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ZONIN DISCOVERS A NATIVE ITALIAN RED GRAPE THAT'S GREAT FOR FIZZ

30th August, 2018 by Patrick Schmitt

What red grape other than Pinot Noir can be used to make great traditional method fizz and top-end still red wines? Francesco Zonin thinks he has found the answer.



Francesco is the vice president of Zonin1821

In an interview with *the drinks business* yesterday, Francesco, who is vice president of Zonin1821, the Italian group with wineries in Tuscany, Veneto and Sicily, among others, said that he has discovered a grape that rivals Pinot Noir for its suitability for reds as well as sparkling wines.

And, as a result, Francesco will next year unveil a bottle-fermented fizz from this variety that has spent 36 months ageing on its lees.

So what is it? Nero d'Avola – the most widely planted grape in Sicily, where it is widely believed to have originated.

Francesco explained, "Twenty years ago we went to Sicily and we learnt a lot about how to grow a great Nero d'Avola, and now, 20 years later, we are bringing our sparkling wine know-how to Sicily to give Nero d'Avola a parallel life."

Continuing, he told *db* that two years ago the company, which has been making sparkling wine in the north of Italy for over 100 years, launched its first tank-method fizz blanc de noirs using Nero d'Avola – called Nero Luce Brut – and in February 2019, will be unveiling an inaugural traditional-method version from the same variety.

"It will be a Champagne-method, zero dosé, blanc de noirs from Nero d'Avola," he said.

"It is disruptive, if you think that Nero d'Avola is the king of red wines from Sicily, but I think it has much more to offer, and we are starting to understand the next step, there is huge potential," he added.

"Like Pinot Noir, which is used in Champagne and Burgundy, because it is great for red wine and sparkling, Nero d'Avola can be used to make great red and sparkling wine, both Charmat and metodo classico," he said.

Zonin1821 specialises in the production of sparkling wines from Italy, making big brand fizz with both Prosecco and Moscato.

The company will be presenting the great range of sparkling wines from Italy at a masterclass in

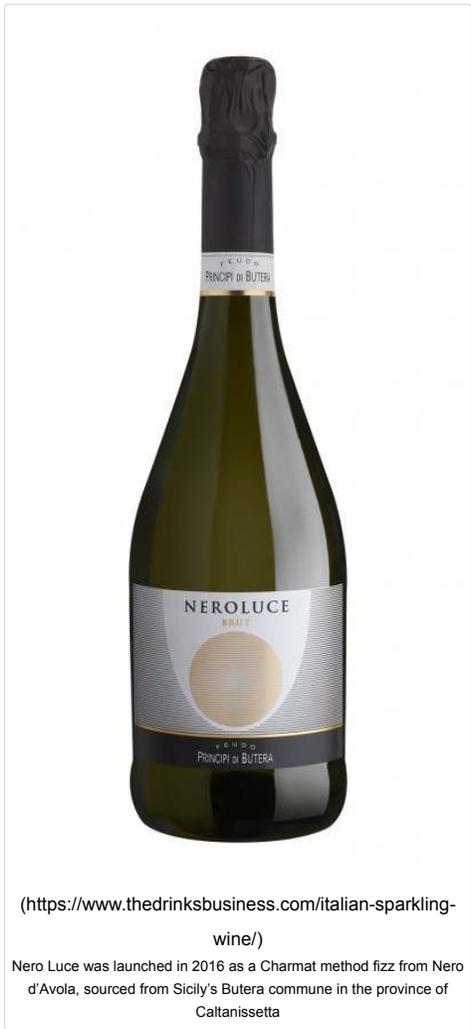
London on 1 October from 10.30 to 12pm at Asia House.

Taking in the commercial classics, such as Prosecco, along with newer examples, this will be an educational event designed to showcase the diversity and quality of Italian fizz.

It will also provide a chance to taste the wines, sparkling included, from Zonin1821's latest project: a set of wines from Chile under the brand Dos Almas.

Presenting the wines will be Zonin1821's chief winemaker Stefano Ferrante.

This event is free of charge but places are very limited, so please register your interest by clicking here now. (<https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/italian-sparkling-wine/>)



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