



IPO WINES

COUNTRY
France

REGION
Corsica

APPELLATION
Patrimonio

SOIL TYPE
Clay, Limestone

VARIETAL(S)
100% Muscat à Petit Grains

FARMING
Organic

WINEMAKER
Antoine Arena



2014 Arena Muscat du Cap Corse

IMPORTED BY Kermit Lynch

ABOUT THE PRODUCER

Antoine Arena, like most Corsicans of his generation, grew up in a family that earned a modest living working the land on an island largely unknown to the outside world. As soon as he could he joined the mass exodus of Corsicans to the French mainland, in search of jobs and what they thought to be a better life. Several years later in the mid 1970s, with a promising career on the mainland, the Corsican independence movement exploded with violent confrontations between nationalists and French government forces, leaving Antoine stunned.

In his shock and anger, he moved back to the family farm and decided to reverse the trend and remain on the land, as his own form of protest. Many others soon followed his lead, and for the first time in over a century, the emigration from the island ebbed and Corsicans came back home to reclaim their land. To survive off the land, Antoine knew he would need to show the world outside of Corsica what Patrimonio was capable of. And so his mission began to make the best his land could make and to spread the word. He started identifying the best parcels and vinifying them separately, and long before his time, worked the vines organically and vinified without any added sulfur.

From the beginning of the endeavor, Antoine and his wife Marie worked tirelessly to put Patrimonio on the map to the greater French public, and with quite a success. They brought fame and respect to their appellation and are recognized nearly unanimously as being the best there is on the island. In Paris, for example, Arena is a living legend and his presence at a tasting in the city will always guarantee an over capacity crowd. He's close friends with the likes of the Gang of Four, Montanet, Barral, Catherine & Pierre Breton, and is as much of a bon vivant as any of them.

Now Antoine is joined by his two sons, Antoine-Marie and Jean-Baptiste who share Antoine's spirit and continue to work the land and make the wine naturally, as taught from their father. Good thing is, this time around, no one will be leaving the domaine in search of a better life elsewhere.

WINE NOTES

Vines planted in 1982, 1992, 1995. Hand harvested (yields usually around 40 hl/ha), Natural fermentation, low doses of sulfur, cement cuve, no wood. Long fermentations, then wines are aged for 6 to 8 months on fine lees. Wines complete malolactic fermentation. Most vintages are bottled unfiltered. There is also a small parcel of Muscat à Petits Grains that goes into the Muscat du Cap Corse cuvée. It is a low-yielding parcel, which is then fortified with Corsican grappa, as tradition and A.O.C. rules require. His Muscat is never over the top nor syrupy but is always floral and delicate. The Arenas also produce a small quantity of unfortified Muscat that is mostly consumed locally.

This wine is pungently redolent of sage, orange blossom, and candied lemon rind. Subtly oil and creamy, its piquancy almost manages to be a match for its sheer sweetness, and it finishes – in its confectionary, honeyed, bittersweet way – with far greater persistence than most French wines of its genre.