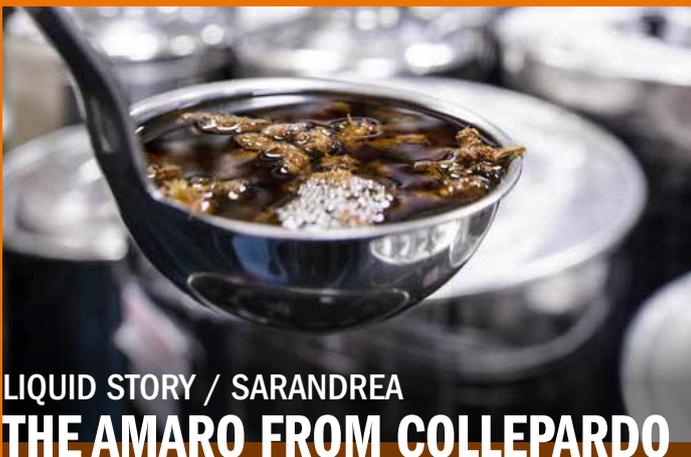
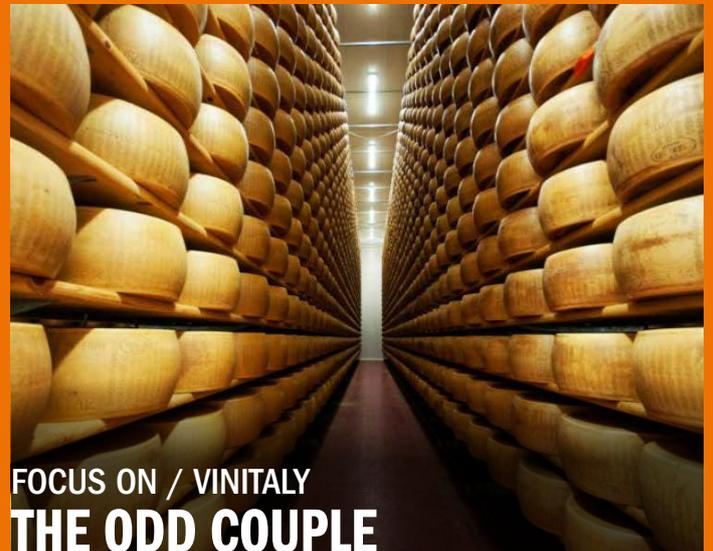


Bartales

Best of

N. 38 | JUNE 2022

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Shaking perspectives



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GAMONDI
1890

ITALIAN PRIDE

They call it the Town of Herbs. With around 1,000 inhabitants, halfway between Frosinone and Fiuggi (in southern Lazio) is Colleparado, a delightful little medieval town in the heart of the Ernici mountains. It is known for its caves, the Trisulti Charterhouse, St Dominic's Monastery, and the Botanic Garden, but most of all, for its exceptional biodiversity. According to the ancients, the whole area was known as the "Garden of Centaur Chiron" (teacher to Aesculapius, the god of medicine) because of its abundance in medicinal plants and herbs. Suffice to say that in the area over 1,200 species of herbs have been classified, belonging to 150 different families, which were used through the centuries by the Cistercian monks to make extraordinary remedies. And it was here that in 1918, at the end of the Great War, one of the jewels of the Italian liqueur industry was born: the Sarandrea Liquoreria. It started out as a small factory that became well-known and gained prestige over time. This was also thanks to sambuca, which in all likelihood was born in Colleparado. And it is thanks to the Amaro San Marco, a liqueur made from an infusion of several medicinal herbs, that it received the "Liqueur of the Year" and "Best in Show by Country" at the London Spirits Competition. A recognition that makes us proud and an award for best quality.

