

### 2014 Argiolas Vermentino di Sardegna Meri

I was previously unfamiliar with this wine, but am very happy to have discovered it now. The 2014 Vermentino di Sardegna Meri is a gorgeous expression that is the result of experimental techniques studied to enhance Vermentino. Meri is produced with a special procedure that chills the grapes with dry ice as they are being harvested. This process has done much to lock in the aromas and the natural freshness of this crisp and luminous wine. Although Vermentino is celebrated for its simplicity, this interpretation shows unique creaminess and sophistication. It has the fullness of a Chardonnay and the lighthearted grace of Vermentino.

Founded in 1938 by Antonio Argiolas, this is one of the most important quality wineries on the island of Sardinia. Argiolas farms 240 hectares of vines (with native grapes such as Cannonau, Nuragus and Monica) in the southern part of the island near Cagliari. This year, I was especially impressed by the gorgeous Nasco-based white wine Iselis and the Vermentino Meri. Both wines are new to me.

Importer(s):

Winebow, Inc., 236 W 26th St, New York, NY 10001, (212) 255-9414, www.winebow.com.

- Monica Lerner (December, 2015)

### 2012 Argiolas Angialis

Made with late harvest grapes, the 2012 Angialis (500-milliliter) is 95% Nasco with a tiny percentage of Malvasia di Cagliari mixed in for an extra aromatic lift. This precious wine represents a tremendous effort. The bouquet is particularly generous with honey, dried apricot and candied fruit. The wine's appearance is beautiful with golden rays of brilliant light. Creamy intensity and rich fruit flavors wrap around the palate, yet the wine also offers that much-needed acidity to keep it fresh and clean. In terms of Sardinian dessert wines, it really doesn't get any better than this.

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### 2011 Argiolas Turriga

This is a landmark wine from one of Sardinia's leading producers. The 2011 Turriga is a blend of Cannonau, Malvasia Nera, Carignano and Bovale Sardo aged in French oak for two years. The wine represents a brainstorming between the Argiolas family and famed Italian enologist Giacomo Tachis. This is a beautiful edition of the celebrated wine from a hot vintage that shows extra aromatic intensity and softness in the mouth. Austere aromas of dark fruit, plum and blackberry segue to spice, licorice and balsam herb. Despite the wine's richness and opulence, it never feels overripe or too heavy.

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### 2013 Argiolas Cannonau di Sardegna Costera

The 2013 Cannonau di Sardegna Costera hits all the right buttons. This is a steady and well presented red wine from the heart of the Mediterranean. It shows a high level of confidence and boldness with big, black cherry aromas followed by more subtle nuances of spice, tobacco and freshly milled black pepper. Although the wine tastes very dry, it is not without its softness and plushness in terms of texture.

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### 2014 Argiolas Nasco di Cagliari Iselis

I was highly impressed by the 2014 Nasco di Cagliari Iselis. Made from the unknown Nasco grape, the wine is partially aged in oak barrel to add texture and weight to the mouthfeel. The Nasco grape is characterized by its deep aromas and floral bouquet. This is a very perfumed wine with primary tones of white flower, honey and summer peach. Iselis was created to drive charity causes around the world and this wine has funded medical centers in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

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### 2011 Argiolas Cerdeña

The 2011 Cerdeña is mostly Vermentino with small percentages of other indigenous white grapes in the mix. Fruit comes from well-draining limestone soils and the wine is fermented in oak. It later ages in wood barrel for up to eight months. The results are simply terrific and this beautiful wine offers a sophisticated and creamy style. This is a medium to full-bodied white wine with gorgeous aromas of yellow fruit, rose and honey. It wraps thickly over the palate. I would expect Cerdeña to safely continue its evolution over the next five years.

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### **2012 Argiolas Korem**

Showing the marks of a warm vintage, the 2012 Korem is an intricate blend of Bovale Sardo, Carignano and Cannonau. These are three of the most prominent red grapes used in Sardinia. The wine shows a darkly concentrated appearance with brooding intensity and opulent thickness. Black cherry, exotic spice and moist chewing tobacco lift heavily from the bouquet. Korem shows soft tannins and a thickly layered texture. This is a great winter wine to pair with a succulent cut of red meat.

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