



VINITALY  
INTERNATIONAL  
*Academy*

ITALIAN WINE MAESTRO CERTIFICATION COURSE  
STUDY GUIDE AND SYLLABUS  
2019



## COURSE DESCRIPTION & INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Italian Wine Maestro program of the Vinitaly International Academy (VIA) certification study program. This course introduces students to the wealth of Italian native grape varieties that are fundamental to understanding Italy's complex and fascinating wines.

The focus on native grapes as well as regional appellations sets this course apart from many others and provides a unique depth of knowledge and understanding. As the complementary base course to VIA's education system, Italian Wine Mastro is not only the stoning course to the higher level Italian Wine Ambassador qualification but also resonates with the continuous contribution from the evolving VIA world community. Ultimately, the VIA qualifications aim to be the gold standard of Italian Wine Education, under the guidance of its founder Stevie Kim, VIA Chief scientist Prof. Attilio Scienza and supported by the Institutional Advisory board members.

There are currently three levels of certification available through the VIA program: **Italian Wine Maestro, Italian Wine Ambassador and Italian Wine Expert**, the latter being VIA's highest qualification level. The goal of the VIA certifications is to develop a cadre of enthusiasts who are highly knowledgeable about Italian wine, can speak and write about Italian wine with authority, and will be credible representatives of the Vinitaly International Academy. Students who successfully pass this course and wish to further their study may apply to enroll in the rigorous VIA study program held annually in Verona and abroad, wherein students pursue either the Ambassador or Expert credentials.

## SCOPE OF THE VIA MAESTRO COURSE

This study guide and syllabus contains a description of the body of knowledge needed to achieve the VIA Italian Wine Maestro certification. It was designed specifically to organize the body of knowledge into a manageable format and set expectations for study and course work. The required text for the course is Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape.

The study topics represent key areas that will be covered in classes or that the student should concentrate on while preparing. Though VIA focuses and believes in a grape variety study approach, ideally, students should come to the Maestro program with a basic understanding of viticulture and wine making techniques, as this will not be covered in the scope of this course. That knowledge, however, is required in order to fully grasp the concepts covered in the VIA course. Prior wine education such as WSET level 2/ CSW/ ISG level 1/ or the Court of Master Sommeliers Introductory Level may be helpful but are not considered as prerequisites.

# COURSE STUDY MATERIALS

## Required Texts

Stevie Kim, GERALYN BROSTROM, Lingzi He, Michele Longo, Michaela Morris, and JC Viens. *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*. Positive Press, 2017.

## Additional Useful Resources

[www.federdoc.com](http://www.federdoc.com)—additional information from the Federation of DOCs  
[www.italianwinecentral.com](http://www.italianwinecentral.com)—online resource for details on wine production rules of each denomination, as well as statistics, pronunciation aids, glossaries, etc.

# TEST METHODOLOGY AND GRADING CRITERIA

At the end of the Italian Wine Maestro, students will take a written exam consisting of 50 questions in one hour. There will also be a 30 minute tasting component consisting of one white and one red each marked out of 10.

Students who achieve a combined score of 75% or higher will be designated **Italian Wine Maestro**.

## Learning Outcomes

### Outcome One: The theory of Italian wine and native wine grapes

- 1) Understand and explain the history, geography, wine laws and labelling of Italian wines and styles.
- 2) Describe and understand the key factors that influence the characteristics and differences between Italian native grape varieties.
- 3) Describe and understand the key production factors that influence the characteristics and differences between Regional Italian wine styles including sparkling, dry, fortified & sweet wines.
- 4) Be able to provide accurate, authentic and credible information and advice on Italian wines.

### Outcome Two: The analytical tasting of Italian wine

- 1) Identify and assess the characteristics & quality of Italian wines and styles correctly.

# REQUIRED STUDY TOPICS

## Part One: Introduction and Background Information

### A. History, Geography, Wine Laws and Labeling

For the following topics, students:

- are expected to know the name, location in Italy, relative proximity to other regions and correct spelling of all 20 political regions in Italy
- should be able to demonstrate an understanding of Italian wine label terms (riserva, superiore, etc.) and geographic classification terms (crus, subzones & MeGA's)
- should be able to demonstrate an understanding of Italian Wine laws, including EU & Italian nomenclature, quality level requirements and relationships between quality levels (DOCG, DOC, IGP etc.)

