The secret of Nero d’Avola success in the world

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One family, three men and their love for wine since ever. Carmelo Morgante, Marketing and Sales Manager of the winery Morgante, tells us how is the “Sicily of wine”. In the area of Agrigento the vineyards struggle to produce grapes and passionate winemakers, like the Morgante’s, transform them into wine with love and passion. The Nero d’Avola, the only wine they decided to produce and sell around the world with success, is an authentic expression of Sicily. And it is also the Morgante’s family signature. From Sicily to the world, Carmelo Morgante reveals us how his wine and his country has achieved a solid international success.

The “Sicily of wine” seems to have promising skills of development in addition to what has obtained until today. In your opinion, what are the main limits to overcome in order to

bring the great enologic force of “Sicily of wine” out?
Sicily has a great advantage as regards to other Italian regions. It is well known as brand, both for negative events related to it and also for cultural aspects. During the building of Sicily reputation, wine helped to make know this territory in a positive way around the world.
I think Sicilian producers are lucky because our land offers temperatures that allow us to have almost always beautiful or exceptional vintages and therefore quality products. But the distance from North and from abroad creates some limits: a tourist passes through Verona, but in Sicily you have to get there and make a longer trip. For us, it’s difficult to be the first choice of tourists, so we have to be even better at communicating what we do.
Today what are you doing to promote Sicily in the world?
Since a short time Sicily has invested in promotion with the Consorzio DOC. The beginning is promising, so we are waiting for future profits.

Which are the wines to bet for promotion abroad?
Native wine varieties. For this reason Nero d’Avola is the only one in our production. I think this is the way of our future because we are in competition with nations which have costs of production lower than ours: producing Cabernet in Chile is cheaper than in Sicily. With our native wines, we can tell unknown stories and new tastes, and creating a connection between wine and territory.
Why does Morgante produce only Nero d’Avola?
We have always had this grape and produced this wine since pur birth, because we are simple and direct people and we want to be immediate in our communication.
Can you try to define your winery with one adjective?
Defining ourselves it’s difficult. I think clear and loyal.
What is your personal story?
Morgante’s family has always produced wine, ever since my grandfather made bulk wine and sold it to the area of Agrigento. In 1990 my father Antonio decided to invest in a modern winery. In 1998 my brother Giovanni and I realized that the world was changing and it was time to invest in bottled wine. In that year, with the help of our wine expert Riccardo Cotarella, we did the first production of bottled wine. We

were lucky because at that time Sicily had already become known for the quality of wines and we took advantage of the effect of the “fashion Sicily” trying to raise awareness of the Nero d’ Avola in the world .
From Italy to the world…
We have always focused on selling wine abroad, in fact, firstly we started to sell wine abroad, then in Italy and last in Sicily. At first, we focused on trade fair, then the press talked well about us and Nero d’Avola. I admit we have very lucky.

At the beginning which were the markets in which you were interested in?
USA, Germany, Switzerland. And then, in addition to these, Denmark, Belgium, Russia.
And today which are the more interesting markets?
USA, Germany, Switzerland because they don’t have our crisis. Also Japan is a good market. Japanese people pay attention to quality, they love Italy and know its products.
What are the qualities of a good Export Manager nowadays?
I personally deal with export and, as Angelo Gaja says, I think the main suggestion is “do not speak English, but sing it”. In addition, the export manager is the company’s image, often there are professionals who do not feel the business as their own, and this feature makes the difference. The owners will always tell the soul of the company in a better way; as if this role is of an external person then he/she should be able to give empathy to the product.
How many “Sicilies” exist?
Sicily is huge. Temperatures and land quality are very different. There are many Sicilies, and many others to find out which could tell nice stories.

How is your Sicily?
Our vineyards are in the province of Agrigento, in the western coast of Sicily, a very drought area.
But as if by magic, as my father says, plants grow in a place where it rains very seldom. When I was a child and it rains a little it was like a national holiday, the miracle of wine. Surely it is a good quality land and we have always done this, it comes naturally.

I remember when I was young and there was no rain in the summer we went with the hoe to dig around the vine we try to close the cracks in the ground.
Wine is in our land and in our blood.