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Highlight

A wine to love and defend: Malvasia day 2016, the wines tasted

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Capofaro, island of Salina, the 2016 edition, the sixth, of Malvasia Day. It is an important appointment for lovers of this wine and a fundamental one for the protection and promotion of a wine which is truly special. There are fourteen producers of this wine, one which is unique in a worldwide perspective, and the overall acreage is a mere 100 acres (40 hectares) of vines.. The event took place on Saturday, July 9th at the Capofaro Malvasia & Resort of the Tasca d'Almerita estate. Malvasia delle Lipari is pure Mediterranean, transported from coast to coast, from island to island, by Greeks and Venetians and perhaps by their enemies, who cares. It is a wine distinguished by its style and by its sea. *Monem-vasia*, "a port with an entranceway". Wars with the Arabs and Turks have left traces of the variety on many islands, from the lower Mediterranean to the upper Adriatic Sea.

There are many expressions of the variety on the mainland as well, but the wine is Lipari is special due to a unique volcanic soil. Initially cultivated only on the island of Salina, indeed here best preserved, it has also returned more recently to Lipari, Panarea, and Vulcano and it appears that there aresome vines as well on the island of Stromboli. In addition to its fruitiness, it is unique for its herbaceous and balsamic notes and its notes of medicinal herbs, of mastic, of boxwood, of myrrh, of fig groves, rosemary, and xxx. But above all for its intensely savory character. It has a hypnotic fascination and now, even more than before, it is fermented as a dry wine, producing light wines with a slight bittersweet finish, perfect for meals and a fish and seafood cuisine. The traditional version, however, is sweet. The grapes, whole bunches, perfectly healthy and without skin breakage, are laid on straw mats to dry in the sun and wind for 15 to 20 days to dry the berries and concentrate the sugars. Less frequent, but also utilized, is a late harvest of grapes left o the vine. The wine, on average, reaches an alcohol level between 12.5 and 14 degrees and between 90 and 150 grams of residual sugar. The appellation rules require a minimum of 95% of Malvasia with a possible 5% of the Coritno Nero grape.



Here below Wineinsicily.com's notes on the wines tasted:

Tasca d'Almerita

Didyme 2015, Malvasia Secca (dry) IGT (Typical Geographical Indication) Salina
A fresh and balanced vintage, the year 2015 offers a dry vesion of the Malvasia di Capofaro with notes of aromatic herbs and flowers. Tickle, as always, attractive bittersweet notes and show us a territory read in a modern manner. Didyme is the former name of Salina.

Capofaro 2015 Malvasia IGT (Typical Geographical Indication) Salina
A personal and modern version of an Aelolian Malvasia. A bracing freshness and an elegant texture place this beyond the traditional style. Avoiding grape burn and an overripe crop are the secret. The harvested grapes repose in a ventilated space, one without humidity and heat from the sun in order to force the drying of the grapes. A fine acidity and a limited level of alcohol. Apricots, white figs, lilies of the valley, then pepper and citronella oil. Low alcohol, a mere 10.5°, and 185 grams pr liter of residual sugar.

Caravaglio

Malvasia – Bianco Secco (dry) 2015
A dry version produced from 90% Malvasia and 10% of other native grapes. The soil of the island of Salina is sandy and volcanic. The style emphasizes the notes of citurs fruit which add drinking pleasure to the wine.

Infatata 2015 – Salina IGT (Typical Geographical Indication)
A dry white wine produced from the grapes fom the "Tricoli" Vineyard. The splendid vineyard has a triangular shape which has given it its name) and is located on the northwestern side of the island of Salina. The grapes ferment at controlled temperatures with indigenous yeasts. On the nose: peach flowers, lime, and white melon. The palate emphasizes freshness and flow.

Occhio di Terra 2015 – Sicilia (Typical Geographical Indication)
This dry wine comes from a special selection of Malvasia grapes cultivated on the Island of Salina. The fermentation uses indigenous yeasts and the wine then macerates on its skins for 30 days and is then aged in amphorae for six months. Attractively earthy in style, slightly rough while still maintaining all the characteristics of the grape variety. The wine is dry and flows well with a decisive personality and character. Something very different and not to be missed.