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N. 38 | JUNE 2022

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194

HERMITE, WITH THE SOUL OF ALPESTRE

The old recipe of a full-flavoured amaro makes a comeback
Perfect for slow drinking

BY ALESSANDRO PALANCA

Arquebuse, Arquebuse de l'Hermitage, Eau d'Arquebuse, Alpestre: many names that changed over time to identify and later shield it from imitations; a unique product that

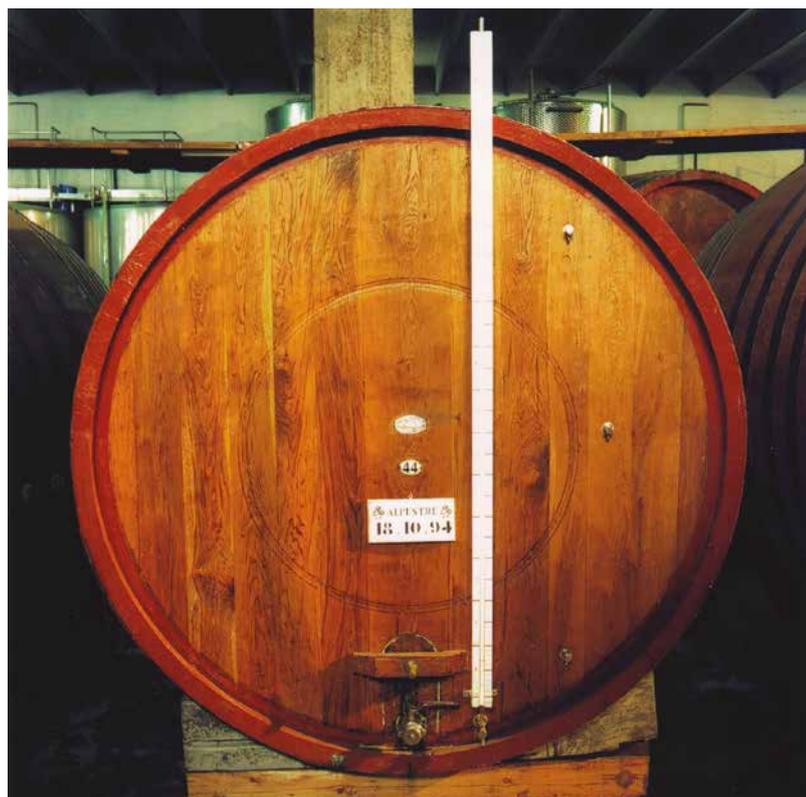
carries its 165 years of history very well. The secret of the old Arquebuse is its use of officinal herbs, alcohol and nothing more, as well as the selection of botanicals included in the original recipe in the



right quantities. The recipe was jealously guarded for many years in Carmagnola (Turin), where production took place in the early 1900s.

After moving to Piedmont in 1903 to escape French anticlerical laws, the Marists bought a large building in Borgo Salsasio, Carmagnola, built in the 1600s as a residence for noble families. The Marists restored the dilapidated building making it their simple home and set up the distillery with all the equipment they were able to bring with them from France. The San Giuseppe distillery was born.

In leaving France, the Marists left the field open to counterfeiters and fake producers. They waged a long legal battle in France to maintain the name “Arquebuse”, but despite some rights being recognised, they were not permitted to be the only users of the name. Arquebuse and its consumption were now so widespread that it was decided to allow the name for public use. This was one of the contributing factors that led to the birth of the name “Alpestre”.



To defend its inimitable spirit and distinguish it from the others, and since the use of foreign names was prohibited during the Fascist period in Italy, the name was changed to Alpestre to preserve the Alpine identity for the product.



In France, Arquebuse de l'Hermitage continued to be produced. "A white house with grey shutters, enclosed in the circle of a fragrant garden where roses, begonias and dahlias bloom in incomparable abundance. Beyond the garden, a low building, a chimney with a good plume of smoke ...

and the financial police. The building, the chimney and the financial police represent Arquebuse. No shouting, no noise of wagons, no comings and goings of workers and supervisors. If the financial police that controls consumption of alcohol were not there, it could be said that the Arquebuse

