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Wine Notes

These wine notes were created on 17-Aug-2019.

Baccolo Appassimento Rosso Veneto 2017

This popular medium-bodied Veneto red achieves its rich, spicy flavour by partial natural air-drying of the grapes (a mix of merlot and corvina). The result is rounded, flavoursome and well worth trying.

Product Code	IT26291	Dominant Grape	Merlot
Product Type	Red Wine	Drink Dates	Now to 2020
Origin	North-East, Trentino, Veneto	Alcohol Level	13.5%
Style	Medium Bodied	Closure type	Twin top
Vintage	2017 vintage	Price £	6.75 / Bottle

Producer : 'Cielo e Terra' Gruppo Cantine Colli Bercici

This family-run co-operative is based in the Colli Bercici (Bercici Hills), which are between Verona and Padua in the Veneto region of north-east Italy. It is owned by the Cielo family, and the name 'Cielo e Terra' is doubly clever: it translates literally to 'heaven and earth' and also reflects the family's close ties to the terroir of Veneto.

The estate was founded in 1908 by Giovanni Cielo. He began by planting vines around the family home, but the property grew and grew, and his sons and grandsons built their own winery and began buying grapes from other local growers to meet production demands. By the time it reached the current, fourth generation – Luca and Pierpaolo Cielo – in the early 21st century, the co-op was sourcing fruit from over 2,000 producers in the Colli Bercici.

Considering that the Bercici hills are a real suntrap, with a warm, Mediterranean climate, it isn't surprising to learn that vines have been grown here for hundreds of years. Co-op members own 4,000 hectares of vines here in total, from well-known favourites like chardonnay, sauvignon blanc, trebbiano, merlot and sangiovese to more local varieties like Manzoni bianco, tai rosso and raboso.

The company has three wineries spread across the southern towns of the hills. On arrival, grapes are sorted according to variety, area of origin and sugar levels. Winemaking involves cold fermentation and soft pressing, both of which help to retain the grapes' natural fragrance and complexity.

The co-op produces various ranges of wines – the one wine we buy, Baccolo, is from the estate's premium range, and is a blend of merlot and corvina. The grapes are partially dried to enhance flavour and part of the blend is aged in oak barriques.



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The Society's Montepulciano d'Abruzzo 2017

A ripe, friendly red for enjoying with all things Italian. This perennial member favourite has the deep purple colour and generous fruit of a hot vintage with low yields, yet buzzes with freshness and vitality that will transport a Friday night pizza to the Adriatic coast!

Product Code	IT25191	Dominant Grape	Montepulciano
Product Type	Red Wine	Drink Dates	Now to 2020
Origin	Central - Tuscany, Umbria	Alcohol Level	13.5%
Style	Medium Bodied	Closure type	Cork, plastic
Vintage	2017 vintage	Price £	7.25 / Bottle

Producer : Casa Vinicola Roxan

Montepulciano d'Abruzzo is the seldom overpriced but frequently variable wine made from the eponymous red grape variety on Italy's Adriatic coast. At its best it is flavoursome, deeply coloured and delightfully fruity. Most of the wine here is produced at winemaking co-operatives.

The Society's version is made by the Roxan co-operative, known for their special relationships with 700 individual growers who, unusually in a co-operative set-up, are given a significant amount of input into the final wines. While up to 1,000 hectares of land is farmed, less than 10% of the grape yield in each vintage is actually bottled by the co-operative which keeps quality control reassuringly strict. These are smooth, stylish wines at the price. The winery itself is located in the town of Rosciano, near Pescara, and each bottling tends to be drawn from vineyard-specific sites.

Buyer Sebastian Payne MW recalls that The Society first looked to buy wines from the Roxan co-operative after Edoardo Valentini, the brilliant but eccentric local winemaker and one of the most influential figures of his generation, sold his surplus grapes to it. Valentini was fiercely secretive, shunning wine critics and the wine establishment in general, yet this particular co-operative was the only one he trusted to turn his grapes into good wine. He died in 2012, but his son continues his estate, and upholds his father's trust in the Roxan co-operative.



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The Society's Sicilian Reserve Red 2015

Smooth, generous and fragrant Italian red from Sicily's native nero d'Avola grape. This has deservedly been extremely popular since we first introduced it, because it hits the spot and is great value.

Product Code	IT26661	Dominant Grape	Nero d'Avola
Product Type	Red Wine	Drink Dates	Now to 2022
Origin	South and Islands	Alcohol Level	13.5%
Style	Medium Bodied	Closure type	Cork, diam
Vintage	2015 vintage	Price £	8.25 / Bottle

Producer : Feudo Arancio

This substantial Sicilian estate is based on the windy south coast of Sicily. It has two large vineyard areas, covering almost 700 hectares in total, situated at Sambuca di Sicilia in the west and Ragusa in the east.

