



MANDRAROSSA
LA SICILIA CHE NON TI ASPETTI



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Wine with Leslie: An Italian white wine under €15 that pairs perfectly with pasta

Some lesser-known Italian wines mean fine quality at very fair prices

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Ah, Italy. No other wine-producing country is as complicated, as frustrating or rewarding. Italy is the largest producer of wine in the world and (probably) has the largest selection of grape varieties, and certainly the largest number of recognised wine regions.

Every time I look at a book on Italian wine I learn a new grape variety and often I learn of a new wine region. The average vineyard size is just over two hectares so there are thousands of producers and almost every scrap of land that is not a mountain top or a town grows vines.

Having said that, don't be intimidated it is always rewarding exploring the lesser-known regions of Italy and thankfully more appear on our shelves every year. With this in mind I have given over the column to some varieties you might be less familiar with this week.

One or two of the suggestions have appeared here before but not in the last three years. If you don't know red grapes like Negroamaro and Nero D'Avola it is time you did as they offer fine quality at very fair prices. When we think of white wine from Italy we tend to think of Soave, Gavi and the light white wines of the North. Well, it is time you explored the South. Sicily has a whole clutch



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including Cattarato, Inzolia and Malvasia; and always watch for Fiano — there is even an excellent Fiano-Chenin Blanc blend from the **Mandarossa** Co-Op.

Fiano is native to Campania and I rank it as one of Italy's very best white grape varieties and you will find it in many other regions. Fiano is at its best around the town of Avellino in Campania where it is grown in 26 villages, most of which claim subtle differences. In general, Fiano shows lemon verbena, pear and citrus elements but can also be smoky and waxy or delicate and floral. The Fiano here is from one of the best producers in Campania — also watch for their Greco di Tufo, Falanghina and Taurasi (from the Aglianico grape).

For a fuller explanation on Fiano (or any of the grapes mentioned this week) I recommend Ian D'Agata's book *Italy's Native Wine Grape Terroirs* which delves deep into the history of Italy's grape varieties and the subtle effects that terroir can have on those grapes. Even in regions I thought I knew well, such as Chianti and Barolo, the book is packed with insights and information.

Link all'articolo completo:

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/food/arid-40725030.html>