Malvasia delle Lipari DOC (controller appellation), Passito 2014
A blend of Maòlvasia delle Lipari (95%) and 5% Corinto Nero- The grapes – cultiovated at Malfa on characteristically terraced hillsides with a density of 288 vines per acre (7000 per hectare) – are hand picked and left to dry in the sun on the traditional reed mats for 15-20 days. The hthe fermentation, with no added yeasts, it ages partly in stainless steel tanks and partly in oak for six months. The 2014 version underwent a six month period of skin contact. The nose shows citrus fruit, orange flowers, and almonds. The palate is pleasurably piquant. Authentic, faitful to tradition, a bottle which embodies the island.

Tenuta di Castellaro

Bianco Pomice 2015
We have now moved to Lipari. The splendid new cellars are functional since 2013. The soil is sandy and volcanic, deep, rich in micro-elements with pumice and obsidian (and the fomer has given its name to the wine. The vineyard is planted to a very high density (3600 vines per acre, or 900 per hectare). The blend is 60% Carricante and 40% Malvasia. The nose is floral, frity, and clearly mineral. A dry wine which is an excellent drink.

Malvasia delle Lipari DOC, Passito 2013
A blend which follow s the appellation rules , 955 Malvasia and 5% Coritno. The crop is picked by hand with a selection of the grapes during the picking. The drying of the grapes is a natural one with the bunches spread out on reed mats on the ground for ten days and are turned every day. The nose shows aromas of candied figs, dates, and peach jam. The flavors are opulent, soft, and mouth-filling. But sustained as well by a pleasurable freshness.

Colosi

Secca del Capo 2015 – Salina IGP (Protected Geographical Indication)
A dry wine obtained by a special working method. The vineyards are in the Capofaro area and consist of Guyot-pruned bush vines along with espalier vines, the densityis approximately 2400 vines per acre (6000 per hectare) and the yield is some two kilograms per vine. The harvest is an early one, and takes place during the first week of August. The grapes are given a cold pressing. The color is a straw yellow with golden highlights. The nose shows flowers, citrus and tropical fruit along with flowers. The palate is soft, dry, and elegant.

Malvasia delle Lipari DOP – Naturale 2012
Virtually a late-harvest wine whose grapes dry on the vine and produced from 95% Malvasia and 5% Coritno Nero given this natural drying. The alcohok is 13° and the residual sugar is 113 grams per liter. Warm and velvety on the palate with a balanced savor and crispness.

Malvasia delle Lipari DOP – Passito 2010
Produced from grapes grown near Capofaro, the crop is harvested towards late September. The alcohol is 13° and the residual sugars are 115 grams per liter. Opulent and soft, all the medicinal and balsamic herbs typical of the variety and the territory are on show. Jasmine, boxwood, and rosemary and the highlights of this wine, one with an important personality, a notable structure, and long perissitence on the finish and aftertaste.

Salvatore D'Amico

Léne 2014 – Salina Bianco IGT (Typical Geographical Indication)
A wine with a special bouquet produced from 100% Malvaisa cultivated near Leni; the exposure is southwestern, the soils basalt and volcanic. Veru idnividual, it is a bit atipica with its salty notes of medicinal herbs and citrus fruit. A unique wine in its genre, an Aeolian champion for devotees of "natural wines".

Malvasia delle Lipari DOC (controlled appellation) , Passito 2013
A reference point Malvasia. The drying of the grapes takes place on reed mats and lasts three weeks. After the grapes are pressed, the must ferments in puncheons. As is the case with the previous wine, this Malvasia has a strong personality. Dried yellow fruit on the nose along with notes of minerals and sulphur, eucalyptus, and mint. One of the not to be missed Salina wines.

