

Examiner  
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## Wines and a recipe from the fiery island of Sicily

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Visually stunning movie produced by Regione Siciliana, Agriculture and Alimentary Resources Department and C.E.M. Cinema e Media.

*Giampiero Nadali*

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Lucky me. I was recently sent two wines to try representing the new types of wines Sicily has to offer: Baglio di Planetto Ficilligno 2013 and Valle Dell'Acate Il Frappato 2014. As you probably know, for most of the 20th century Sicily produced vast quantities of grapes, most of which were exported to be added to wine made elsewhere in Italy. This is not the way one sets the tone for respect of great wines.

Change is inevitable fortunately. The last 18 years or so have seen significant changes to the sizzling island's wine culture. It's good to see the many international prizes now being won by Sicilian producers. I think it's time we say that many of Italy's most notable wines are now being made in Sicily. A new generation of Sicilian producers are realizing the full potential of the island's desirable climate and the sense of place and taste it is helping to create in the newer wines.

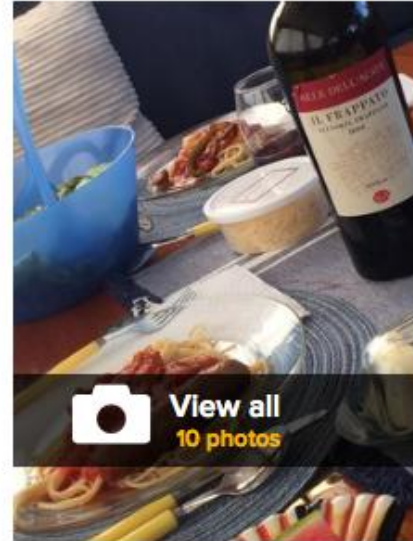
Sicily has been working hard revitalizing indigenous grapes and crafting exciting, sophisticated, and vivacious red and white wines. Here are the two wines I enjoyed while on my boat in the San Juan Islands in Washington State. I've also included a recipe to try with either one.

### **Baglio di Planetto Ficilligno 2013**

A blend of Insolia (related to other Sicilian natives like Grillo) and Vioigner this tasty white wine is plush with notes of pineapple, melon, lemon, and faint vanilla. Baglio di Planetto stems from the desire of its founder to create a wine that celebrates the uniqueness of the Sicilian terroir in the methods of the great French chateaus. This wine is perfect for early fall BBQ's and pairs well with many types of dishes.

You're likely to be seeing more contemporary Sicilian wines based on the Grillo grape. Grillo translates as "cricket," and is a historical Sicilian grape variety just now being applauded for producing dry wines of incredible depth. Grillo is versatile and easy to drink. Characteristics range from fresher and more savory to more structured and mature. Vineyards across Sicily benefit from marine breezes and mineral-rich soil along the coast that lends a complex, fresh mineral note alongside tropical and fruity aromas. These Grillo wines are perfect for small plate's dishes such as an herbed goat cheese salad, grilled shrimp, olives, or a cold Thai noodle salad

Look on the label for the Grillo grape from Sicilia DOC for guaranteed quality and great-tasting wine hand-tailored on an island in the middle of the Mediterranean



Linda Kissam



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**Valle Dell'Acate Il Frappato 2014**

I found this to be a fragrant, light-bodied and somewhat earthy red. It showcases aromas of dark cherry, rose and pomegranate. The palate delivers a tart yet juicy blend of cranberry's, strawberry, and a whiff of white pepper. This is a light red wine that should be chilled for 20 minutes and sipped on a deck. It is vinified in stainless steel to maintain its fruity flavors. It goes well with veggie dishes, chicken sausage or white meat. It's sort of tart, tangy, and earthy all at once. This would be an excellent wine to serve at Thanksgiving with turkey.

**Grilled Swordfish with Sicilian-Style Relish**

Pair a Grillo or Grillo Chardonnay Blend from one of Sicily's inland regions, with notes of floral and Mediterranean fruit to balance the flavor burst that comes with a simple, briny, herbal relish that gets a spicy kick from pickled peppers and veggies.

**Ingredients**

2 tablespoons capers, roughly chopped

5 or black and green 6 olives, chopped (preferably a mix of oil-cured Sicilian black olives and Castelvetarno green olives)

2 tablespoons fresh parsley and chives, chopped

3 tablespoons whole almonds, roughly chopped

1 tablespoon pickled vegetables/peppers\*

Extra virgin olive oil

4 swordfish steaks (5-6 ounces each)

Salt and pepper

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**Directions**

Mix all ingredients in a small bowl and add just enough extra virgin olive oil for the relish to come together.

Prepare the grill at medium-high heat. Brush the swordfish steaks with 2 tablespoons of olive oil plus salt and pepper, to taste. Grill the steaks until just cooked through, about 3 minutes per side (depending on thickness of steaks). Transfer the steaks to a plate and top with the relish.

\*Chop and cover a selection of vegetables (carrots, cauliflower, celery, spicy peppers) with salt water for approximately one day, rinse vegetables and add equal parts vinegar and extra virgin olive oil and refrigerate for 2 days (or use any jarred pickled vegetables in the gourmet or dell section of the grocery store)

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Source: Recipe developed for Sicilia DOC by Victor Rallo, chef and wine critic and host of his public television show Eat! Drink! Italy! He owns and runs Birravino in Red Bank, NJ and Undici Taverna Rustica in Rumson, NJ. He has published two wine books, Napoleon Wasn't Exiled and 21 Wines.

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