

Mandrarossa's Lalbira

scritto da Redazione Wine Meridian | 1 Ottobre 2026



Lalbira from Mandrarossa is one of those wines that proves a point many still overlook: Catarratto, when well managed and grown in the most suitable areas, expresses real quality and charm.

We're talking about Sicily's historically most widespread white grape variety. That very abundance may be what held it back. Too common to feel precious, too familiar to draw attention, it spent decades in the shadow of varieties that arrived later with more prestige. A grape treated unfairly, a victim of prejudice rather than lack of merit.

Mandrarossa's Lalbira flips that narrative, and it makes sense that Mandrarossa is the one doing it.

Behind this brand stands Cantine Settesoli, arguably the clearest example of excellence in Italian wine cooperation. It

was among the very first Italian cooperatives to understand that a label alone couldn't give value to its members' wines, what was needed was a genuine viticultural and enological project. Over twenty years of study, begun even before Mandrarossa launched in 1999, went into finding the right match between variety and terroir. Work on the soils, especially the calcareous ones, continues to this day. Lalbira, released this year alongside three other wines from native varieties, is the latest result of that commitment to territorial identity.

The wine is born in Salaparuta, in the Belice Valley, from vineyards at 450 to 480 meters on calcareous soils, facing north, west, and south. Pure Catarratto, Salaparuta DOC, harvested in the third week of September, fermented at low temperature, and aged six to eight months in steel. The approach is natural, with no wood to mask the wine's true face. Production totals six thousand bottles.

In the glass, it's straw yellow with greenish highlights. The nose is intense, with notes of orange blossom, jasmine, lemon, and grapefruit. But it's on the palate that Lalbira truly shows its character: fresh, savory, fragrant, with a minerality that keeps the fruit in tension and lengthens the finish. A white with personality, one that takes a stand rather than simply accompanying the meal. This is a wine that asserts itself.

We paired it with a delicious grilled grouper. The wine's salinity and the fish's firm flesh found real harmony, an outstanding pairing, a perfect match at the table.

Lalbira proves that Catarratto never needed rediscovering. What it needed was someone who truly believed in it.

Company Profile

Cantine SettesMandrarossa is the clear and genuine expression

of Sicily's new face in wine growing. Mandrarossa brand's character is innovative and modern. Its vineyards lie along the south west coast of Sicily, in Menfi, a unique and unspoiled territory particularly well-suited to winegrowing thanks to perfect climate conditions: intense light, mild temperatures, sea breezes. Mandrarossa vineyards grow on small hills from 5 different soils and many different exposures. This brings high quality to wines and gives life to many different and innovative varieties.oli – Mandrarossa

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