Fenech

Maddalena 2015 – IGT ((Typical Geographical Indication) Salina
This is a dry Malvasia, 100% varietal, fermented in stainless steel tanks and produced in small numbers (6000 bottles). The grapes are picked in late August. An intense straw yellow in color, it has a floral nose with notes of white melon, boxwood, capers, and white figs. The palate Is savory, balanced, and with a strong return of the fruit notes.

Malvasia delle Lipari DOC controlled appellation), Passito 2014
Three thousand bottles of this dried-grape wine, amber in color and with aromas of dried apricots and figs. The alcohol is 13.5° and the residual sugar is 114 grams per liter. The viticulture – as is the case with the entire production – is biological, and the vineyards are located between Malfa and San Lorenzo. The drying takes place on the traditional reed mats. The wine is limpid, full, pleasurable, and structured and with a fine aromatic persistence.

Florio

Malvasia delle Lipari DOC (controller appellation), Passito 2010
The Florio methodology is a classic one. The grapes, after picking, are dried on reed mats for approximately 20 days. The dried grapes, rich in sugar, are pressed after being cooled for a brief period. The temperature-controlled fermentation is a slow one and stops spontaneously. The wine then ages for five months in small oak barrels. Golden in color with copper highlights, it offers a balsamic nose of Mediterranean herbs, rosemary and oregano. The structure is full. The finish shows dried, once again, dried apricots and elegant notes of Mediterranean brush land. The alcohol is 13.5 ° and the residual sugar is 140 grams per liter.

Hauner

Iancura 2015 – Salina IGT (Typical Geographical Indication)
Imagine a totally calm days with an intense Mediterranean heat. “Iancura” in the local dialect is that white glare produced by the heat and the static air. The sea, flat as a board, mingles with the white and light blue sky. The word also indicates a mood of imperturbable peace along with that desire for rest and repose which only the lovely days of a Mediterranean island can offer. It is a dry wine (to be precise, with four grams per liter of residual sugar) produced from 90% Malvaisa and 10% Insolia, a light straw yellow in color with greenish highlights. The presence of Insolia and its characteristic aromas and light elegance is evident. Orange flowers, apricots, sage, and thyme. The palate is fresh, savory, and long., the finish pleasurably soft.

Malvasia delle Lipari DOC (controlled appellation), Vendemmia Tardiva 2014
The Malvasia wines of Carlo Hauner are iconic, reference points for all of Italy of this category. Three the versions: late harvest, dried grape, and a Riserva. The late harvest has 12.5° of alcohol and 80 grams per liter of residual sugar. The grapes dry partially on the vine itself. The wine is less concentrated than the Riserva, but reaches an equal aromatic concentration. Figs, dired apricots, and tropical fruit. Elegantly savory on the palate and with a pleasurable bittersweet finish.

Malvasia delle Lipari DOC (controlled appellation), Passito 2014
This Passito, which won many a prize and medals in 2016, has 13° of alcohol and 120 grams per liter of residual sugar. The drying of the grapes lasts a month and the yield in wine is 25%. Much more intense and strongly personal than the preceding wine, its aromas are full and emphatic. A wine with a startlingly strong personality. Lavender and thyme along with typical green notes.

Malvasia delle Lipari DOC (controlled appellation), Passito – Selezione Carlo Hauner Riserva 2013
Alcohol 13.5°, residual sugar 140 grams per liter. This is the most celebrated and prize-winning wine of Hauner. The aromas are elegant and very typical. The color is a brilliant golden yellow. Tropical fruit, peach jam, and medicinal herbs mingle in a whirlwind of aromas. The finish is persistent and with an accelerating fullness.

Virgona

Ruffiano di Salina – Spumante Extra Dry
This is perhaps the first and sole sparkling wine of the Aeolian islands, an extra-dry (and accordingly slightly sweet in flavor) from Malvasia grapes produced with the Charmat method. It is an aromatic wine with a limpid and brilliant straw yellow color. The bubbles are persistent and concentrated. The nose is intensely fruity and floral with notes principally of apricots, pears, and pineapple. Very attractive, to be precise.