The grape varieties are each planted in separate blocks, and are used to produce a range of single-varietal wines in the state-of-the-art, temperature-controlled winery, although some of the wines are also bottled at the excellent Mezzacorona winery at the foot of the Italian Dolomites in north-east Italy.



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The Society's Verdicchio Classico 2018

One of Italy's best buys, well-made single-vineyard verdicchio makes a great full dry white with fresh crisp flavour, so it works well with or without food. This Society wine comes from a single vineyard, Coste del Molino, on the hills around the town of Jesi, west of Ancona on Italy's Adriatic coast.

Product Code	IT27181	Dominant Grape	Verdicchio
Product Type	White Wine	Drink Dates	Now to 2020
Origin	Central - Tuscany, Umbria	Alcohol Level	12.5%
Style	1 (of 9): Bone dry	Closure type	Screwcap
Vintage	2018 vintage	Price £	7.95 / Bottle

Producer : La Vite Monte Schiavo - See next page.



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Producer : La Vite Monte Schiavo

The Monte Schiavo cantina sits on a large hill just outside the town of Jesi on Italy's Adriatic coast. It is owned by the Peralisi Group, which is a world leader in producing machinery for olive-oil production along with many other interests – it owns Ancona airport and a large hotel and supports the national basketball team!

The family has been cultivating vines since the 1960s (it now has over 100ha under vine), but it only bought La Vite Monte Schiavo outright in 1994 – prior to that, it had been a co-operative, of which the family owned the largest part. This year marked a big change for the company, as the Peralisi family worked tirelessly to improve quality and invest in state-of-the-art equipment in the winery.

Monte Schiavo has an enviable reputation, in particular for verdicchio, the most famous DOC of the Marche region, and one of the most distinctive and characterful of Italian whites. Monte Schiavo produces verdicchio in all forms, including the remarkable, ageworthy La Giuncare, as well as a spumante sparkling wine, and a sweet passito wine. The winemaker is now Simone Schiaffino and they have had viticultural advice since 2015 from the experienced Carlo Ferrini, who advises Brolio and Fonterutoli in Chianti Classico too. For the last three years Monteschiavo has been preparing for organic cultivation and will be certified from the 2019 vintage.

It is an impeccable source of The Society's Verdicchio, which comes from the fruit of a single vineyard, Coste del Molino. As with all verdicchio, the name of the wine is also the name of the grape variety from which it is made, a derivative of the word 'verde' (green) which aptly describes the glints visible in the glass. Grapes are hand picked before undergoing temperature-controlled fermentation to retain their natural aromas and flavours.

In a break with tradition, The Society's bottling comes not in the curvaceous amphora which helped verdicchio makes its mark in trattorie throughout Britain, but in a simple, lower-key Burgundy bottle.



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The Society's Barbera d'Asti Superiore 2016

A lovely vintage with ripe fresh juicy fruit with hints of damson and black cherry. This is a highly enjoyable and versatile Italian red.

Product Code	IT26211	Dominant Grape	Barbera
Product Type	Red Wine	Drink Dates	Now to 2021
Origin	North-West, Piedmont	Alcohol Level	14.5%
Style	Full Bodied	Closure type	Cork, diam
Vintage	2016 vintage	Price £	7.75 / Bottle

Producer : Araldica Vini Piemontesi - See next page.



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Wine Notes

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Producer : Araldica Vini Piemontesi

Araldica is the trading name of the successful co-operative at Castelvevo in Italy's north-western Piedmont region. It is one of the most important producers of Barbera d'Asti and Barbera d'Alba, and also makes excellent Gavi, Moscato and Prosecco. Founded in 1954 by a small group of growers, headed by their parish priest, the co-op has evolved greatly from its simple origins and now it owns the largest winery in Piedmont.

It currently has around 200 members, cultivating 900 hectares of vines throughout the region, but in particular its vineyards in the Monferrato hills are celebrated for the quality of their barbera. As the business expanded in the latter half of the 20th century, the company also acquired a modern, temperature-controlled bottling plant and warehouse, with a large capacity to store its barrels made from the region's traditionally favoured Slovenian oak.

While Italy is generally known for its sun-baked vineyards, Piedmont is actually as far north as Bordeaux, and the nearby Alps make a marked impact on the temperatures which are much more in line with classic French regions. The hot summers are followed by very cold, often snowy winters, and the melting snow is an excellent marker of vineyard quality: the best vineyards have the fastest-melting snow because they receive the most sunshine.

The co-op members mostly grow native grape varieties such as barbera, nebbiolo and dolcetto for the reds and cortese, arneis and moscato for the whites. They also grow lesser-known varieties like brachetto and freisa, as well as international varieties such as merlot, cabernet sauvignon and chardonnay. Vineyards are spread across the major areas of the Langhe, Monferrato, Roero and Gavi. Generally speaking, barbera is grown in more exposed, sunny areas, because it is one of the more hardy and adaptable varieties, whereas more delicate varieties are planted in sheltered areas. That said, the co-op owns some of the best barbera sites in the region.

