

# PORTOVINO

## MORTELLITO 'PONENTE' BIANCO TERRE SICILIANE 2023

Mortellito [MORT-el-li-to] is in *Val di Noto*, in the corner of Sicily that lies at the same latitudes as North Africa's arid desert climate. Its vineyards are a few kilometers from the coast, with **grooves of ancient olive and almond trees breaking the wind off the sea**. Abandoned and still working fishing ports dot the landscape. Owner Dario Serrentino has always enjoyed the contrasts of this **coastal growing area**, which he calls '**a desert next to the beach**.' Over the years, lucky for us, he's learned to coax extremely elegant wines from this receding coast in of **limestone**, which, he says, is '**the magic to produce wines with tension, freshness, and complex salinity**.' Dario has always worked on the family farm in one form or another (his heirloom almonds were actually his first love). He changed careers from social worker and part-time farmer to full-time *vignaiolo* with his first bottling in 2014.

There's never been any chemical interventions in the vineyards, and there's an intentional hands-off approach in the cellar, with a minimum of sulphur added at bottling. **Avoiding the entrapments of the glou-glou or overwrought luxury style**, Dario is part of a very small contingent of producers in Sicily producing **fine and natural wines**, or as Dario poetically likes to say: ***mare e terra in vino***.

*Ponente* was born from Dario's strong belief in the connection of grillo to this territory. Sapling grillo grown on limestone gives extraordinary results, which Dario saw in the evolution of Cala Iancu. Longer maturation and maceration create a very unique expression - something more complex and profound. A wine that represents the salinity of the coast of the Mediterranean.

**\*Ponente** is a wind from west to east. It is the summer wind of well-being, eliminating the humidity of the sea, allowing the grapes to reach rapid ripening. A microclimate that protects the grapes from spring diseases; farmers say that the west brings "positive things". This west to east wind is depicted in the turquoise sea on the label.

In 2023, the winter was much rainier than 2022. And the spring was moderately wet too. During the summer there were only two heat waves. This climate brought to a much more complex ripening, with the fruit and tannins that are more deep and balanced.



# PORTOVINO

**REGION:** Sicily **GROWING AREA:** Contrada Maccari, Noto

**FARMING:** certified organic by Bioagricert ITBIO007B05H

**VINEYARD:** 1 Ha **ALTITUDE:** 40 m / 131 ft

**SOILS:** pure limestone soils **VARIETIES:** 100% Grillo

**VINE AGE:** 15 years old **VINE TRAINING:** *alberello* (bush vines)

**HARVEST DATE:** end of August **YEASTS:** spontaneous fermentation with native yeasts

**FERMENTATION & ÉLEVAGE:** 48 hours of skin contact at 20 C° and then, very soft pressing; spontaneous fermentation in big stainless steel tanks for 8 days. Élevage in big ( 20 Hl) cement tanks for 18 months and bottle aging of 6 months

**SULPHUR:** 1 mg/L before fermentation and 2 mg/L at bottling

**ALCOHOL:** 13% **ANNUAL PRODUCTION:** 300 cases