

# *Passopisciaro*

Before Andrea Franchetti visited Sicily in 2000, Mt. Etna's profession winegrowing community had all but disbanded over the period between WWII and 1981. Commercial-scale viticulture could not overcome the cost of growing grapes in such an extreme terrain and climate, and the major 1981 and 1991/1992 eruptions of Mt. Etna were the ultimate disincentive to struggling growers from investing even further. However some vines of Carricante and Nerello Mascalese did remain viable on the terraces of Etna, even going back before 1900. Franchetti approached an owner of one neglected vineyard, and the owner settled for 1/5th his original asking price just to be rid of the property once-and-for-all.

Franchetti's first Mt. Etna vintage came out of the 2001 with fruit grown on a rented vineyard of Nerello Mascalese at 1,000 meters. The resulting wine from the Nerello was too light for Franchetti's preference, which typically leans towards more robust and extracted reds, so he supplemented the Nerello with another wine to produce 200 cases of a fuller-style red. Franchetti found that Nerello Mascalese often produced wines with notes of camphor and citrus that are the result of the volcanic lava soils, and the indigenous yeasts could prove temperamental. However just four harvests later, Franchetti's relentlessly artistic personality fashioned a representation of Nerello M. that met Franchetti's standards, stayed true to the typicity of the site, and even garnered some critical attention.

Passopisciaro's Nerello Mascalese fruit produces an aromatic, lightly red-hued wine with wide and progressively-clear halo. This coloring is the result of Franchetti's choice to avoid deep extraction from the skins, but relying on the berry's juice to provide much of the coloring. The wines develop a sweet smokiness over time and age well in bottle up to and beyond eight years.

## SCINNIRI

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**Varietal/Blend:** Nerello Mascalese, Cesanese and Petit Verdot

**Farming:** conventional farming and natural fertilization

**Soil:** volcanic/calcareous soil

**Vine Age:** 20-80 years old

**Harvest Technique:** by hand

**Fermentation:** in steel vats over 15 days

**Aging:** 10 months in large oak casks

**Alcohol:** 14%

**Yeast:** selected yeasts

**Fined:** no

**Filtered:** no

**Country:** Italy

**Region:** Sicily

**Sub Region:** Etna

**Vineyard:** varied