



Ansonica

Synonym: Ansolica, Ansonica, Ansora, Anzonica, Insolia, Inzolia, Nzolia, Zolia Bianca

Commonly mistaken for: Inzolia Imperiale, Regina, Valencia Bianco

Origin: Until genetic testing proved it hailed from Sicily, there had been theories that it could have been Greek or Spanish but it was no real surprise that it was Sicilian – records show it has been grown there (under the name Inzolia) since the seventeenth century.

Agronomic and environmental aspects: A variety which is not homogenous showing diverse characteristics depending on the environment in which it is grown. A vigorous and consistently productive variety it has long robust and elastic canes with medium spaced internodes. Ansonica/Inzolia is well adapted to hot-dry conditions and is grown both on the plains and in the hills in central and southern

Italy. It's a relatively low acid grape but with early harvest can attain good freshness and beat the searing summer temperatures. Historically prefers medium planting density (around 2500 vines/hectare) and medium to long cane pruning. According to Robert Zironi of the University of Udine, "acid soils derived from granite desegregation" in Elba and Giglio are particularly suited to the variety (d'Agata, 2014). Ansonica also performs well in western Sicily, under the synonym Inzolia, at low elevation in sand and limestone soils where it can be harvested as early as August.

Diseases, pests and disorders:

Very drought resistant but less so to extreme summer heat. In particularly problematic seasons it can be sensitive to powdery or downy mildew.

Description

Growing tip: average tip, almost hairless, greenish yellow
Leaf: Medium-large pentagonal leaf with five lobes. Closed/overlapping petiolar sinus. Underside of leaf is hairless.
Bunch: Large, semi-loose, winged bunch with a short pyramidal shape.
Berry: Large with thick, waxy skin. Flesh tends to be crunchy and juicy with quite neutral, sweet flavour.

Vegetation growth habit: semi-erect
Vigour: high
Average bunch size: large
Average bunches per shoot: 1-2

Growth stages:

Time of budburst: medium
Time of flowering: medium-early
Time of veraison: early
Time of harvest: early

Wine characteristics:

Produces nutty, herbal white wines that can tend towards low acidity. Oxidises readily which makes it a great variety for Marsala. When picked early, Ansonica can make citrusy and zesty wines with great finesse. The wine often has a saline note to it. Unusually for a white wine, it can be tannic with naturally high polyphenols. Often used in blends to add finesse, power or perfume.

The Australian Experience:

Ansonica has been in Australia for some time as a part of the CSIRO collection. Ansonica VCR 3 is a new clone which was selected in 2011 and released from quarantine in 2015, the mother rows were planted in 2015 and 2016 on single bi-lateral cordon VSP with 4 foliage wires at the Chalmers Merbein Vineyard in the Murray Darling region.

A super vigorous variety. The original vine which was received from quarantine as a small pot plant grew to a girth of approximately 100mm by 2018. Hardy in hot conditions with large bunches of table-grape like appearance. Naturally high yielding the fruit zone has proven to be a bit congested with uneven ripening of under-exposed bunches hidden up in the canopy, even on VSP. Would probably benefit from some thinning to avoid this.

The berries are elliptical with a sun kissed golden/yellow colour. Delicious eating. The crunchy nature of the berries made the extraction of juice difficult and a hard pressing cycle was required for hand-picked grapes in a pneumatic press. During the ferment it tasted like sultana juice with chunky but attractive tannins. Once dry the wine had an intriguing pretty and fresh yet textural and tannic character. Crisp and medium weight with notes of jasmine, pear, black tea.

Available Clone:

Ansonica VCR 3



- Slightly higher vigour than the average Ansonica
- Smaller bunches than other clones
- Less astringent, less herbaceous and more acidic than most Ansonica
- Ansonica VCR 3 wines have elevated fruit, floral and spice notes and good structure.

Maturity Data: Chalmers Merbein Vineyard

	23/2/17	27/2/17	2/3/17	6/3/17	9/3/17	13/3/17
Ansonica VCR 3						
Baume	11.4	11.2	11.6	12.2	13.0	12.4
pH	3.64	3.68	3.66	3.79	3.78	3.85
TA	6.5	6.5	5.9	5.7	5.4	5.1

	31/1/18	6/2/18	13/2/18	16/2/18	19/2/18	23/2/18
Ansonica VCR 3						
Baume	9.4	10.2	10.6	11.0	11.2	11.8
pH	3.32	3.45	5.59	3.55	3.54	3.88
TA	8.8	9.0	7.1	6.8	6.1	6.0