



## **Wine Pick of the Week: 2003 Ajello Majus Bianco Sicilia**

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Sicily is a wine colossus. Trapani, the island's most prodigal province, is quite likely the most viticulturally prodigious spot on Earth. Marsala, the fortified wine used mostly for cooking, is the best-known wine from this province. But Sicily also is becoming known for distinctive high-quality wines and for some very good values.

For three generations the Ajello family has been selling grapes to the marsala producers, but in 1998 the family decided to join Italy's wine revolutionaries and turn some of its grapes into wine. The first two wines were a red blend and a white blend that sold for about \$20 each. Then, in 2003, they launched an affordable white and red wine they call Majus (pronounced my-yus). According to folks at the winery, Majus is a derivation of the Moorish word for May as well as for a flower that blooms around Trapani in early spring. The wine is made from grillo and catarrato, two grapes thought to be exclusive to Sicily and essential to the production of marsala.

The 2003 Ajello Majus Bianco (\$9) is the debut release of this wine, which has managed to strike a nice balance of acid and alcohol. It is lush and ripe with aromas of stone, fruits and flowers yet shows a sensuous plushness on the palate. Because of its weight, balance and flavors, it can match well with everything from salmon to sushi.