



### **NORTHERN SLOPES OF THE ETNA VOLCANO (Province of Catania)**

Winter was rainy till springtime, it was not particularly hot in summer, September was rainy.

*Marco de Grazia owner of Tenuta delle Terre Nere (Etna Rosso DOC, Etna Bianco DOC, Etna Rosato DOC) - the following is an extract of a letter sent by Marco to the clients of the estate: ".....For a start it was the most complex harvest ever, which required quick decision making and the flexibility to reverse decisions on a day to day basis. On the other hand, we had the best and most organized team ever, and a better equipped cellar than ever before.....and one more experienced cellar man.*

*.....By late September the rain had set on an on and off pattern, alternating rain to hot, sunny days. Ripening was uneven, with sugars doing well, but with grapes that just didn't "look" ripe – I have no better way to word it. In the meantime the rain was starting to damage the earlier ripening grapes from the lower altitude vineyards.*

*Immediately we harvested our white grapes, which were ripe and excellent indeed. Then we strategically started picking the Nerello grapes that were most delicate and likely to be hurt by further rain. These were not ripe enough for very fine red wine, but outstanding for our house Spumante and for our Etna Rosato, of which we made over twice as much as in 2008.*

*This allowed us to leave the very best grapes for our Etna Rosso, and the best of those for our crus.*

*Harvest started October 5, a week later than last year. But it ended on the 14<sup>th</sup>, one day earlier: we had to pick roughly the same quantity in 9 days instead of seventeen. This required an extraordinary effort on the whole Terre Nere team, certainly way beyond the call of duty. ....*

*In this collective effort we were also rewarded with good luck. Two hours after we finished harvesting our last and best grapes, late evening of October 24, we were blasted by the worst rainstorm I've ever seen.....All in all we produced 2-3,000 more bottles of Etna Rosso of outstanding quality. Over twice as much of the best Etna Rosato ever made. Altogether 30-35% less of the crus. About 30% less Prephylloxera. Excellent Etna Bianco, about the same quantity as last year. Roughly 4,000 great bottles of Etna Bianco Vigne Niche. The quality of the crus is*

*excellent. I will reserve my final opinion for after malolactic, but judging from the quality of the grapes and the analytics, I would put the 2009s a little below the very fine 2007s...*

**Giuseppe Russo owner of Azienda Agricola Girolamo Russo (Etna Rosso DOC):**  
*".....harvest lasted longer than usual as we had to carefully select the clusters in the vineyards.....There will be a lower production of the cru wines and of A'Rina (an Etna Rosso made from all the vineyards of the estate).....The growers who worked well in the vineyards obtained a good result. The wines are supple, tannins are sweet, alcohol strength is a bit lower, good nose..the wines of this vintage are more similar to the wines of Burgundy.."*

## **Sicily**

### **CONTRADA OSPEDALETTO – FONTANELLE TRAPANI (Province of Trapani)**

In this area winter was mild and not excessively rainy. During springtime there was a good amount of rain and this was an advantage for the vines during the vegetative reawakening. The summer was not excessively hot.

**Nicola Centonze enologist of Tenuta di Serramarrocco (Sicilia Rosso IGT):** *"..it has been a good harvest. During the summer it was not excessively hot and this was ideal for the grapes. During the harvest of late ripening varieties, such as Nero d'Avola, there were a few downpours, but this was positive as it prolonged the ripening period making the wines finer and more elegant. We started picking after the 15<sup>th</sup> of August and we finished at the end of September. Forecast for the 2009 wines: it is an excellent vintage. The wines tend more towards elegance and finesse, the varietal bouquet is intense and not "burned" by the sun..."*

### **ISLAND OF PANTELLERIA**

The climate throughout the year was quite good, in May it rained, the summer was hot and in autumn the weather was cool.

**Salvatore Ferrandes owner of the homonymous winery (Passito di Pantelleria DOC):** *"There were rains during the harvest period....Passito is different from the other wines...The must yield was slightly lower than usual, the fermentation went well.....We started picking in the vineyards near the sea and we continued in the inner zones (from the end of August till the end of October)...The product is good, I am satisfied..."*