



## Passopisciaro, Contrada "C" 2009



Blend: 100% Nerello Mascalese

Vineyard age: 80 years

Vineyard area: 1.2 hectares

Vineyard density: 8,000 vines/Ha

Vineyard altitude: 550 m asl

Yield per hectare: 20 Hl/Ha

Fertilization: None

Spraying: Clay, propolis, sulphur, copper, grapefruit seed extract

Vinification: Fermentation in stainless steel vats for 10 days

Aging: MLF followed by 18 months aging in large, neutral oak barrels

Contrada Chiappemacine is a small domain at 550 m/1,000 ft a.s.l., our lowest site for a single vineyard cru. The site produces a more full-bodied, rounder style because it lies on the last outreach of Mount Etna's lava; beneath the thinner strata of lava lies a limestone bed to which the vines penetrate. Because some roots here make it to the lime-soil, wines from Chiappemacine have a rich taste that strikes right at the beginning of a sip. We own 1.2 hectares of vines in this contrada.

### 2009 VINTAGE

There was plenty of nourishment from the snow line at about 800 meters, extending and receding across the vineyards for most of the winter and into the spring. Then the furious weather changes of a high mountain mixed sunshine and drizzle until a dry summer set in. The sun on Etna works moderately but very steadily for all of three months, with a peculiar stress to the vineyards, which is that of a progressive drought of the soil and not the burning that is normally inflicted on the vines. In line with the weather trend of the last two years, 2009 featured earlier rains that fell at the end of September and again in mid-October, with prolonged dampness and low-cast skies. Luckily, nerello mascalese fares well with a certain amount of rain at the end of ripening. In this particular soil, thin as face powder, water slides off a waterproof skin and doesn't reach the roots. The tight skins of the nerello grapes also resist for a long time before damaging.

The relief of early rainwater brings the ripening to a head. These earlier pickings produced wines generally varietal-like, light in alcohol, peppery and leaning on the indigenous, the carnal, the shameless. They are also backward just enough for the making of a solid texture that will give them aging potential.