Additional premium estates in the region have been added to the company's portfolio since 1999. First, the co-op bought the 60-hectare Il Cascinone estate in the Monferrato hills in central-eastern Piedmont, and completely revamped the vineyards and cellars here. This is the site of some of its best barbera plantings.

It subsequently purchased La Battistina, a 30-hectare south-facing vineyard, and one of the best sites in Gavi. The excellent old vines here have an average age of 35 years. The unique, well-draining, mineral-rich limestone and chalk soils here are perfect for the high acidity levels of cortese, the official Gavi grape, and Araldica further enhances its character by ageing 20% of the blend in oak. This superb wine is the source for The Society's Gavi.

The co-op is ably run by Claudio Manera, whose wife Lella is also an oenologist working in the laboratory. The winery is based at Castelvevo: its oldest part was built in 1954, but over the years the traditional cement tanks have been replaced with stainless-steel ones, as well as wooden barrels for careful oak maturation where appropriate.



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Producer : Araldica Vini Piemontesi - Continued.

Here, Claudio leads a team of four other winemakers, and their creations continue to win awards for being excellent examples of their kind.



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Nero d'Avola La Ferla, Sicilia 2017

Scented with hints of spice and black pepper, this Italian red has lovely fresh vibrant sweet fruit on the palate and shows how well the nero d'Avola grape keeps its fruit and charm in Sicily's hot sun.

Product Code	IT26311	Dominant Grape	Nero d'Avola
Product Type	Red Wine	Drink Dates	Now to 2020
Origin	South and Islands	Alcohol Level	13.5%
Style	Medium Bodied	Closure type	Screwcap
Vintage	2017 vintage	Price £	7.25 / Bottle

Producer : Viticultori Associati Canicatti - See next page.



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Wine Notes

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Producer : Viticultori Associati Canicatti

The Canicatti co-operative is based inland from Agrigento on Sicily's south-western coast, although its 480 members cultivate 1,000 hectares of 60 different types of vines across the entire winemaking area of the island. They are eager to express the ancient nature of Sicily's vines and water-deprived soils in the character of their wines, without rejecting the benefits of modern winemaking practices.

The gently undulating hills of vineyards – which rise to 600m above sea level – are made up of mineral-rich soils (including potassium, sulphur and calcium), making them like a laboratory for winemakers keen to experiment and see what the various vineyard areas of Sicily can produce.

Despite the size of the vineyard area covered by their growers, the co-op employs very strict growing guidelines and only accepts grapes of a certain quality level. The poor soil quality results in low yields, so growers can monitor the ripeness of each parcel of vines individually and harvest at the best time. They grow a wide array of indigenous varieties in the hope that they'll be able to showcase the huge amounts of regional variation in this small but important winemaking region.

One of the most important of these regional varieties is nero d'Avola, grown for the co-op's La Ferla range of wines. These grapes are sourced from vines in the areas surrounding Palermo, Agrigento, and Caltanissetta. The vines are grown on sandy silt soils with limestone influence, and have an average age of 12 years.

Regional identity matters not just in the vineyards, but in the winery too: grape parcels are selected and vinified separately according to a harvesting calendar. In recent years they have invested in pneumatic presses to improve the quality of the free-run juice, and another key investment is the development of temperature-controlled cement tanks – a modern twist on a traditional method – as well as stainless-steel ones. The stainless-steel tanks are particularly small, so that batches of fruit from specific microclimates can be fermented separately. Investments have also been made in the bottling line, which is now so advanced that quality control can be monitored throughout every step of the process.

The effort to portray Sicily's regional identity does not stop here: Canicatti are currently undertaking a simply astonishing project to convert the historic Taccia-Caci sulphur mine at Aragona into an ageing cellar for their vines. Their aim is also to open these converted mines to the public, so tourists can learn about their history as well as to see how they've changed to benefit a new industry.

Winemaking is overseen by consultant Tonino Guzzo. La Ferla Rosso is fermented in a mixture of steel and cement and aged for eight months in cement tanks with no wood influence



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The Society's Prosecco

Light in style and all about the purity, this is a lovely aperitif to serve with nibbles to get everyone in the party mood. Prosecco, grown in the province of Treviso, has long been the aperitif of choice in Venice, and increasingly all over Italy, and now in the UK too. Unfortunately, many come from anonymous grapes grown on the plains and sweetened to hide their lack of character. The finest and best come from the hilly vineyards of Valdobbiadene, mostly from small family holdings. Our wine is just that. We buy it as simple 'Prosecco di Treviso', because 'Valdobbiadene DOCG' commands a premium price, but what counts is in the bottle.

