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BROOKLYN, I'M TRYING | FATTORIA BETTI WINE

MAY 11, 2018

Creativity begins with an idea, an energy, an excitement, a noise. We breathe life into it, we spend time and energy and countless sleepless nights on so many dynamic projects that inevitably have the same goal; to make an impact. To move someone. To have an influence. To be remembered, felt, seen, shared.

It's this desire, this part of the creative cycle that led us all here to Brooklyn Like misled moths to a flame of promise, we leave the comfort of our former homes and all congregate in this land of shoebox apartments and ungodly rent prices and people with aggressive opinions about bagels. We all come blindly, searching for something more with the hope we can stay just long enough within this light of hope before we burn out.

And so how does an Italian winemaking family find a place for their wine in the New York food scene?

They find a way to make it speak the language here in order for it to be understood. They choose a charming little spot in a neighborhood in Brooklyn that's known for its big ideas, its promise of potential, its unequivocal expectation, its location, physically and tangibly at the epicenter of creativity. They have a local chef dream up five courses inspired by each dynamic wine. They invite people with a palate, with a voice, with an appreciation and a desire to share. They sit them around a low-lit intimate communal table, ripe for conversation and appreciation. And then they wine and dine them.

My wine expert Zach Eichenhorn and consequent favorite vintage; good age, big nose, strong body, seductive notes, lingering taste, will take you through the sensory adventure, as it transpired, from every sniff and sip, to each perfectly al dente bite.

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Stepping into [Le Fond](http://www.lefondbk.com/) in Greenpoint last Tuesday, I was unsure of what to expect from the wines and food we were about to experience. A Tuscan winery, [Fattoria Betti](http://www.fattoriabetti.it/english.html), would be the source of some truly delectable tastes as owner, Guido Betti, casually and confidently guided us through his family's long-standing traditions of wine-making. The magic of this dinner would be how Chef Jake Eberle's creations

served as a unique pairing to some of Betti's vintages.

First up, a crisp white comprised of 70% Chardonnay and 30% Trebbiano, a common Tuscan grape. This wine dubbed, "Creto De' Betti", had subtle notes of pineapple and even mango. Chef Jake Eberle's first course of a spring vegetable carpaccio with mustard vinaigrette and egg did well to pair with the casually effortless, and well-balanced finish of the wine.

Sangiovese is the favorite grape of Fattoria Bette and Guido knows how to harvest it well. The next wine we sampled was the 2016 Chianti Montalbano consisting of 85% Sangiovese and 15% Chianti. The old style maturation of this wine, done in steel and concrete vats, created notes of cherry with medium acid and a slightly dry finish. Our second course was a marriage of perfectly chewy cavatelli found amongst the delicate punch of grassy, de Puy lentils, shaved parmesan, and the tiniest square bits of prosciutto. The plate provided a savory sweet finish leading up to our main course.

As we settled into our next glass of wine, it was at this point that the conversation beside and across the table began to flow. The attendees began to loosen up and relax a bit, knowing now that we were all truly experiencing a unique taste of Tuscany in the cozy confines of our well-appointed venue for the evening.

Next up, the "Prunideo". Again, starting in the traditional, old-style which the Betti family has seemingly perfected using steel and concrete vats, this 90% Sangiovese and 10% Cabernet is finished in oak casks for a period of one year. This blend was of a richer, more full-bodied complexity that was my favorite of the evening. Paired with our main course of an incredibly tender braised lamb shoulder, this robust, scintillating wine is not only perfect for fattier meats but it had me coming back for more than one glass.

As dessert arrived I thought I couldn't possibly eat one more bit of food. Yet here was this delectable, milky chocolate slate paired with a light, creamy vanilla custard staring back at me. As Chef Jake came around, finely drizzling each plate with a strawberry reduction, our host Guido was offering a glass of 100% Sangiovese rose. The tart, yet not overpowering finish of this refreshing wine provided the perfect acidic balance to end an absolutely exquisite 4-course meal. Only in Brooklyn.

In a very generous final gesture, our new friend, Guido, bestowed upon us a parting gift in the form of one bottle of his 100% merlot vintage, the "Semel". One week later, popping cherry tomatoes and bits of cured meat on a fair day at Transmitter Park, we opened the bottle to find a delightfully refreshing, medium-bodied red with notes of plum and raspberry. If we find ourselves in Tuscany anytime soon, Mr. Betti, we will be knocking on your door. For the time being we will be waiting for our palate to be played upon again by your fine wines, hoping they come to our shores again very soon.

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