

Du Cropio



Du Cropio, translating to “doctor of agronomy” in the Greek-influenced local language of Calabria, is an estate of 30 ha overlooking the village of Cirò and the Ionian sea. The Ippolito family, present in the region for generations, holds 8 ha of vines on the coastal plains and a further 22 high in the hills further west. Most of the grapes harvested at the estate are sold either at the time of harvest or as bulk wine thereafter. Then, the finest wines from the best sites are kept to be vinified at the estate and sold as “Du Cropio.”

On occasion, and over many years, we have cast a glance at a map of the southern reaches of Italy and have contemplated expanding to regions not represented in our portfolio. Each time, after dipping our toes into the water, we have conserved our energy and concentrated on our work in the North. After meeting Giuseppe Ippolito in December 2011, I arrived at Du Cropio, expecting either light, insipid wines or overripe “confettura”; instead, I was stunned by the elegance, breed, and complexity of the three red wines of the Du Cropio estate, and after familiarizing ourselves with the Calabrian region and its wines, we are confident that this first foray into the southern zone of Italy will not only prove compatible with our selection but will enrich it considerably.

Viticulture:

- **Farming:** Certified Organic Grapes, Practicing Organic Vinification
- **Treatments:** Copper-sulfate only, cover crops sown between the vines
- **Ploughing:** Annual ploughing by horse to promote vineyard health
- **Soils:** Limestone-clay on mostly southeast-facing slopes
- **Vines:** Trained in Cordon de Royat and planted in couplets at c. 7,000-10,000 vines/ha to severely restrict yields. Average age 35-40 years.
- **Yields:** Controlled via severe pruning and debudding
- **Harvest:** Entirely manual, usually in early October
- **Purchasing:** Entirely estate fruit



Vinification:

- **Fermentation:** After sorting, destemming, and crushing, wines ferment spontaneously in stainless-steel tanks. Cuvaison lasts c. 30 days.
- **Extraction:** A combination of punchdowns and pumpovers depending on the vintage.
- **Chaptalization and Acidification:** None
- **Pressing:** Pneumatic bladder press
- **Malolactic Fermentation:** Occurs spontaneously following alcoholic fermentation

Aging:

- **Élevage:** 15-18 months in 25-50-hl neutral botti, with all racking and movement carried out via parastaltic pump
- **Lees:** 7-8 months
- **Fining and Filtration:** All wines are unfined and unfiltered.
- **Sulfur:** Applied when necessary during ageing and at bottling, with c. 20 mg/l free sulfur on release