

WINE OF THE WEEK

2005 Passopisciaro Rosso Sicilia

Quick swirl

September 5, 2007

Taste it blind and you'd never guess this Italian red came from Sicily. Not, that is, unless you've been visiting *garagistes* who have staked a claim to the north slopes of Mt. Etna on the east side of the island. This hot new region in Sicily has gained a cult following.

Chiseled and crisp, its gorgeous cool-climate fruit shot through with spice and juniper, the 2005 Passopisciaro can hold its own against a good Sangiovese or Barbera. It's produced by Andrea Franchetti, who made his name with Tenuta di Trinoro in Tuscany. The grape in Passopisciaro is in fact the local Nerello Mascalese picked in November when it's completely ripe. File that fact away in case it's needed in a wine trivia game. Meanwhile, just enjoy the wine with grilled sausages, roast birds, grilled Cornish game hens or a meaty lasagna.

-- S. Irene Virbila

Region: Sicily

Price: About \$36

Style: Chiseled and crisp

Food it goes with: Grilled sausages and meats, roast birds, lasagna

Where you find it: Widely available at fine wine retailers