

L'Acino

Profile

Founded in 2006 by Antonello Canonico, Dino Briglio and Emilio Di Ciann (all natives of the mountain town of San Marco Argentano), L'Acino is a communal effort to express the oft-forgotten possibilities of Calabrian terroir. When the project began, the three friends were working full-time in unrelated fields: Antonello was a film director, Dino a historian and Emilio a lawyer. Though they had no viticultural or winemaking experience, their love of wine was enough to start an estate, and the trio's taste for vini naturali meant focusing their attention on organic viticulture and minimal intervention winemaking.

After a year of searching far and wide for a small vineyard, Antonello struck gold with an hectare of the indigenous white grape Mantónico. Purchased from an old farmer who deemed the land too hard to work, this picturesque vineyard is located right on the border of the Pollino national park, the largest natural park in Italy. Soon thereafter, the guys were able to purchase a nearby 1.5 hectare parcel of the local red grape Magliocco. While converting both parcels to organics, they produced their first wines in the 2007, a white called *Mantónicoz* and a red named *Tocco Magliocco*. At 650 meters elevation and exposed North, both these sites are particularly cool, providing a lighter, more elegant style than most would expect of Calabrian wine.

The next step was seeing something through from the beginning, and so a new search began for a suitable terroir that had never been planted in vines. This again took about a year, but resulted in the discovery of a stunning, sandy coteau where the guys have planted Magliocco and Mantónico from massale, much of it in franc de pied. Planted in 2007, these young vines produce the estate's two entry level wines, both called *Chora* and both extremely fun, lively and surprisingly light gulpers.

The wines ferment off their native yeasts, mostly in stainless steel vats, though a small amount of old French oak is used for the older's vines' best grapes. Vinifications take place without addition or retractions, save a small amount of sulfur at bottling. The whites in particular are wildly original and compelling, while the reds are a pure, coifable joy.