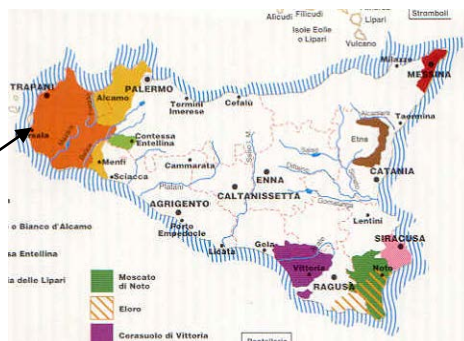


WINERY PRESENTATION



ITALY →

Sicilia →

Nino Barraco

Nino Barraco winery was created by Nino (Antonino) Barraco and his wife Angela in 2004. Nino started with 7 hectares owned by his father Vincenzo, as well as other vineyards owned by Angela's family. Later, he added more, and now has about 10 hectares (25 acres). The winery is based in the area of Marsala, in the western part of Sicily. Though Nino's adventure started several years before, while he was in Palermo as a political science student. In his spare time he started making wine, using his dad grapes and sold it to a famous little bistro and wine bar in Palermo. The wine was so good that it immediately gained cult popularity with the locals.



Grillo' vine

The vineyards of Barraco are close to the sea on predominantly sandy soil with some limestone and pebbles. The vines are generally old and the majority are grown in an alberello (bush tree) trellis system. Over time, depending on the variety, the alberello bushes/vines have been trained to become a guyot (or a sort of guyot) and some new vines are just guyot. "My challenge", Nino Barraco states, "is to bring back the level of winemaking that used to be practiced in a region where vine growing and winemaking has been done for thousands of years. I want to steer away from production methodologies that, for too long, aimed to make quantity over quality wines. It is necessary to re-think the vineyard management and the ratio between the leaves and the grapes, by doing basically the opposite of what vines made to make Marsala wines in recent generations. Essentially going back to early practices. This is important because of the vineyards' proximity to the sea, high temperatures and presence of scirocco winds (a hot wind blowing from the Northern Africa desert) just before harvest time, making the grapes lower in acidity. Because of this, green harvest is a must. The canopy is managed by leaving more leaves as well." This is just one part of the game. "It is necessary to also re-educate the consumer on the wines from this region – ones that are truly the traditional.

I want to bring back the emotions of this terroir". And Nino adds, "It must be remembered that the real objective of a wine producer should be to bring emotions, by making the most intimate part of our territory available and known. Wine should express the core of the place where the vines live. Indeed, if a particular kind of grape has become more resistant and is growing in a certain place, there must be an historical and geographical reason, and its wine must of that and of the producer his or her vision and interpretation of the world. My idea is not about making a perfect wine, but to make a wine that has a very strong personality, even if there is something ajar in it. Wine to me is the result of a personal journey of the producer and there is no space for any technical aide".

This means, both in the vineyards and in the cellar, everything must be done in a natural way.



Natural is different than respecting tradition. Nino says: *"Being natural first means acting in a way that respects the eco-system, preserving the land, the animals and the plants, which enhance the health of your vines each year"* Absolutely no pesticides or systemic treatments are ever been used in the vineyards. But, like many other natural producers, Nino never sought organic or biodynamic certification. In order to make sure that every single vine is getting the best nutrients, Vincenzo and Nino achieve fertilization by using *favini* (fava beans) to produce "*Massa Azotata*", as Nino calls **nitrogen biological fixation (BNF)**¹, which help the vines to produce healthy grapes. In case of sudden mishaps, a little use of cow or horse manure, aimed to the root, is added.

Green harvest is necessary to allow the plants to work on selected grapes and transfer all the nutrients. By using this practice, Barraco achieves ripeness of the grapes and its seeds (is able to harvest earlier?) earlier than other local producers, bringing a higher level of acidity/lower pH.

¹ BNF = Biological Nitrogen Fixation. BNF was discovered in 1901 by Beijerinck; it is an essential process to plants life. Plants need nitrogen as a critical element for growth and production. Nitrogen is the main part of chlorophyll, essential to photosynthesis (besides being a key block for proteins building, ATP and nucleic acids). Plants, though, can only use nitrogen as a combined element, so it must be "served" to them. That can happen naturally either by 1.) decomposition of organic matter (normally) or 2.) by the conversion of atmospheric nitrogen into compounds (like a lightning into the ground - rare). Otherwise by man intervention... promptly served like the 3.) addition of ammonia and nitrate fertilizer (so called Haber Bosch process, key in conventional agriculture); 4.) by adding manure (green or animal) to the soil (slower process but safer). In all but 3.) BNF must be present. It is carried by micro organisms (prokaryotes) in the soil that are able to catalyze the nitrogen to ammonia and balance the need of the plants acting in symbiosis. BNF is at the basis of solid farming both Organic or Biodynamic (Horn Manure 500 preparation enhances BNF). Conventional agriculture instead is jumping the process by feeding plants directly what they need...good in short term but killing the organisms in the soil in the process, compromising the plants and the soil in the long term. In 1977 Dr. Alan Smith discovered how this process works in detail... His original speech appeared in 'Australian Plants' Vol. 9 No. 73, 1977... and was immediately pulled/silenced by the chemical company Dr. Smith was working for (as all the fertilizers would have been not sellable anymore...). It has been republished on International Permaculture Journal #7 March 1981. It is available from us as well, in case you are interested.

The grapes grown are all indigenous. The whites grown are Catarratto, Zibibbo and Grillo - Grillo being the most important grape white of the region. The reds include Nero D'Avola and Pignatello also known as Perricone.

The Vineyards are in three areas: Petrosino, Castelvetrano and Marsala.

