

IMPORTED BY
OLIVER MCCRUM WINES
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BIONDI WINERY

TRECASTAGNI * SICILIA

Ten years ago the general expectation of southern Italian wines was that they were rustic and (if any good) red. The reality today is very different; you will find some big, chewy red wines there, but you will also find some fantastically fresh and delicious white wines, and some reds that show extraordinary finesse. **Ciro Biondi** carefully crafts such wines on the south-eastern slopes of Mount Etna, an active volcano that is the most dramatic and interesting place to grow grapes I have ever seen. www.vinibiondi.it



ETNA BIANCO 'OUTIS'

Carricante, an intriguing white indigenous grape variety with a distinctive stony minerality, is blended here with several other more aromatic local varieties, including Moscadella dell'Etna. The combination of bright acidity and minerality from the Carricante and the complex aromatic notes from the other varieties come together harmoniously in the glass. (Unblended Carricante can be almost too lean and minerally.) Notes: bright pale straw color; aroma of wet stones, with hints of flowers, peach, apricot and herbs; very flavorful palate impression with lively balancing acidity.

ETNA ROSSO 'OUTIS'

Etna Rosso is made of Nerello Mascalese, with the permitted addition of up to 20% Nerello Cappuccio, of which Ciro Biondi takes full advantage. This is the most elegant wine I have tasted from Sicily, and one of the best; it shows an almost Burgundian combination of finesse and substance, leaving a wonderful lingering impression on the palate. The enologist here is Salvo Foti, also from Etna, whose respect for the indigenous flavors of the mountain is evident; the wine shows no overt oak, only excellent, clean and balanced winemaking. Notes: light-medium red Pinot-like color; aroma of red and black fruits, with balsamic hints; medium weight on the palate but very flavorful and long on the finish, excellent balance. This wine has far more weight and complexity than you'd expect from the relatively pale color (as with Pinot and Nebbiolo, of course).