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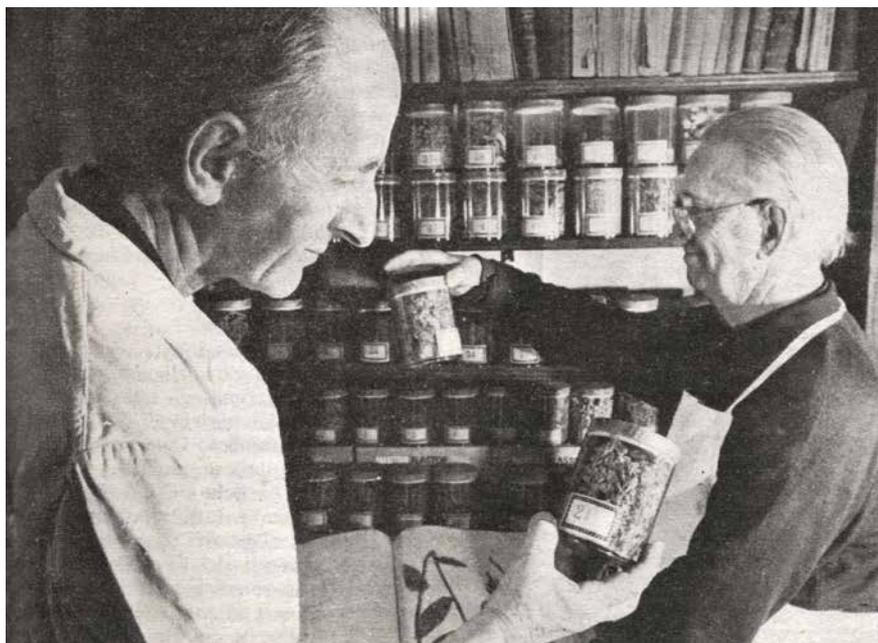
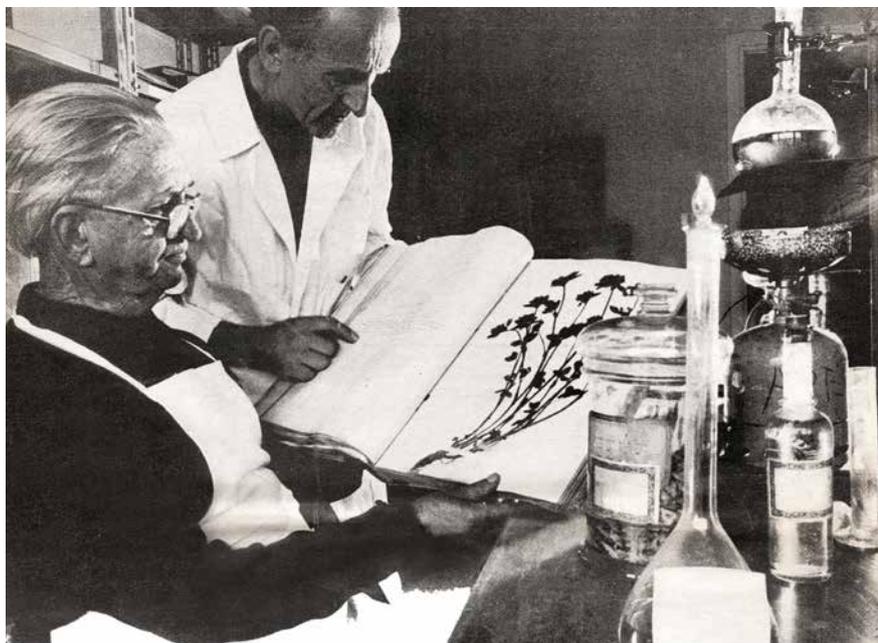
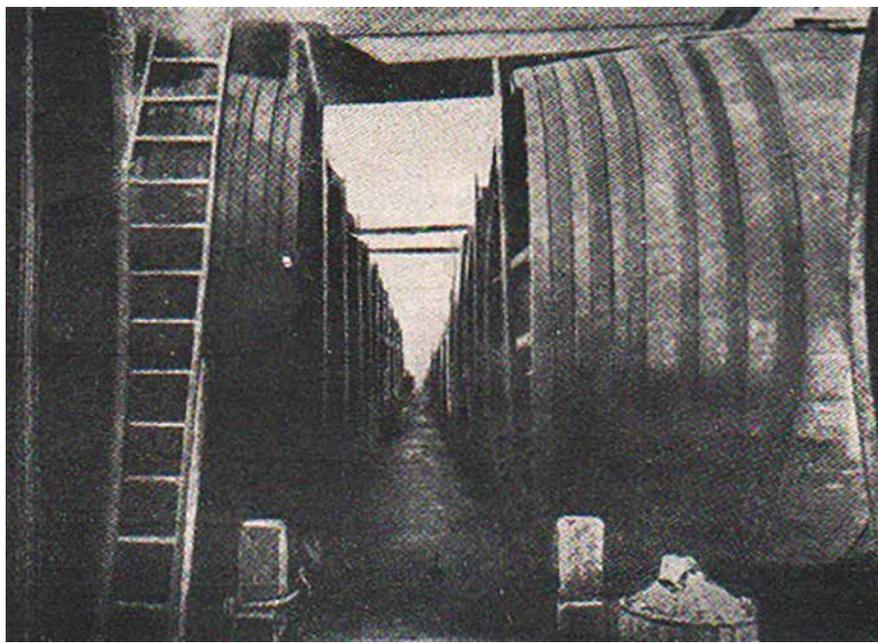
makes itself.”

