

SEPTEMBER 2016: SICILIAN SHOWDOWN #2

This was our second comparison of wines from Sicily (the first was in [May 2007](#)), and was again more of a sampler compared to the usual format of our tastings, with three whites and three reds.

Overall, these were well-made wines, leaving us pleased about the state of winemaking in Sicily, with the whites being especially delicious, and all the wines having complex aromatics.

Guests were assigned a wine, but no points were awarded, and the results below are in the order tasted.

Donnafugata Grillo SurSur 2014 (Sicilia). Lots of minerality, plus complex scents of herbs, butter, apricot, green apple, caramel, lemon, autumnal flowers, spices, and passion fruit. Josephine found a "green stemmy thing". Citrus, tangerine, peach and a hint of effervescence on the palate. Great balance, a bit clamped on the mid-palate, but a great finish. Josephine described it as "very polite", with Suzanne deciding on "pretty", and Kristin noting that it "has an elegance to it". David loved the brightness and freshness of it. Probably the best white of the night. Kristin's bottle. About \$25.

Cottanera Etna Bianco 2014. Tasters found aromas of pencil eraser, chalk, green pepper, honeydew, and freesia. Ali was reminded of "a Hello Kitty product". Round texture, with plenty of acidity and nice bitterness on the finish, featuring flavors of green pears, melon, orange rind, carnations, and minerals. Nicely done. Josephine's bottle. About \$27.

Planeta La Segreta Bianco 2015 (Sicilia). Made from 50% Grecanico, 30% Chardonnay, 10% Viognier, and 10% Fiano. Notions of suede, sneaker rubber, apricots, dried pine needles, under-ripe lemons, fresh wood, red roses, and laurel leaves on the nose. Honeysuckle, lime, and vanilla flavors, with a slight impression of sweetness. Ali was reminded of "dishwater, with citrus detergent", while Josephine felt it was "more assertive". A touch of wood on the finish. Suzanne's bottle. About \$15.

Fondo Antico Nero d'Avola 2014 (Sicilia). Unfiltered. Scents reminiscent of violets (plus leaves), tire store, cleaning agent, caramel, candy corn, prunes, plum, evergreen, raisins, rotting fruit, dust, and smoke. Kristin was reminded of "Waterfire from this apartment". An initial wave of cranberries and cherries, but is overall short and a bit unforgiving, showing some brown sugar notes later. Josephine thought it was "the acerbic uncle that takes a while to warm up to". Great with the sun dried tomatoes. Ali's bottle. About \$20.

Planeta La Segreta Rosso 2014 (Sicilia). Made from 50% Nero d'Avola, 25% Merlot, 20% Syrah, and 5% Cabernet Franc. On the nose, there were notions of skunk, low tide, camp fire, overturned earth, eucalyptus, musk, and lily. Ripe tannin on the palate, with flavors of cola, Moxie, cranberries, blueberries, cherries, and touch of butter. Decent length, with a black pepper note on the finish. Great with fatty meats. Josephine noted that it "mellowed and became more cohesive" with air. David's bottle. About \$16.

Tenuta delle Terre Nere Etna Rosso 2014. Tasters found aromas suggesting nutmeg, smoke, toast, a touch of butter/cream, cloves, orange zest, white roses, and bacon. Andy felt this was like "a fancy breakfast", while David noted that it was "a bit more mysterious". Dark, savory, with a lot of depth to the cola and cherry flavors. Josephine felt that it was "very plain spoken". Good intensity and composure, with impressive density of flavor, as well as being tannic and integrated overall. Probably the best red of the night. Andy's bottle. About \$30.

