
Sella e Mosca wine pairing dinner at Vini e Capricci

Vini e Capricci – Wines & Whims hosted a Sella e Mosca wine pairing dinner last month at its premises at the Gozitano Agricultural Village in Xewkija.

Chef George Borg was tasked with designing a menu to match the six prestigious Sella e Mosca wines from the extensive range of this Italian producer. Located in Alghero, Sardinia, Sella e Mosca is considered the most important and illustrious winery on the Italian island for more than a century. It produces premium wines made exclusively from estate-grown grapes, including Vermentino, Torbato and Cannonau, but has also been among the first to introduce international grape varieties, notably Cabernet Sauvignon.

As the guests gathered, Torbato Spumante Brut and Oleandro Rosé di Alghero were served as an aperitif in Vini e Capricci's wine cellar. The aperitif consisted of a plate of choux buns with sweet potato and crispy guanciale, along with mozzarella strudel, and Parma ham parcels with melon and pecorino.

The spumante is made with Torbato grapes selected over the years from clones identified as suitable for their higher acid content. The wine has a light straw colour, with brief hints of lemon, a fine, persistent mousse and a fresh, lively palate with dry top notes that leave a long after taste. It is ideal both as an aperitif and for drinking throughout the meal with the appropriate food.

The rosé is made from young Cabernet Sauvignon grapes picked only during the coolest hours of the morning in two stages – in mid and late September. Its nose has fruity top notes, followed by the more austere varietal sensations typical of Cabernet. It pairs very well the pastas and rice dishes of the Mediterranean kitchen or lean meat with light sauces.

For the *mise en bouche*, a white Terre Bianche Alghero was chosen to go with a Hazelnut crusted prawn set on a courgette parcel with honey glazed mussels, drizzled with a peach vinaigrette. Made with a grape variety with very ancient origins – Torbato, which was introduced to Sardinia under Spanish rule and today is grown exclusively by Sella e Mosca – the Terre Bianche is a fresh, dry wine dominated by the variety's typical fruity flavours.

White wine with pasta? Why not: the Montero is a Vermentino di Gallura. Spreading from Spain along the coasts of the northern Tyrrhenian Sea to eventually establish itself in Sardinia where it has found the land that best enhances its exceptional distinctive features. Pleasantly balanced and fresh, it went well with spaghetti with Sardinian Bottarga di Muggine from Stefano Rocca and roasted garlic, enhanced with a parsley oil.

Then the first red wine of the dinner was served with the second course: the Terre Rare, made from bush-trained Carignano grapes grown in a coastal area of the southern-west part of Sardinia. This was accompanied by a wonderful plate of venison seared with blueberries set on a spinach potato cake. This Terre Rare delights the taste buds with its hints of ripe late-autumn fruit discreetly sustained by good oak-derived aromas.

To pair the main course, which consisted of slow cooked rabbit in jars infused with cherries, accompanied by a tobacco-infused risotto and sprinkled with freshly ground coffee, another red wine was served, the Marchese di Villamarina. With its concentrated aroma with pleasant notes of red fruit, vanilla and hints of spices, and pairing a mature palate which offers alluring sensations of hay and oak, it affirms itself as the most prestigious Cabernet Sauvignon wine from Sella e Mosca's winery

The last wine that was served was a fortified wine, Anghelu Rujù, made from partially sun-dried Cannonau grapes. The long vinification process is completed by aging in large oak barrels for at least six years. This complex, elegant wine was served with Verzin® and Ocelli® in chestnut leaves, biscuits and then Basil and lemon *panna cotta* served with chocolate bites.

Verzin® and Ocelli in foglie di Castagno® are two Italian cheeses from Beppino Ocelli's cheese dairy in Farigliano, Cuneo. The first is a soft, spreadable marbled cheese made from full cream cow's milk and the second is a cheese made from either goat's or cow's milk, according to the availability of the season. The cheese is left to age for 18 months and wrapped in chestnut leaves to produce a strong and exceptional flavour.

Finally, Sulumu Grappa di Cannonau from Distillerie Berta and Mirto di Sardegna from Zedda Piras were served in Vini e Capricci's wine cellar to end this memorable meal.

For more information about Sella e Mosca visit www.sellaemosca.it.

– ENDS –

Caption:



1. The aperitif of the Sella e Mosca wine pairing dinner, served in the wine cellar of Vini e Capricci



2. The main course of slow cooked rabbit in jars infused with cherries, accompanied by a tobacco-infused risotto and sprinkled with freshly ground coffee, was washed down with a red Marchese di Villamarina



3. The fortified wine, Anghelu Ruju, was first poured into decanters and allowed to breath before serving