



IPO WINES

2016 Arena Vin de France "Bianco Gentile"

IMPORTED BY Kermit Lynch

COUNTRY

France

REGION

Corsica

APPELLATION

Patrimonio

SOIL TYPE

clay, limestone

VARIETAL(S)

100% Bianco Gentile

FARMING

Organic

WINEMAKER

Antoine Arena

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 1997. Hand harvested. Natural fermentation, low doses of sulfur, cement cuve and no wood. Long fermentations, then wines are aged for 6 to 8 months on fine lees in stainless steel tanks.

Wines complete malolactic fermentation and most vintages are bottled unfiltered.

Bianco Gentile is a variety native to the island, which was considered lost until a small parcel was found up the highlands of Corsica. Antoine and a small group of vigneron friends took some cuttings from that last remaining vineyard, and planted it back on his property, effectively saving it from extinction.

Patrimonio regulations, drawn up when the grape was considered extinct, don't allow for its use in the A.O.C., so the wine is a Vin de France. The parcel is situated between the Carco and Grotte di Sole vineyards.

Beautifully balanced fruit with reasonable complexity and length. Has a dry richness that suits my palate. A little acidity, a bit buttery, and full of flavor.

