

Take a Taste Trip to Le Marche Region

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While New York City's food and wine lovers were being introduced to the products of Le Marche region during the past weekend with presentations and free tastings held at Little Italy's DiPalo and Flatiron's Eataly, a handful of lucky individuals partook in Aperitivo with the Winemaker: Wines of Le Marche offered by La Scuola di Eataly on Sunday, January 15th, 2012.

What could be more pleasurable than spending a couple of hours tasting natural wines? Possibly having them presented by a the very wine-knowledgeable general manager of Eataly's wine store Niccolò Salvadori, and accompanied by carefully chosen dishes prepared by the executive chef of La Scuola di Eataly Patrick Lacey. Let us not forget to mention the presence of Marco Scapagnini, food and beverage consultant as well as Domodimonti Winery representative who answered any questions with regard to the production of these natural wines and what that means exactly, both for the consumer and the environment.

The territory of Le Marche is often referred to as the "New Tuscany," and for those who need



to make a comparison, it is all that and more. Simply put, it is another hidden, or less known Italian gem, quickly gaining worldwide recognition. This is not at all surprising when the consumers are presented with high quality and naturally grown products in our vastly ecologically oriented and environment-conscious market.

Domodimonti Natural Winery, nestled in the breathtaking Italian countryside of Montefiore dell'Aso in the Le Marche region, places an emphasis on producing their wines in the purest fashion, using little to no additives in the process. The winery's location is the first step in achieving this goal, as it is not only located in a desirable climate for vine cultivation but it is also far enough from urban pollution.

The winery's owners **Francesco and Marisa Bellini** hired an expert wine maker Carlo Ferrini whom together with a team of dedicated winegrowers, vineyard and winery staff, enologists and agronomists created and launched a state-of-the-art, low amount of visual and ecological impact generating winery, producing natural wines that may soon take over the American market. Marco Scapagnini describes their approach to wine production and allots the success of Domondimonti wines to their adherence to the following:

- Grapes that are hand-picked
- Sustainably-grown, using organic matter
- Low-yielding vineyards
- No sugar additives and strict selection of yeast
- No acid adjustments
- No other commonly used additives for mouth feel, color creation
- Minimal use of sulfites
- Use of state-of-the-art technology

During the afternoon tasting at La Scuola di Eataly, Domodimonti offered five wines from their line, beginning with a refreshing white wine called Déjà V made from the passerina grape and followed with LiCoste, produced from pecorino grape (yes, it sounds like the cheese but it is actually a grape name!) which is aged in barrels made out of acacia wood, giving the wine a specific and unusual aroma and taste. Three reds were also presented: the 100% sangiovese grape Monte Fiore, Picens, made from four different grapes (sangiovese, montepulciano, merlot and cabernet sauvignon) as well as their pride Il Messia, a montepulciano and merlot blend. All these wines were also offered to the public at Eataly the same weekend and are sold in Eataly's wine store with prices starting at \$ 12.80 for the Déjà V and reaching \$35 for Il Messia. Domodimonti also introduced their extra virgin olive oil, made exclusively from the olives grown on the hillsides of Le Marche.

Products used by chef Patrick Lacey, to create the wonderful hors d'oeuvres complimenting the wines were provided by Ortoconserviera Cameranesa Srl, an Italian agricultural food-processing company that has been preserving flavors, recipes and traditions of Italian cuisine and typical Marchigiani products for three generations. The array of different pecorino cheese was provided by Caseificio Val d'Apsa, which specializes in the production and sales of quality cheese of the Le Marche region. Other products being promoted included Spinosi pasta, fortified with Omega 3 acids produced not only using fresh eggs from their own farm raised and carefully fed chickens, but as the owner of the company emphasizes "where each egg is still broken by hand."

The aperitivo could not finish on a better note than by having a shot of Varnelli amaro. A family owned and operated distillery leading in the sector of dry anise production. Orietta Maria Vernelli was present to answer questions about the production of their products, their unchanged methods and the great secrecy of their recipes. Varnelli Distillery Corp products are all naturally obtained from herbs, roots, fruit honey and alcohol, then checked and certified and the process is always being carefully followed by one of the family members who inherited knowledge and expertise from their herbalist ancestors.

Can't make it to Italy soon? No problem! Take a taste trip to the Le Marche region. You and your taste buds will not be sorry! All products are available at Eataly or their wine store.

Here are some helpful links if you would like more information on these products:



Domodimonti Winery: <http://www.domodimonti.com/> [2]

Ortoconserviera Cameranesa Srl : <http://www.ortoconserviera.com/> [3]

Varnelli Distillery Corp: <http://varnelli.it/> [2]

Spinosi Pasta: <http://www.spinosi.it/> [4]

Caseificio Val

d'Aspa: <http://www.ascompesaro.it/main/apps/SchedeAssociati/index.php?id=508&g=caseificio-produzione-formaggi> [5]

Le marche official site: <http://www.regione.marche.it/> [6]

Eataly NYC: <http://eatalyny.com/> [7]

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Links

[1] <http://www.iitaly.org/files/varnelli2jpg>

[2] <http://www.domodimonti.com/>

[3] <http://www.ortoconserviera.com/>

[4] <http://www.spinosi.it/>

[5] <http://www.ascompesaro.it/main/apps/SchedeAssociati/index.php?id=508&g=caseificio-produzione-formaggi>

[6] <http://www.regione.marche.it/>

[7] <http://eatalyny.com/>