



The Etna Volcano

Sicily

NORTHERN SLOPES OF THE ETNA VOLCANO (Province of Catania)

Marco de Grazia owner of Tenuta delle Terre Nere (Etna Rosso DOC, Etna Bianco DOC, Etna Rosato DOC): “The 2012 vintage on the northern slopes of Etna, where we have our estate and our vineyards was remarkable in many ways. The most remarkable fact which powerfully influenced the wines, however, was the absolute lack of rain from late May through early November. A unique condition, the equal of which not even the very old vigneroni could remember. Although we suffered from a severe drought, however, it is important to note that, thanks to exceptionally good vineyard management none of our vines, not even the young ones, were stressed. Furthermore, fortunately the summer months were quite mild and never overly hot. All this brought about several consequences. For one thing, the grapes were absolutely healthy. Furthermore, the concentration of the grapes was unprecedented. The skins became remarkably thick in order to protect the little juice that was present in the grapes. Although the grape load was average, the weight of the grapes was so light given the little juice that production was down 40%! Having harvested exceptionally fine grapes, but exceptionally concentrated ones with a very high percentage of skin with respect to juice, and with high sugar contents, the risk was over extraction during fermentation-maceration. Therefore, we had to be very careful and most delicate in our extraction techniques - less pumping over, less punching down, shorter and cooler macerations - in order to have harmonious wines that would not be overly tannic and unbalanced (because too much of a good thing can be counterproductive). Happily we were very successful, and we released among the finest wines we ever made. So much so that we were rewarded by the best press coverage ever.”