### B. Ampelology & other grape variety background info

For the following topics, students should be able to:

- define the specific meanings of native, traditional and international grape varieties and what distinguishes one from the other.
- describe and give examples of the ways in which grapes are named in Italy
- describe the concept of anthocyanin profiles and its application to native grapes as well as their importance in understanding differences in native Italian grape varieties
- define and differentiate between the terms ampelology and ampelography
- describe the basic differences between sub-varieties, clones, biotypes, and phenotypes
- list the key events in Italian wine history that have led to a loss of plantings of native grapes in Italy

## Part Two: Italy's Native Grape Varieties and Wines

### A. Grape Groups and Families

General: students are expected to know the difference between a group and a family.

For grape groups and families listed below, students are expected to know the following:

- whether the collection of cultivars is considered a group or a family
- characteristics such as anthocyanin profile, tannin and acidity levels, etc. where listed as noteworthy in Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape
- associated regions & DOPs
- the variety's primary blending partner(s) if used in a blended wine, and the resulting style(s) of wine produced (i.e., dry, sweet, sparkling, etc.)

*(Note: In the list below, the most important groups/families are bolded. The most important members of each group or family are marked with an \*asterisk.)*

1. Colorino (Red: \*Colorino)
2. **Greco** (White: \*Greco, Greco Bianco)
3. **Lambrusco** (Red: \*Lambrusco di Sorbara, \*Lambrusco Grasparossa, Lambrusco Maestri, Lambrusco Marani, \*Lambrusco Salamino)
4. **Malvasia** (White: \*Malvasia Bianca di Candia, \*Malvasia Bianca Lunga, \*Malvasia del Lazio, Malvasia di Candia Aromatica, Malvasia di Lipari, \*Malvasia Istriana; Red: Malvasia di Casorzo, Malvasia di Schierano, \*Malvasia Nera di Brindisi, \*Malvasia Nera di Lecce)
5. **Moscato** (White: \*Moscato Bianco, Moscato Giallo, \*Moscato di Alessandria/ Zibibbo; Red: Moscato di Scanzo, Moscato Rosa)
6. Raboso (Red: \*Raboso Piave)
7. **Refosco** (Red: \*Refosco dal Peduncolo Rosso)
8. Schiava (Red: Schiava Gentile, Schiava Grigia, Schiava Grossa)
9. **Trebbiano** (White: \*Trebbiano Abruzzese, Trebbiano Romagnolo, Trebbiano Spoletino, \*Trebbiano Toscano)
10. Vernaccia (White: Vernaccia di Oristano, \*Vernaccia di San Gimignano; Red: Vernaccia Nera)

## **B. Major Native Varieties**

This section breaks down the Must-know Native and Traditional Varieties section of Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape into two further categories to help the student prioritize his/her study: **most important** grapes and **other important** grapes. **Most important** grapes are those that are significant in both an Italian and global wine context. **Other important** grapes are those with recognized quality potential but with a reputation limited primarily to Italy as of this time.

For every variety, the student is expected to know:

- correct name, spelling and notable synonyms
- color
- associated regions & DOPs

For the most important varieties, the student is also expected to know:

- the variety's primary blending partner(s) if used in a blended wine, and the resulting style(s) of wine produced (i.e., dry, sweet, sparkling, etc.)
- closely related varieties
- characteristics such as anthocyanin profile, tannin and acidity levels, etc. where listed as noteworthy in the Handbook of Native Grapes of Italy

## MOST IMPORTANT RED-BERRIED GRAPES:

1. Aglianico
2. Barbera
3. Calabrese/Nero d'Avola
4. Cannonau
5. Corvina
6. Dolcetto
7. Gaglioppo
8. Montepulciano
9. Nebbiolo
10. Nebbiolo Rosé
11. Negro Amaro
12. Nerello Mascalese
13. Primitivo
14. Sagrantino
15. Sangiovese

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### Other important native red-berried grapes:

1. Aleatico
2. Bombino Nero
3. Bovale Sardo
4. Brachetto
5. Canaiolo Nero
6. Carignano
7. Cesanese Comune
8. Cesanese d'Affile
9. Ciliegiolo
10. Corvinone
11. Croatina
12. Frappato
13. Freisa
14. Fumin
15. Grignolino
16. Lacrima
17. Lagrein
18. Mammolo
19. Marzemino
20. Molinara
21. Monica
22. Nerello Cappuccio
23. Oseleta
24. Petit Rouge
25. Piediroso
26. Pignolo
27. Rondinella
28. Rossese
29. Ruchè
30. Schioppettino
31. Teroldego
32. Uva di Troia
33. Vespolina

## MOST IMPORTANT WHITE-BERRIED GRAPES:

1. Arneis
2. Carricante
3. Catarratto Comune
4. Cortese
5. Fiano
6. Garganega
7. Glera
8. Grillo
9. Pecorino
10. Ribolla Gialla
11. Tocai Friulano
12. Verdicchio
13. Vermentino/Favorita/Pigato

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### Other important Italian native white grapes:

1. Albana
2. Ansonica/Inzolia
3. Bombino Bianco
4. Bosco
5. Cococciola
6. Coda di Volpe Bianca

7. Erbaluce
8. Falanghina
9. Grechetto
10. Nascetta
11. Nosiola

12. Nuragus
  13. Picolit
  14. Prié
  15. Timorasso
  16. Verduzzo Friulano
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### C. Crossings

General: students are expected to know the definition of a crossing.