So wrote Marinella del Rosso about the San Giuseppe Distillery in “La Corba della Salute”, a brochure created by the Marist Brothers in Italy on the use and consumption of Alpestre.

A convent-company with over 250,000 square meters of sunny fields used for growing medicinal plants for liqueurs and a factory capable of producing up to five thousand litres a day. Writings from the early decades of the 1900s testify to the impact that the San Giuseppe distillery and the intense work that took place inside it had on the visitor. A large, green clearing held the rows of plants, divided by species into rectangles of soil. After being harvested and selected, the plants were placed in macerators together with a large amount of pure alcohol. The tanks occupied two floors of space. From the stills the liquid passed directly into the barrel, and the bottling also took place in the distillery.

The choice of Piedmont as Arquebuse’s new production site immediately proved to be ideal, because the climate of the region was suitable for growing the herbs from the nearby Alps. In the event of bad harvests, it was easy enough to obtain the necessary plants from the surrounding valleys, without affecting the formula and taste of the final product.

For a long time, the distillate continued to be produced almost exclusively for the French market, at least until 1918, when Italian Giovanni Fresia tasted it during a trip to the Lyon area where Arquebuse was particularly popular. Thinking – and rightly so – that the product would meet the tastes of his fellow citizens, he started selling the product in Italy, despite the challenges caused by the two world wars.





His sons supported him in his venture.

In the meantime, the Marist brothers expanded their offering and new products were born alongside Arquebuse. The main raw material continued to be the variety of medicinal herbs. Not surprisingly, the distillery's Latin motto read "herbarum virtus, vita hominum", or "virtue of plants, life of men".

"Despite running like water on the nothingness of my botanical knowledge, they leave on the bottom some kind of nostalgia for the farming world." Such were the words of journalist Agostino Ghilardi,

when on a visit to the San Giuseppe distillery he wrote about the herbs grown by the Marists in the illustrated weekly "L'Osservatore della Domenica". It was the mid-seventies and Ghilardi cited the success of Alpestre as evidence of renewed public interest in the benefits of officinal plants, which not by chance owe their name to the "officine", ancient laboratories where the "pharmacists" of the time, mostly monks, extracted drugs from herbs and obtained medicinal preparations.

The San Giuseppe Distillery produced



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other liqueurs in addition to Alpestre. Flowers, herbs and Alpine roots were also included in the Hermite recipe, a “great Italian cordial” with lower alcohol content, used as a digestive, in desserts and fruit salads or in cocktails with Arquebuse.

Meanwhile, a community of Marists had also sprung up in Germany, settling there in 1914, which immediately started producing some specialties such as Hermite and Arquebuse. They were in possession of recipes found in a booklet by Brother François Rivat, the successor of Father Champagnat who was one of the founders of the Marist Society. The aim was to secure good financial income during a very difficult period.