Product Code	SG2201	Dominant Grape	-
Product Type	Sparkling Wine	Drink Dates	Within one year of purchase
Origin	North-East, Trentino, Veneto	Alcohol Level	11.0%
Style	2 (of 9): Dry	Closure type	Champagne cork
Vintage		Price £	10.50 / Bottle

Producer : Az. Vin La Riva Dei Frati

The prosecco grape has reigned supreme for centuries in its heartland of the northeastern corner of Italy where it lends itself well to sparkling wine production. When made with care and attention, it can be a revelation such as here at La Riva dei Frati. This estate owes its name to where its vineyards are situated – a forgotten abbey on a steep slope formerly belonging to the 15th century Dominican Friars of San Nicolas from Treviso. It is now owned by the Adami family who combine tradition with technology, aspiring to the production of the best Prosecco wines possible. using only grapes from their own vineyards. Crisp and fresh flavours combined with a frizzante finish create one of the most refreshing sparkling aperitifs around.



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The Society's Falanghina 2017

Tangy and fresh with generous citrus fruit, this is a seductive and versatile white from Campania in southern Italy. La Guardiense are the main producers of the falanghina grape and we can choose the pick of the crop for our wine.

Product Code	IT26491	Dominant Grape	Falanghina
Product Type	White Wine	Drink Dates	Now to 2020
Origin	South and Islands	Alcohol Level	13.5%
Style	2 (of 9): Dry	Closure type	Cork, agglomerate
Vintage	2017 vintage	Price £	8.75 / Bottle

Producer : La Guardiense Co-Op (Janare) - See next page.



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Wine Notes

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Producer : La Guardiense Co-Op (Janare)

In 1960, a group of 33 winemakers in Italy's central Campania region decided to join together and create a co-operative, and La Guardiense was born. Today, the company has around 1,000 members, who farm over 1500 hectares of vineyards between them along the 40km length of valley and slopes around La Guardia, near Benevento.

This area is part of Sannio, a sub region in the north of Campania, which was named after the Samnites, a pre-Roman people whose wines were mentioned favourably by ancient philosophers such as Cato and Horace. The hillside vineyards here produce the best grapes as they avoid extremes of hot and cold temperatures throughout the year.

The growers supply many local Campanian producers with bulk wine, but it is the co-op's Janare range of wines that is its greatest achievement. Janare – a local word for a friendly witch, and a nod to the region's famous history of alleged witchcraft – is a range produced and bottled by the co-op itself. It focusses on native grape varieties ideally suited to the region's volcanic soils, such as falanghina (in fact, the co-op cultivates the vast majority of the world's falanghina vines), fiano, greco and aglianico. The grapes for the Janare brand are sourced from specific vineyard sites – the range's Lucchero Aglianico is even a single-vineyard wine – which imparts a more concentrated character.

The company's winery boasts much modern technology, including a fantastic and unique solar power system. Since 2006, the winery has undergone a revolution in quality and innovation, thanks to the company's decision to employ Riccardo Cotarella, one of Italy's most famous and well-respected oenologists, and the recipient of several winemaker awards. His influence and experience has transformed the co-op into one of the most important in southern Italy.



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Grillo Sicilia, Isola della Fiamma, Cantine Rallo 2018

Grillo, the fullest-flavoured of western Sicily's white grapes, has been given extra lift and zing by the addition of a small percentage of the aromatic zibibbo grape, with very attractive results.

Product Code	IT26851	Dominant Grape	Grillo
Product Type	White Wine	Drink Dates	Now to 2020
Origin	South and Islands	Alcohol Level	12.5%
Style	2 (of 9): Dry	Closure type	Screwcap
Vintage	2018 vintage	Price £	6.25 / Bottle

Producer : Cantine Rallo

The dynamic Vesco family took over Cantine Rallo 10 years ago and has updated and revitalized practices here, investing heavily in cutting-edge technology in the cellars.

Cantine Rallo have vineyards in three main sites: hilly Alcamo not far from Palermo (where nero d'Avola is grown), seaside Marsala, and the almost African island of Pantelleria.

The grapes tend to be picked earlier than those of many of their neighbours and this produces their customary bright, fresh style.



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The Society's Gavi 2018

Gavi is all the rage and 2018 was an excellent harvest at the fine Battistina vineyard, which is the source of this admirably generous full dry white. We're delighted with how this has turned out and hope you will be too.

Product Code	IT27141	Dominant Grape	Cortese
Product Type	White Wine	Drink Dates	Now to 2021
Origin	North-West, Piedmont	Alcohol Level	12.5%
Style	2 (of 9): Dry	Closure type	Screwcap
Vintage	2018 vintage	Price £	9.95 / Bottle

Producer : Araldica Vini Piemontesi - See next page.



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