

PORTOVINO

I CUSTODI 'AEDES' ETNA BIANCO

It's Spring, yet all of a sudden the air is becoming bitter cold. Extreme diurnal temperature swings mark one of many differences that make Mt. Etna different from the sun-n-fun vibe you usually find in Sicilia. We grab our jackets and start walking among I Custodi's gnarly bush vines, curled into the stark black soils. The muted sun falls on cooled lava flows and crumbled pomice fields. Dry-terraced lava walls demarcate the vista. This is what it must be like to grow vines on the moon.

From its beginning in 2007, local owner Mario Paoluzi set the groundwork to make I Custodi an Etna *fuoriclasse*, as the Italians say, one of the greats. Besides sending us many cell phone pics of when *A Muntagna* is erupting, he has had unwavering passion to work exclusively with the ancient albarello bush vines, some of which are 150+ years old.

I Custodi's cellar master is long-time Etna guru Salvo Foti, and his touch is one of a *bianchista* (white wine lover) prizing elegance, tension, and keeping the pristine volcanic spice found in these wines. Mario and Salvo have decided to release both red and whites only after extended elevage; it's another sign of the dedication of this winery to natural and fine wines, a shared mantra also of PortoVino.

Aedes is made from the younger Albarello vines that are in Contrada Muganazzi. More citric fruits dancing with the volcanic minerality, than a study of volcanic minimalism as seen with the Ante bottling.



REGION: Sicilia **GROWING AREA:** Etna

FARMING: Certified organic by Suolo e Salute srl # IT-BIO-004

IMPORTED BY: PORTOVINO

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VINEYARD: 2 Ha in Contrada Muganazzi

ALTITUDE: 650 m / 2,133 ft

SOILS: Sandy and volcanic

VARIETIES: 100% Carricante

VINE AGE: 10 years old

VINE TRAINING: *Alberello* (bush vines)

HARVEST DATE: Second week of September

YEASTS: Native

FERMENTATION & ÉLEVAGE: Direct and soft press (maximum 1 bar). The fermentation lasts 10-12 days in temperature controlled steel tanks. Élevage for 6 months in stainless steel.

MALOLACTIC FERMENTATION: No; the wine has 4.2 g/l of malic acid. The low pH (3.12) of the wine stops the malolactic fermentation naturally.

SULPHUR: 15 mg/l added during fermentation, 15 mg/L added during élevage, 30 mg/L added at bottling.

ALCOHOL: 12.5%

ANNUAL PRODUCTION: 1,000 cases