In 1965/66, the old building that housed the San Giuseppe distillery was demolished and a new distillery was built. This ceased production on 30 September 2010. Using the discovery of the Marist brothers’ ancient recipes as a starting point, who since 1857 had been studying the benefits of distilling medicinal herbs in depth, the owner of the brand, the Onesti Group, has revived the ancient formula of Hermite, the Amaro of Alpestre.

Hermite is dark yellow with orange reflections. On the nose there are officinal and balsamic notes. On the palate, the raw materials typical of the territories on the border between Piedmont and Liguria come through. It has a full flavour, with a marked but sweet herbaceous body, is balanced and bitter with citrus tones. Hermite contains 10% Alpestre spirit. Among the main botanicals we find gentian, peppermint, bitter orange, sweet orange, rhubarb, cinchona, green anise, wild thyme, yarrow and Roman wormwood.

Now as back then, Hermite is the ideal companion for those who want to round



off every meal perfectly or for slow drinking. Hermite was available for tasting at the Mixology Experience and at the Roma Bar Show in May. Hermite – cordial flavour, with the soul of Alpestre.

Alessandro Palanca

THE ART OF “LAMBICAR”

In Trentino, two centuries of history protected by a certified trademark
Made using the Zadra method

BY LUCA PIZZETTI

For a long time, grappa was considered a sort of Cinderella within the noble world of spirits. Just like in a fairy tale, what was once considered a poor family member has now become perhaps the most aristocratic of spirits, cloaked by an ancient charm that has turned her into a timeless princess.

From its beginnings as a hardy and invigorating spirit drunk by farmers, today grappa features during the most important of occasions. In its finest examples it is a spirit enjoyed in slow drinking, a loved partner in food pairing and is definitively establishing itself as the hero in mixology 2.0.

In the dialect of the Trentino province, the term “lambicar” means “to distill”. For Trentino producers, this term means nurturing and promoting a culture with roots that date back 200 years.

Established over 50 years ago, the Institute for the Protection of Grappa of Trentino deals with the enhancement, protection and promotion of grappa obtained from distilling the pomace of the region. Protection of Trentino grappa is certified and guaranteed by the trident



trademark found on each bottle.

As in other parts of Italy, in Trentino distillation of grappa is considered an art that incorporates ancient traditions and social customs tied to the region, the secrets of which have been handed down from generation to generation over the centuries.

The history of grappa in Trentino is documented by texts which confirm that master distillers worked in the area as early as the second half of the 19th century and, no less, that spirits from Tren-



tino featured at the imperial court of the Habsburgs of Austria. Today 25 grappa distilleries form part of the Grappa Institute of Trentino and they represent about 8% of the annual production of Italy's quintessential national distillate.

In its two centuries of history, Trentino grappa has maintained the charm of an ancient time that is still found in the bottle. The artisan distillers of Trentino select very fresh pomace to create spirits with unique aromas and refined smoothness that comes through on the palate in full intensity.

Like all regional products, Trentino grappa also expresses the aspects of the rich territory it reflects. The idea of founding an institution to develop Trentino grappa came from five historical founders: Bassetti, Bertagnolli, Pisoni, Sebastiani and Segnana.