For each crossing listed here, the student is expected to know:

- alternative names, if any
- color
- regions where found
- crossing of which varieties

1. Albarossa
  2. Incrocio Bruni
  3. Manzoni Bianco (Incrocio Manzoni 6.0.13)
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### D. International and Traditional Varieties

General: students are expected to define the differences between international and traditional varieties.

For the following international and traditional varieties, the student is expected to know:

- where they are primarily grown in Italy
- in which major wine DOPs they are used

1. Cabernet Franc
2. Cabernet Sauvignon
3. Chardonnay
4. Gewürztraminer
5. Merlot
6. Müller-Thurgau
7. Pinot Bianco
8. Pinot Grigio
9. Pinot Nero
10. Riesling
11. Sauvignon Blanc
12. Syrah

## Part Three: Important Denominations in Italy, Organized by Region

While the study of Italy's denominations is not the focus of the VIA course, in order to become an Italian Wine Maestro, Ambassador or Expert on Italian wines, students should know these very well too. Those listed below in bold are the most important.

For every denomination listed here, the student is expected to know:

- correct spelling
- region(s) where the denomination is located
- most important grape variety or varieties associated with the denomination
- what type(s) of wines they make (red, white, sparkling, dessert)

For the most important (those bolded):

- whether their wines are blends, varietals (min. 85%), or 100%

Although background information on denominations is available from a variety of sources, beware of outdated books and websites. Reliable sources include the websites [www.federdoc.com](http://www.federdoc.com) and [www.italianwinecentral.com](http://www.italianwinecentral.com).

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### VALLE D'AOSTA

1. **Valle d'Aosta DOCG**

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### PIEMONTE

2. Alta Langa DOCG
3. Asti DOCG
4. **Barbaresco DOCG**
5. **Barbera d'Alba DOC**
6. **Barbera d'Asti DOCG**
7. **Barolo DOCG**
8. Boca DOC
9. Brachetto d'Acqui DOCG
10. Carema DOC
11. Colli Tortonesi DOC
12. Diano d'Alba DOCG
13. **Dogliani DOCG**
14. Dolcetto d'Acqui DOC
15. Dolcetto d'Alba DOC
16. Erbaluce di Caluso DOCG
17. Freisa d'Asti DOC
18. Gattinara DOCG
19. **Gavi DOCG**
20. Ghemme DOCG
21. Grignolino d'Asti DOC
22. Grignolino del Monferrato Casalese DOC
23. Langhe DOC
24. Lessona DOC
25. Malvasia di Casorzo DOC
26. Malvasia di Castelnuovo Don Bosco DOC
27. Nizza DOCG
28. **Roero DOCG**
29. Ruché di Castagnole Monferrato DOCG

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### LIGURIA

30. Ormeasco di Pornassio DOC
31. Rossese di Dolceacqua DOC
32. Riviera Ligure di Ponente DOC
33. Cinque Terre DOC

## LOMBARDIA

- 34. **Franciacorta DOCG**
- 35. Lugana DOC (also in Veneto)
- 36. Moscato di Scanzo DOCG
- 37. Oltrepò Pavese DOC

- 38. **Sforzato di Valtellina DOCG**
  - 39. Valtellina Rosso DOC
  - 40. Valtellina Superiore DOCG
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## TRENTINO-ALTO ADIGE

- 41. **Alto Adige/Südtirol DOC**
- 42. Delle Venezie DOC (also in Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia)
- 43. Teroldego Rotaliano DOC
- 44. Trentino DOC

- 45. **Trento DOC**
  - 46. Valdadige DOC
  - 47. IGP Trevenezie (also in Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia)
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## VENETO

- 48. **Amarone della Valpolicella DOCG**
- 49. Bardolino DOC
- 50. Bardolino Superiore DOCG
- 51. Bianco di Custoza DOC
- 52. **Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco DOCG**
- 53. Delle Venezie DOC (also in Trentino-Alto Adige and Friuli-Venezia Giulia)
- 54. Lugana DOC (also in Lombardia)
- 55. **Prosecco DOC (also in Friuli-Venezia Giulia)**

