

Sicilian vino is the godfather of Mediterranean wines so... Here's a quaffer you can't refuse

By [OLLY SMITH EVENT FOR THE MAIL ON SUNDAY](#)
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I once sat on a plane leaving Sicily while a gentleman in a camel overcoat nonchalantly presented his manicured fingers to be kissed by fellow passengers as he strolled down the aisle. I have no idea if he truly was a godfather or just a smartly dressed bloke with the world's most attractive hands. Thankfully, as far as wine goes, stereotypes like this don't apply to Sicily's vast cast of bottled characters – and with prices looking tempting, Sicilian vino belongs in your weekly shop.

Wine and Sicily have been entwined for several thousand years. While rich fortified Marsala slipped from favour, the same grapes flowed into making zippy fresh local white wines. I reckon Grillo is the grape to hunt on the UK shelves, such as Marks & Spencer Grillo 2016 (13%, £8), a fragrant, lemony easy sipper that will appeal equally to fans of Pinot Grigio or Sauvignon Blanc. For a sparkling option, Il Grillo di Santa Tresa is £12.99 at [vintageroots.co.uk](#) (12.5%) – it's buzzing bubbly to pop for an aperitif. Pair with fish and chips, a fishfinger sandwich or fritto misto. Inzolia, Catarratto and Fiano are further fresh whites to check out, though reds are arguably more diverse. Frappato is scented and light, while Nerello Mascalese, from Etna, can be wild and powerful, such as Passopisciaro 2015 from Corney and Barrow (£33.95, 13.5%).

OLLY'S PICK
OF THE BUNCH

WINE
OF THE
WEEK

HERE COMES
SUMMER

**Nicosia Etna
Rosso 2015
(13%)**
*Marks
& Spencer
Nerello
Mascalese
woven with
Nerello
Cappuccio
into a robust
yet summery
blend – bang
on for a
dinnertime
treat or
Sunday roast.*



£11



£4.99

**BRILLIANT
BARGAIN**
**Il Sarmiento
Nero D'Avola
2016 (13%)**
*Co-op A steal
of a wine for a
red, with sleek,
juicy, bright
fruit at a no-
brainer price.*



£5.25

**WINNING
WHITE**
**Tesco Fiano
2016 (13.5%)**
*Tesco Nectarine
spiced with
an apple –
aromatic
enough to sip
alongside
lemon chicken.*



£7.95

TOP BLEND
**Il Barroccio,
Rosso 2016
(13%)** *Corney
& Barrow*
*Stunning,
masterfully
blended and
impeccably
priced. Order
a case.*



£8

RAVISHING RED
**Le Senie
Aglianico 2016
(13.5%)** *Oddbins*
*A piercing cherry
bullseye of a
wine, floral, firm
and fabulous for
a weeknight
indulgence. +1
Good value too.*

Aglianico, too, can offer wines of mighty concentration, but perhaps the biggest red star is Nero D'Avola, by turns suave and fruity or butch and savoury. For my trilogy of tips, try Morrisons The Best Nero D'Avola 2016 (12.5%) for £6, The Society's Sicilian Reserve Red 2013 (13.5%, £8.25, [thewinesociety.com](#)), partly aged in barrels giving a little more richness, or Donnafugata 'Sherazade' Sicilia 2016 (13%, £14.95, Valvona & Crolla).

If I had to pick just one single Sicilian red, it would be Nero Oro Appassimento 2016 (13.5%) from £8.99 in Majestic. Memorable as The Godfather, it's got the presence you need to experience all the depth of character in Sicilian wine in one single sip.