Contrada Corleo in Petrosino
Rina Vecchia in Castelvetrano
Abbadessa in Marsala
Casazze in Marsala
Contrada Bausa in Marsala
Ceusa in Marsala
Contrada Giudeo in Marsala

The winery is in construction, in a facility owned by Barraco family, and will hopefully be completed by the 2015 harvest. Nino has been able to rent a space in a local winery and to bring in his tanks. A handful of 25HI stainless steel tanks are used both for fermentation and for ageing and fining. Grapes are destalked and the grapes are left macerating for 4 days average in the tanks. After this, grapes are squeezed, via a basket press, and the juice is then moved to a tank where the fermentation takes place by itself. Wine then goes through malolactic in the same tank. Only at the completion of the malolactic, Nino will add a minimal amount of sulfites to stop any further spoilage. The wine then rests in tanks until May when it gets bottled, without filtration or clarification.



Barraco' simple but very effective equipment

White Wines

Vignammare : Vignammare means vineyard on the sea, as this vineyard is truly less than 200 feet from the shore. Made of Grillo grapes from a vineyard based in "contrada Corleo" in Petrosino. This Grillo has an early picking compared to the other more oxidative style Grillo. Originally it was supposed to become the base for a classic method. Unfiltered and unfiltered.

Catarratto: From the vineyard based in Abbadessa in Marsala a unique interpretation of this grape variety. Left macerating on skins but taking just the free run of the must the wine goes thru fermentation on native yeast and malolactic.

Zibibbo: From a vineyard based in Casazze - Marsala, this interpretation of a dry Zibibbo (aka Moscato D'Alessandria).

Grillo: From Rina Vecchia vineyard based in Castelvetrano there is an outstanding example of what grillo grape can become. After a short maceration the grapes are manually pressed and just the free run is taken. The wine ferments on native yeast and is left on its own on fine lees.

Tasting profile: Color is a pale straw, with a slight cloudy tone as the wine is unfiltered. The nose is complex and flowery with fruit scents such as cantaloupe, peaches apricots. The mouth delivers a complex wine with a very vibrant acidity, limey, and an exquisite saltiness - the one that only can come from a vineyard placed so close to the sea; long finish. You can understand what Barraco meant when he said that he made this wine to pair with oysters. For Muscadet lovers.

Temperature of serving 55-60F.

Tasting profile: The result is a wine with and intense deep yellow. The nose is complex of yellow flowers, lemon zest and oranges, cinnamon. The mouth is full with both notes of oranges and tangerine and nutmeg and smoky flavors.

Temperature of serving 65F.

Tasting profile: The color is an intense yellow. The nose is very aromatic with apricot, grapefruit and bergamot. The mouth is complex, with hints of mint and lemon zest at starting evolving bergamot and orange and dried apricots and a long finish.

Temperature of serving 65F.

Tasting profile: Golden yellow in color this wine has a nose at first reminiscing of a riesling with petroleum notes and an aroma of candied lemon apricots and toasted hazelnuts; these notes follow you in a mouth, full, almost opulent with some saltiness like anchovies juice.

Temperature of serving 65F.

Red Wines

Rosammare: Based on the same principles of Vignammare the Rosammare (roses by the sea) it is a wine made with Nero D'Avola in a rose' version. The vineyard is based in Ceusa Marsala.

Pignatello: From the vineyard based in contrada Giudeo in Marsala a pure version of Pignatello grape (also known as Perricone). Barraco is one of the very few producers making this wine without mixing it with other varieties. After grapes are manually harvested they get left macerating on stainless steel for ten days. As usual with Barraco wines the fermentation and the malo are spontaneous. The wine rests for about a year in stainless steel before bottling where it stays fining for another six months. Stainless steel before bottling where it stays fining for another six months.

Nero D'Avola: From the vineyard based in contrada Bausa in Marsala the Nero D'Avola grapes are manually harvested toward the end of September. The grapes are left macerating on skins for 15 days; hand pressing follows. Absolutely no inoculation it is done, both for alcoholic fermentation and malolactic. Wine rests in stainless steel for about a year before bottling and fining another 6 months.

Millocca: is a rare event and so far just in 2006 and 2008 vintage happened. From the Nero D'Avola vineyard, sometimes the grapes get dried out due to the Scirocco a warm wind that blows from the sea and it is originated in Africa. In such condition the wine gets plenty of sugar and the native fermentation does not convert all sugars in alcohol. After fermentation and malo resting 9 months in stainless steel this is the only wine from Barraco that rests in casks, made of chestnut wood, for 2 years before being bottled and further fining for 6 months.

Tasting profile: This rose' has a color with some cloudy notes as the wine is unfiltered and bottled with part of the fine lees. The nose is of red fresh fruits. The mouth delivers a refreshing bright acidity with cherry notes. *Temperature of serving 55-60F.*

Tasting profile: A ruby red in color with a nose of red fruits such as raspberries strawberries and red currants, blueberries as well. In the mouth Barraco' Pignatello is vibrant and refreshing delivering red fruits flavors with some salty notes.

Temperature of serving 65-68F.

Tasting profile: The result is a wine with an intense deep red in color. The nose is of ripe cherry, black mulberry, anisette, capers and cocoa. In the mouth is full yet vibrant with flavors similar to the nose. Long finish.

Temperature of serving 65-68F

Tasting profile: The color is of a deep red. The nose has ripe cherry, cocoa, anisette and capers. In the mouth is full both with an acidity that makes it vital but a little sweet of ripe dates and dried figs then the cherry and the cocoa still very evident. To be paired with sharp cheeses or foie gras.

Temperature of serving 65-68F.