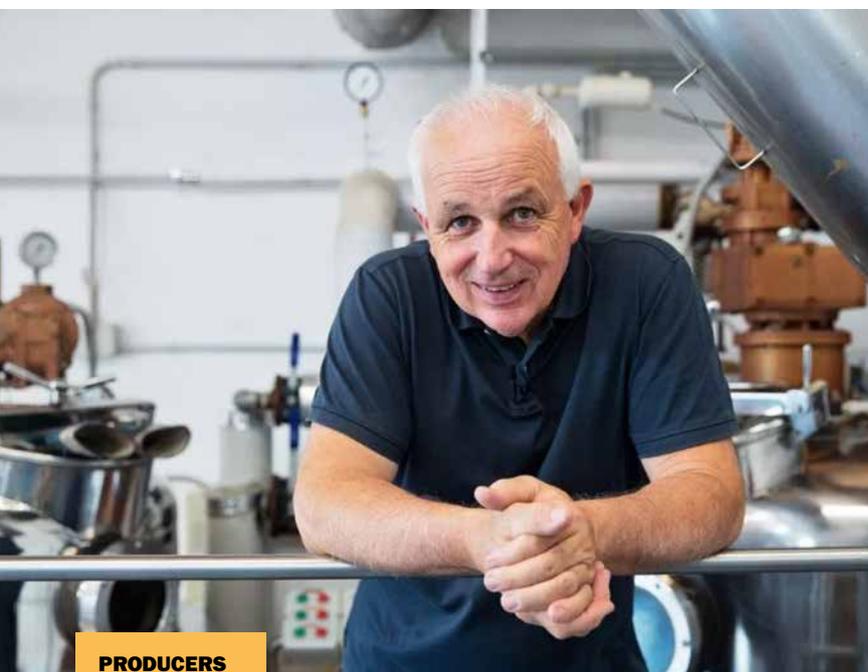
The Grappa Institute of Trentino has always been based on self-discipline and strict production checks that are shared and accepted by all the member brands

of the institute. The indisputable quality guarantee is also certified by external control bodies. Among these is the Mach Foundation – Agricultural Institute of San Michele all'Adige, which carries out chemical laboratory analyses – and the special commission set up by the Trento Chamber of Commerce which deals with sensorial testing.

The first half of the 1900s was an important time for the evolution of Trentino grappa. In that period a distillation method was born that took the name of its inventor: the Tullio Zadra system.

Tullio was a copper craftsman who learned his trade in a well-known workshop in Calliano. He decided to start his own business and built stills that would revolutionise distillation in Trentino, and not only, of pomace.

The stills of Tullio Zadra (1905 – 1991), a bain-marie distillation method with tray rectification columns, were designed to hold only a small amount of pomace in the boiler at a time to ensure the best



PRODUCERS
BRUNO PILZER,
FROM THE
DISTILLERY OF
THE SAME
NAME.

possible richness in aroma. Extraction was slow and constantly controlled by a worker and took place with the usual formula of an indirect heat source, a discontinuous method that requires extreme

care to better regulate temperatures and wisely separate the “heart”, the “heads” and the “tails” of the distillate.

The Bruno Pilzer Distillery produces some of the most representative brands of Trentino grappa. This parlour of Italian distillation is in the heart of the Cembra Valley, in the autonomous province of Trento. The story of the Pilzer Distillery is the story of a family which pursues the ancient art of “lambicar” by deepening its patience, knowledge, skill, experience and technology. From their discontinuous



bain-marie stills, grappas, fruit spirits and complex distillates flow drop by drop the fruits of excellent raw materials and pure water that take time to mature in the silence of valleys where nature remains untouched.

The story of this little gem of the Italian spirit industry began in 1957 from an idea of Vincenzo Pilzer who decided to found a distillery in the heart of the Cembra Valley, already known as a valley of more or less prolific distillers. It was not an easy operation, but the perseverance of this visionary distiller overcame all odds. The Pilzer Distillery became famous with Schiava grappa before enriching its production with single-variety grappas.

In 1983 the new generation represented by Bruno Pilzer started an innovative process within the distillery and its products. Shortly thereafter, Bruno Pilzer was joined by his brother Ivano, and with his



arrival the new headquarters were built just outside Faver, in the Municipality of Altavalle, which was inaugurated in 2001. Still today, the philosophy of the Pilzer Distillery is based on one simple rule:



distilling well means respecting those who came before. It means innovating while respecting tradition, and having the ambition to do better and better.

Today Bruno Pilzer is the president of the Institute for the Protection of Grappa of Trentino. And so, the sons of Vincenzo Pilzer, two dreamers branded by a passion for their art, continue to skilfully distill in a modern and avant-garde setting that allows the two brothers not only to

produce first-rate grappas, but also to experiment with new techniques. Alongside grappa, various spirits stand out which are made from a variety of fruit: Williams pears, apricots, apples, quinces, and also grape and wine spirits.