Enrico 2015 – Salina IGT (Typical Geographical Indication)
This is the new wine of the house from the 2015 vintage and bears the name of grandmothers and grandchildren. It is a dry wine produced from Malvasia grapes fermented until all of their sugars have been transformed into alcohol and the wine then aged in oak casks. The nose is elegant with its notes of orange flowers, citronelle oil, grapefruit, and Mediterranean herbs along with hints of vanilla mousse. A complex and very pleasurable wine.

Malvasia delle Lipari DOC (controller appellation), Passito 2010
The Passito di Daniela is one of the essential wines of Salina. The 210 version is elegant but with a certain energy as well. The alcohol is 13° and the residual sugar is 137 grams per liter. The wine undergoes a lengthy aging, the last year of which in bottle. Balance and complexity are its distinctive features. Soft and fruity notes fuse completely with balsamic scents. Sensations of ferns and resin surround the notes of fruit jam.

Gaetano Marchetta

Bianco del Comandante 2015 – Malvasia IGT (Typical Geographical Indication)
This is the new dry wine of Gaetano Marchetta. If you don't run into him in a vineyard or a caper plantation it might be easier to find him on n hydrofoil moving towards the Aeolian islands. The name of the wine – "the white wine of the commander" – therefore does not seem so strange. This is a pleasurable wine, dry and fresh. Only five thousand bottles for the total production. Quite agreeable the sensations of lime and ferns. A very promising summer wine.

Malvasia delle Lipari DOC (controlled appellation), Passito 2013
This is one of the most typical wines of the isalnd and we can say in advance that, for us, it is a very good one. Ten acres (four hectares) of vines cultivated wine maniacal care and attention. 2013 was, for Gaetano Marchetta, a good year. The nose is fresh with spicy and floral notes. Then figs, rosemary, dried fruit, dates. Creamy in texture, it finishes with an elegant bittersweet note. A top wine with 140 grams of residual sugar per liter and 13° of alcohol.

Punta Aria (Island of Vulcano)

Malvasia Francangelo 2015 – Terre Siciliane
This is the (new) dry wine from the cellars of Francangelo and Mauro Pollastri. There are 12.5 acres (5 hectares) planted to wines in the Gelso district of the island of Vulcano, all cultivated organically. There is also a delightful resort with fourteen rooms and a restaurant. Punta Aria is part of the "Italian Federation of Independent Grower-Producers" (Federazione Italiana dei Vignaioli Indipendenti) and is the only cellar on Vulcano. A note: we were unable to taste the wine, it sold out, alas, too soon. Maybe next time.

Malvasia delle Lipari DOC (controlled appellation), Seconda Espressione – Passito 2014
A wine of great delicacy and vigor which offers a gamut of ample sensations. The color is an intense amber yellow. Apricots, dates, and an echo of dried fruit on the nose. The palate is dense, fresh, savory. A good balance, on the whole, and much persistence.

Barone di Villagrande

Salina bianco 2015 IGT
Influenced by a change in packaging with an elegant Rhine-wine shaped bottle, we almost sense a change in style as well. To be precise: the Barone Villagrande cellars are located in Mount Etna near Milo. It owns vineyards, nonetheless, on the island of Salina, and one is particularly fascinating: a strip of nine terraces above the port of Santa Marina Salina. The vine are espalier-trained and are planted to 2800 vines per acres (7000 per hectare). The 2015 Salina Bianco is a dry wine produced from Malvasia along with percentages of Catarratto, Insolia, and Rucignola. It is a quite fascinating wine, the result of a positive vintage.

Malvasia delle Lipari DOC (controlled appellation), Passito 2013

The small but functional cellars, 750 square feet (70 square meters) in size, are completely integrated with the architecture and landscape of the Aeolian islands. The most important zone, however, is the terrace (over 5000 square feet or 500 square meters) in size, where the grapes dry in the wind and sun. The color of the wine is a luminous gold with amber highlights. The nose is intensely floral with notes of aromatic herbs, apricots, plums, honey, and thyme as well. The palate is ample and enveloping, full and velvety. A splendid version of Malvasia Passito, indeed among our favorites. Very long on the finish and after.

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(to be continued…)