

# PORTOVINO

## I CUSTODI 'SAECULARE' ETNA ROSSO RISERVA

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 in his possession 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 pristine the 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.

Saeculare contains the oldest vines from the winery, some over 150 years old, and is in extremely limited production. The first bottling was the 2012 vintage, released in 2022.

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**REGION:** Sicilia **GROWING AREA:** Etna

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



IMPORTED BY: PORTOVINO

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**VINEYARD:** 0.7 Ha of a centenary vineyard, in Contrada Muganazzi

**ALTITUDE:** 700 m / 2,297 ft

**SOILS:** Sandy and volcanic

**VARIETIES:** 80% Nerello Mascalese and 20% between Nerello Cappuccio and Alicante

**VINE AGE:** up to 250 years old; some vines have native rootstock

**VINE TRAINING:** *Alberello* (bush vines)

**HARVEST DATE:** Half October

**YEASTS:** Native

**FERMENTATION & ÉLEVAGE:** The fermentation lasts 12 days in stainless steel tanks..  
Élevage in 500 liters tonneaux.

**MALOLACTIC FERMENTATION:** Yes

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

**ALCOHOL:** 12.5%

**ANNUAL PRODUCTION:** 250 cases