- 56. Recioto della Valpolicella DOCG
  - 57. Recioto di Soave DOCG
  - 58. **Soave DOC**
  - 59. **Soave Superiore DOCG**
  - 60. **Valpolicella DOC**
  - 61. **Valpolicella Ripasso DOC**
  - 62. IGP Trevenezie (also in Trentino-Alto Adige and Friuli-Venezia Giulia)
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## FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA

- 63. **Collio Goriziano DOC**
- 64. Delle Venezie DOC (also in Trentino-Alto Adige and Veneto)
- 65. **Friuli Colli Orientali DOC**
- 66. Friuli Grave DOC
- 67. Friuli Isonzo DOC

- 68. Colli Orientali del Friuli Picolit DOCG
  - 69. **Prosecco DOC** (also in Veneto)
  - 70. Ramandolo DOCG
  - 71. IGP Trevenezie (also in Trentino-Alto Adige and Veneto)
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## EMILIA ROMAGNA

- 72. **Lambrusco di Sorbara DOC**
- 73. **Lambrusco Grasparossa di Castelvetro DOC**

- 74. **Lambrusco Salamino di Santa Croce DOC**
- 75. Romagna Albana DOCG

## TOSCANA

- 76. **Bolgheri DOC**
  - 77. **Brunello di Montalcino DOCG**
  - 78. **Carmignano DOCG**
  - 79. **Chianti DOCG (and its sub-zones)**
  - 80. **Chianti Classico DOCG**
  - 81. Elba DOC
  - 82. **Maremma Toscana DOC**
  - 83. Morellino di Scansano DOCG
  - 84. **Rosso di Montalcino DOC**
  - 85. **Rosso di Montepulciano DOC**
  - 86. **Vernaccia di San Gimignano DOCG**
  - 87. **Vino Nobile di Montepulciano DOCG**
  - 88. **Vin Santo del Chianti Classico DOC**
  - 89. **Vin Santo del Chianti DOC**
  - 90. IGP Toscana
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## MARCHE

- 91. **Castelli di Jesi Verdicchio Riserva DOCG**
  - 92. Cònero DOCG
  - 93. Lacrima di Morro d'Alba DOC
  - 94. Rosso Cònero DOC
  - 95. Rosso Piceno DOC
  - 96. **Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi DOC**
  - 97. **Verdicchio di Matelica DOC**
  - 98. **Verdicchio di Matelica Riserva DOCG**
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## ABRUZZO

- 99. **Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo DOC**
  - 100. **Montepulciano d'Abruzzo Colline Teramane DOCG**
  - 101. **Montepulciano d'Abruzzo DOC**
  - 102. **Trebbiano d'Abruzzo DOC**
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## UMBRIA

- 102. **Montefalco Sagrantino DOCG**
  - 103. **Orvieto DOC** (also in Lazio)
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## LAZIO

- 104. Cesanese del Piglio DOCG
  - 105. Cesanese di Olevano Romano DOC
  - 106. **Frascati DOC**
  - 107. **Frascati Superiore DOCG**
  - 108. **Orvieto DOC** (also in Umbria)
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## CAMPANIA

- 109. **Aglianico del Taburno DOCG**
- 110. Falanghina del Sannio DOC
- 111. **Fiano di Avellino DOCG**
- 112. **Greco di Tufo DOCG**
- 113. **Taurasi DOCG**

## BASILICATA

- 114. **Aglianico del Vulture DOC**
  - 115. **Aglianico del Vulture Superiore DOCG**
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## PUGLIA

- 116. Castel del Monte DOC
  - 117. Gioia del Colle DOC
  - 118. **Primitivo di Manduria DOC**
  - 119. **Salice Salentino DOC**
  - 120. IGP Puglia
  - 121. IGP Salento
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## CALABRIA

- 122. **Cirò DOC**
  - 123. Greco di Bianco DOC
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## SICILIA

- 124. **Cerasuolo di Vittoria DOCG**
  - 125. **Etna DOC** (Rosso and Bianco)
  - 126. Faro DOC
  - 127. Malvasia delle Lipari DOC
  - 128. Marsala DOC
  - 129. Noto DOC
  - 130. **Pantelleria DOC**
  - 131. **Sicilia DOC**
  - 132. IGP Terre Siciliane
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## SARDEGNA

