

**The Wine: Cusumano Nero d'Avola, 2019,
Sicily, Italy**

The Cost: \$13

The Shop: Jimmy's

Tasting Notes:

Aromas: red and black berries, dark cherry, violet

Palate: black cherry, strawberry, black pepper, baking spices

Finish: fruit driven, creamy, balanced acidity, lightly chewy texture, firm tannins



Region:

Although Sicilians have produced wine since 4000 BC, the region is just starting to receive the positive attention it deserves. For most of the 20th century, Sicily had a reputation for growing cheap, mass-produced, dull wines that emphasized quantity over quality. But the 21st century has brought about change and a new crop of winemakers who have focused on shifting the perception that Sicily can produce fantastic red wines. And why shouldn't it? The region's dry, warm climate is ideal for not only wine production but organic farming as well.

Varietal:

Considered to be the island's flagship variety, Nero d'Avola is the most widely planted grape in Sicily. It has excellent aging potential and contributes to the blending of Sicily's famous Marsala wine – sweet, fortified wine similar to port. With comparable qualities to New World Shiraz, it produces fruit-driven, full-bodied dry wines with black cherry, plum, licorice, high tannins, and juicy acidity. For much of the 20th century, Nero d'Avola was simply used as a blending grape but now stands on its own as a quality varietal with a super affordable price tag. There is a newfound appreciation for its quality and winemakers from other countries like Australia and California are taking notice and testing its ability to adapt to their respective climates and conditions.

Producer:

The Cusumano winery was established in 2001, when brothers Alberto and Diego, took over the management of the company from their father, Francesco. From day one, the philosophy behind Cusumano has been to emphasize the importance of terroir knowledge, investment in innovative technology, and above all, passion for winemaking. Cusumano's wines are made with 100% estate-grown fruit from 4 different territories throughout Sicily. The Cusumano family is committed to creating wines that showcase these distinct regions, resulting in the brand becoming the #1 Sicilian wine in the US with 90+ ratings year over year. They were also among the first to adopt innovative glass stoppers, which are easy to open, re-usable and keep the wine fresh.

Food Pairing:

Calling all rich, meaty, and gamey style meats to the table for this wine. Think beef stew, bacon burgers, short ribs, beef chili, or oxtail soup. Chicken and pasta dishes with hearty and acidic sauces will pair nicely along with savory “non-meat” dishes with mushrooms and lentils. And don’t forget the cheese... Fontina, Gruyere, Muenster, oh my!



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