what whites we will find, and what reds besides Nerello Mascalese. I will, perhaps do to separate harvests of the reds here to keep nerello mascalese and the others separate and see what they propose once vinified. And of course the white will be picked earlier and vinified the whites of Santo Spirito.

A fairly well kept vineyard yet still a great amount of work to be done liberating space around the vineyard and replanting within the vineyard.

5. Chiusa Politi

A tiny vineyard in the contrada Chiusa Politi which heads towards the Quota mille area. It is difficult to get to – we'll have to be creative for harvest because the truck won't be able to get up there. It is excellently kept like only the ancient gentlemen in the area know how to. And besides beautiful old vines it has an abundance of everything from cabbage, strawberries, cherries, potatoes, beans, zucchini, chili, mint, sage, artichokes etc. Old fashion way of doing things – once you have a little fertile vineyard soil at your disposal you might as well grow everything needed for the household, and so it is a Chiusa Politi.

6. Nave

South-west of Randazzo lies the area Nave that has yet to be fully explored. Old and many abandoned vineyards lies around and my Nave is one such. The part of the vineyard that is spalliera still looks like a vineyard (besides the lack of cutting the branches in time!), the rest has alberello vines dispersed around and about with lesser success. A Laurel tree the size of the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center stands almighty in the middle of it all.

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Nave and the python vine - more than 12 feet long!



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Società Agricola Semplice



The Christmas Bay Laurel



The view from Nave – the top of Etna in the background

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Chiusa Politi



Chiusa Politi – the greengrocer's dream!

Santo Spirito and its old vines





BIANCO SICILIA

Bright-gold color in the glass. Fresh notes of apple, light tropical scents of pineapple, and toasted notes slowly unfold as the wine sits in the glass. A fresh core of fruit gently opens up on the midpalate and is edged off with a good acidity that lingers on to the end. It is well-rounded, balanced with a smooth, long finish.

Appellation

DOC BIANCO SICILIA, Carricante Comune di Castiglione di Sicilia e Randazzo (CT)

Altitude

2250 feet above sea level

Terroir

Black soil, deep porous volcano ash soil with traces of sand, very rich in minerals

Exposure

North - North-East

Plant density

3200 vines per acre

Training system

Alberello

Grape variety

Carricante

Harvest

Middle of October

Yield per acre

2.3 tons

Vinification

The alcoholic fermentation and malolactic fermentation were both carried out in stainless steel tanks

Maceration

8 months in French barriques of second passage

Food pairing

The wine drinks wonderfully on its own as well as it pairs great with many sorts of vegetables e.g. asparagus, light pasta dishes, various preparations of fish, especially in the form of sushi, as well as mussels, and scallops, and soft or semi-aged cheeses.





Thalia

Thalia is a word of Sicilian dialect and resembles 'look' as in 'look there!' It is also the name of one of the Three Graces in ancient Greek history. The wine is transparent dry strawberry red in the glass, and expresses itself in a light and elegant manner. It opens up perfumed with delicate mineral aromas particular of the lava soil, a firm body, and fresh fruit notes accompanied by gentle tannins - soft and delicate. Smooth drinking now but if patience permits, even better in five years' time.

Technical specifications

Appellation

ETNA ROSSO DOC Comune di Castiglione di Sicilia e Randazzo (CT) Parcel N° 16, 17, 150, 228 of Map N° 61 e58

Altitude

2250 feet above sea level.

Terroir

Black soil, deep porous volcano ash soil with traces of sand, very rich in minerals.

Exposure

North - North-East

Plant density

3,200 vines per acre

Training system

Alberello

Grape variety

Nerello Mascalese (selection Massale)

Harvest

Middle of October

Yield per acre

5,292 pounds

Vinification

The alcoholic fermentation and malolactic fermentation were both carried out in stainless steel tanks.

Aging

8 months in French barriques of second passage. Refinement in bottle three months.

Food pairing

Thalia goes very well with lighter meat based dishes e.g. pork, veal and poultry. Vegetables like cabbage and spinach, mushrooms, carpaccio, a diverse set of antipasti and pasta dishes are good companions as well as lighter fish dishes.





Aglaea

Aglaea is name of the youngest of the Three Graces – the three sisters and daughters of God Zeus. The wine 'Aglaea' is the 'youngster' in our portfolio, and made from grapes of both old and young vines. It is bright cherry red. Dried herbs and minerals make up the gentle perfumes, while on the palate good acidity and hints of dry cherries capture the senses. A light savory mouthfeel lingers towards the end.

Appellation

IGP Nerello Mascalese, Terre Siciliane Comune di Castiglione di Sicilia e Randazzo (CT) Parcel N° 16, 17, 150, 228 of Map N° 61 e58.

Altitude

2250 feet above sea level.

Terroir

Black soil, deep porous volcano ash soil with traces of sand, very rich in minerals.

Exposure

North - North-East

Plant density

3,200 vines per acre

Training system

Alberello

Grape variety

Nerello Mascalese (selection Massale)

Harvest

Middle of October

Yield per acre

5,292 pounds

Vinification

The alcoholic fermentation and malolactic fermentation were both carried out in stainless steel tanks.

Maceration

Two days at 50°F - six days at 82-84°F

Food pairing

Aglaea drinks well with a wide range of lighter dishes (no heavy sauces), salads and vegetables in all forms and shapes, and antipasti and snacks e.g. roasted nuts, carpaccio, salami etc.





Annacare

Annacare is of the finest selection of grapes. The name is a word derived from Sicilian dialect and means 'to lull' like to gently lull a newborn to sleep. Annacare is the essence of our perception of Etna and 100 year old Nerello Mascalese that has all to tell. It is pure, like magic spring water, and offers lots of mineral notes from the many century old lava-streams from where it derives. Light fruit notes of strawberry and raspberry. Reveals velvety tannins, is elegant, complex and with a long lasting aftertaste. It shows gracefully, is extremely delicate, self-confident and sophisticated. Drinks well in five-12 years.

Appellation

ETNA ROSSO DOC Comune di Castiglione di Sicilia e Randazzo (CT) Parcel N° 16, 17, 150, 228 of Map N° 61 e58.

Altitude

2250 feet above sea level.

Terroir

Black soil, deep porous volcano ash soil with traces of sand, very rich in minerals.

Exposure

North - North-East

Plant density

3,200 vines per acre

Training system

Alberello

Grape variety

Nerello Mascalese (selection Massale)

Harvest

Middle of October

Rootstock

Pre-phylloxera

Yield per hectare

5,292 pounds

Vinification

Fermentation in stainless steel tanks; malolactic fermentation in barriques.

Ageing

18 months in French barriques, (50% new, 50% used once). Refinement in bottle minimum sixmonths

Food pairing

Annacare goes well with many different ingredients and dishes. We would propose to pair it with both classic rustic Sicilian dishes as well as fine food. Lamb, vegetables, truffle, heavier fish dishes, mushrooms (funghi porcini), white meats and 'lighter' cooked red meats. Roasted nuts, and hard cheeses like comtè, gruyere, pecorino and good parmesan.

