

RICCA TERRA

NERO D'AVOLA

— VARIETAL —

Nero d'Avola - A red grape variety that originates from Sicily, which is perfectly suited to the warm and dry growing conditions of the Riverland.

— THE STORY —

We are committed to investing in Mediterranean grape varieties and discovering how best they suit our region. We are excited by their unique qualities and ability to adapt to our climate, and of course their drinkability!

Nero d'Avola was introduced to Ricca Terra Farms out of pure frustration during the millennium drought. Faced with the reality of a limited supply of irrigated water in the future, we needed a grape variety that could withstand the warm and dry climate of the Riverland region.

After extensive in-field trials, we learned that only half the irrigated water was required to grow quality Nero d'Avola grapes compared to some French varieties. Twelve years on, Nero d'Avola is without a doubt Ricca Terra Farm's flagship grape variety.

Nero d'Avola was one of the first grape varieties planted on our vineyard. It's resilience and ability to thrive with minimum inputs such as water, makes it our 'king of kings'.

— TECHNICAL STUFF —

Viticulture: All Nero d'Avola grown on our farm is hand and spur pruned. These vines have a drooping canopy and a set of catching wires to stop the canopy from rolling and exposing the grapes to the sometimes-extreme summer sun.

Nero d'Avola can produce big bunches and large berries. Managed in a similar manner to that of other grape varieties grown on the farm, Nero d'Avola has seen bunch sizes up to 500g per bunch! These large bunches tend to have berries with thin skins prone to bunch rots if harvest rains occur during harvest. To manage this, we stress the vines at flowering which encourages the bunch to shatter (not all the flowers set). Bunch shatter leads to less berries per bunch and a looser cluster, meaning less risk of bunch rots. From flowering to veraison, irrigation is limited to restrict vegetative growth of the vine and to restrict the size of the berry. Irrigation is applied during the period when extreme heat occurs, usually from veraison to harvest.

It is important to note that Nero d'Avola is not compatible with all rootstocks. Grafting onto 101-14, Richter 99 & 110 can lead to grafting failures. Nero d'Avola is a grape variety that produces a lot of leaf in a picking sample if machine harvested and therefore our preference is to hand harvest.

Winemaking: Once the Nero d'Avola is harvested, it is stored in cool rooms prior to crushing. The fermentation of the grapes includes some whole bunch combined with natural and inoculated fermentation. Wine is matured for six months in old French barrels to ensure the characters of the grape are not masked by oak.

Alc/Vol: 14.2%

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