- 133. **Cannonau di Sardegna DOC**
- 134. Carignano del Sulcis DOC
- 135. **Vermentino di Gallura DOCG**
- 136. **Vermentino di Sardegna DOC**
- 137. Vernaccia di Oristano DOC





ITALIAN WINE MAESTRO CERTIFICATION COURSE  
**SESSION MEETING SCHEDULE AND  
READING ASSIGNMENTS**

## SESSION 1:

### INTRODUCTION, FAMILIES AND GROUPS & FOCUS ON ITALIAN SPARKLING WINE

**Readings:** *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- Grappling with Italian Grapes, pages 36-44.
- Must-know Native and Traditional Varieties from Grape Groups and Families: entries on Vernaccia, Moscato, Lambrusco.
- From Major Individual Grapes: entry on Glera.
- History, pages 12-18.
- Geology, pages 20-21.
- Climate, pages 21-22.
- Italian Wine Classifications, pages 23-33.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Lombardia, pages 515-517.

## SESSION 2:

### PIEDMONT'S NATIVE GRAPES

**Readings:** *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Nebbiolo, Nebbiolo Rosé, Croatina, Vespolina, Barbera, Dolcetto, Grignolino, Freisa, Ruchè, Brachetto, Cortese, Arneis, Nascetta, Timorasso, Erbaluce.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Piemonte, pages 508-512.

## SESSION 3:

### NATIVE GRAPES OF VENETO & VALLE D'AOSTA

**Readings:** *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Garganega, Corvina, Corvinone, Molinara, Oseleta, Rondinella, Prié, Fumin, Petit Rouge.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Veneto, pages 518-520.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Valle d'Aosta, pages 506-507.

## SESSION 4:

### NATIVE GRAPES OF FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA & TRENTO-ALTO ADIGE

**Readings:** *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Grape Groups and Families: entries on Refosco, Schiava.
- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Tocai Friulano, Ribolla Gialla, Picolit, Verduzzo Friulano, Schioppettino, Pignolo, Teroldego, Lagrein, Marzemino, Nosiola.
- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Albarossa, Incrocio Bruni 54, Manzoni Bianco.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Friuli-Venezia Giulia, pages 523-525.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Trentino-Alto Adige, pages 521-522.

## SESSION 5:

### NATIVE GRAPES OF LIGURIA, EMILIA-ROMAGNA, TUSCANY & UMBRIA

**Readings:** *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Grape Groups and Families: entry on Colorino.
- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Bosco, Rossese, Albana, Sangiovese, Canaiolo Nero, Ciliegiolo, Mammolo, Aleatico, Sagrantino, Grechetto.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Liguria, pages 513-514.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Emilia-Romagna, pages 526-527.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Toscana, pages 528-531.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Umbria, pages 532-533.

## SESSION 6:

### NATIVE GRAPES OF LE MARCHE, MOLISE, ABRUZZO & PUGLIA

**Readings:** *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Grape Groups and Families: entry on Trebbiano.
- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Bombino Bianco, Verdicchio, Pecorino, Montepulciano, Lacrima, Negro Amaro, Primitivo, Uva di Troia, Bombino Nero, Cococciola.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Le Marche, pages 534-535.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Abruzzo, pages 540-541.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Molise, pages 542-543.
- From A Vinous Giro d'Italia: Puglia, pages 546-547.

## SESSION 7:

### NATIVE GRAPES OF LAZIO, CAMPANIA, BASILICATA & CALABRIA

**Readings:** *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Grape Groups and Families: entries on Malvasia, Greco.
- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Cesanese Comune, Cesanese d’Affile, Fiano, Falanghina, Coda di Volpe Bianca, Aglianico, Piediroso, Gaglioppo.
- From A Vinous Giro d’Italia: Lazio, pages 536-539.
- From A Vinous Giro d’Italia: Campania, pages 544-545.
- From A Vinous Giro d’Italia: Basilicata, page 549.
- From A Vinous Giro d’Italia: Calabria, pages 550 - 551.

## SESSION 8:

### NATIVE GRAPES OF SICILY & SARDEGNA

**Readings:** *Italian Wine Unplugged Grape by Grape*

- From Major Individual Grapes: entries on Catarratto Comune, Grillo, Ansonica/Inzolia, Carricante, Nerello Mascalese, Nerello Cappuccio, Calabrese/Nero d’Avola, Frappato, Vermentino/Favorita/Pigato, Nuragus, Cannonau, Carignano, Monica, Bovale.
- From A Vinous Giro d’Italia: Sicily, pages 552-555.
- From A Vinous Giro d’Italia: Sardegna, pages 556-557.

## SESSION 9: EXAM



