

The Etna
Estate

Etna Rosso Doc Contrada Marchesa 2020

Light ruby red in color, the cru Etna Rosso Doc Contrada Marchesa presents an elegant bouquet with fruity, floral, and balsamic notes. In the mouth, it stands out for its great balance and fine tannic texture that makes it an icon of volcanic elegance.



PRODUCTION AREA

Eastern Sicily, on the northern slope of Etna, in the Marchesa district at Castiglione di Sicilia.

GRAPES

Nerello Mascalese, the main red grape variety native of Etna.

SOILS AND CLIMATE

Mountainous orography; sandy soils of volcanic origin, fertile and rich in minerals. The vineyard in Contrada Marchesa is at an altitude of 700 m a.s.l. Continental climate with Mediterranean influences, characterized by harsh winters and summers with strong day-night temperature ranges. The vineyard is located in a natural amphitheater surrounded by thousands of years old 'bare' sciare (with little vegetation) that enhance the temperature ranges. In this district, average temperatures are colder and therefore ripening is later. The peculiar composition of the soil and the microclimate are the imprint of Contrada Marchesa that Donnafugata interprets - in the vineyard and in the cellar - to create a cru with a unique personality.

VINEYARD

About 3 hectares (7.5 acres); partly etnean *Alberello* (bush vine) with 6,900 plants per hectare, 80 plus years old, and partly VSP (Vertical Shoot Positioning) trained with spurred cordon pruning with a density of about 4,500 plants per hectare. The production yield is about 4-5 tons per hectare (1.6-2 tons per acre). Approximately 3 hectares traditionally cultivated on terraces delimited by dry lava stone walls; Etnean *Alberello* training system with plants over 80 years old and a density of approximately 7,000 plants per hectare, and VSP vineyards (Vertical Shoot Positioning) with spurred cordon pruning and a density of approximately 4,700 plants per hectare. The production yield is 45-50 quintals per hectare.

VINTAGE

On Etna's northern slope, the 2020 vintage was mild, with a rainfall of 792 mm, in line with the average* for the area (801 mm); a typical Etna year with rainfall also recorded in the spring and summer, which is quite usual for vineyards located above 700 m. On this side of the volcano, the weeks of September were dry; this climatic factor, together with the decision to carry out some thinning, favoured the desired ripening and the smooth running of the harvest.

**Average rainfall recorded in Randazzo since the 2007 harvest; in this area, rain-*

fall data refer to the agricultural year from November 1 to October 31 of the following year.

HARVEST

A careful selection of the grapes in the vineyard, and manual harvesting in boxes; in the Marchesa district the Nerello Mascalese was harvested between 6th and 11th of October.

WINEMAKING AND AGING

At the reception in the cellar, a further selection of the bunches on the vibrating table and subsequent selection of the berries thanks to a destemmer that selects only perfectly ripe berries, discarding the green and overripe ones. Fermentation in steel with maceration on the skins for 10-12 days at a temperature of 25 °C (77 °F). Aging for 14 months in French oak (second and third passage barriques) and at least 22 months in the bottle before being released.

TASTING NOTES

Light ruby red in colour, the *Etna Rosso Doc Contrada Marchesa 2020* presents a fragrant bouquet with fruity hints of redcurrants and cherries, balsamic notes and of aromatic herbs (rosemary and thyme) that blend with spicy notes of clove and forest floor. In the mouth, it stands out for its great balance between freshness and structure. The fine tannic texture enhances this cru, icon of volcanic elegance. (February, 27th 2024)

AGING POTENTIAL

Over 10 years.

ARTISTIC LABELS

The protagonist of this label, designed by the illustrator Stefano Vitale, is brimming with charm and mystery. A volcano-goddess with an aristocratic face, adorned with precious jewels: flowers and fruits that reflect the prestige of this select area. The label also depicts the medieval village of Castiglione di Sicilia and its vineyards interspersed with volcanic ashes.

FOOD PAIRING

Excellent with risotto, meat, and game. Try also with legume or vegetable soups delicately spiced. Serve in large goblets at 18 °C (64 °F).

ANALYTICAL DATA

Alcohol 13.93 % vol. - total acidity 5.5 g/l. - pH 3.56.

FIRST VINTAGE

2017.