

## OVERVIEW



Established as a DOC in 1972, this DOC appellation encompasses all the island. Cannonau di Sardegna represents 20% of Sardinian wine production, making Cannonau the most important red grape on the island. Cannonau is a genetic match with Garnacha of Spain and may have arrived on the island during Aragonian rule during the early 1300s. Today 80% of the Cannonau appears to be the Tocai Rosso biotype.

To be called a Cannonau Classico, the wine must contain 90% Cannonau and come from the Nuoro and Ogliastra zones; aging requirements are a minimum of two years, including 12 months in barrel. It is more common to see just a Rosso designation, which requires a minimum of two years aging with six months in oak. The rules for blending grapes in the DOC require that only two other non-aromatic black grape varieties suitable for cultivation in Sardinia may be added. Traditionally these are usually Bovale, Pascale and Carignano, but often times, the wine is 100% Cannonau.

Cannonau vines can age well and many of the better-quality wines come from old vines, especially if planted before the 1980s, before there were mass-plantings of a low-quality biotype of Cannonau. The best quality Cannonau is grown in three regions: *Oliena*, in central Sardegna, *Jerzu*, east central and *Capo Ferrato* in the southeastern part of the island. Producers are allowed to add these names to the label.

The color is a faint, normally translucent red, because the wine is not rich in anthocyanins. The result is a fragrant wine with both fresh and dried floral aromas, although a young Cannonau can have the aromatic profile of a more mature red. The texture is plush, getting creamier with age, and depending on the sub-zone, the tannic grip can be mild to more severe.