The Pilzer Distillery is part of the Grappa Tour Spirito Italiano which in 2022 crosses the entire peninsula to promote one of the noblest Italian spirits, grappa.

Luca Pizzetti

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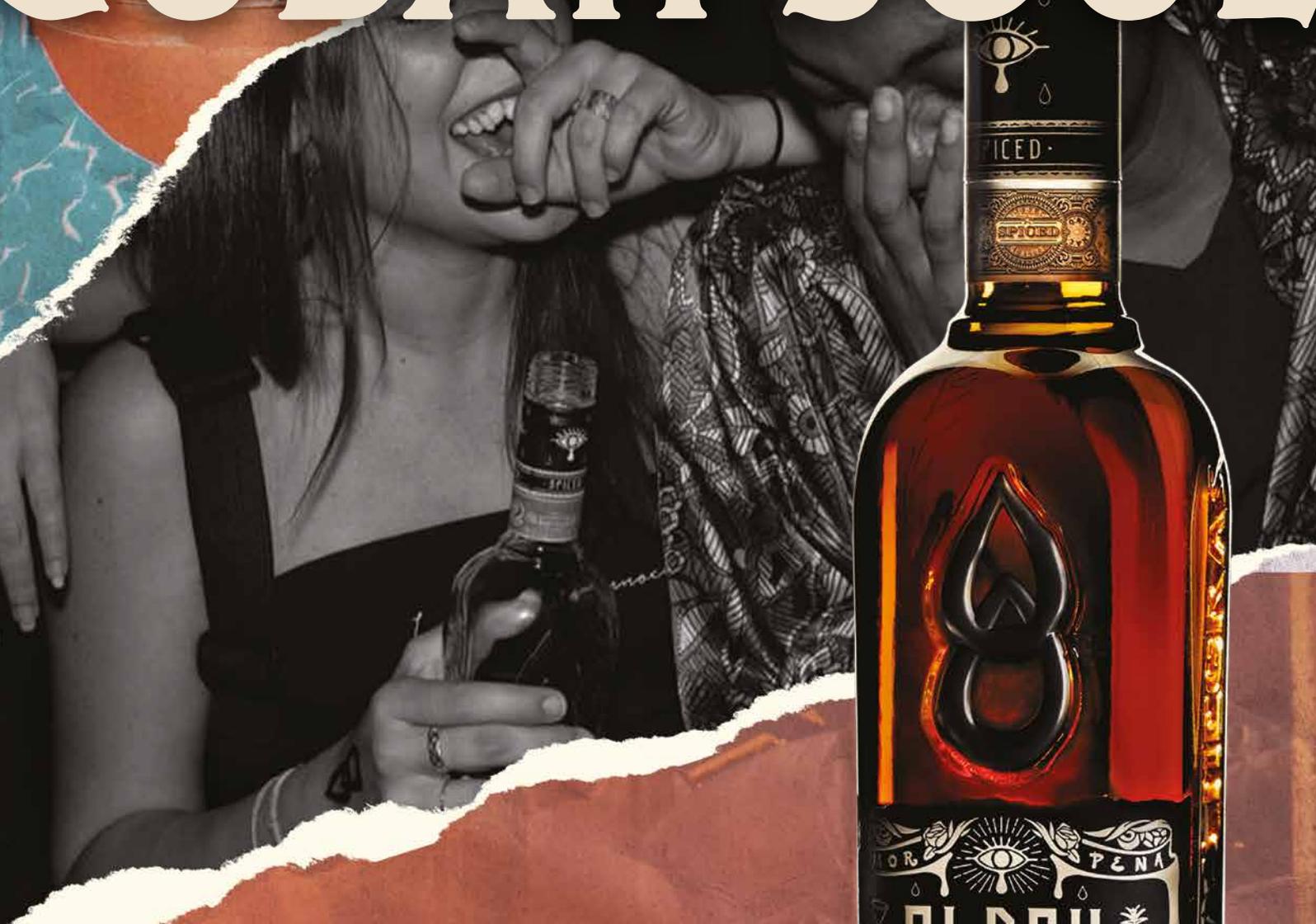
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PILZER GRAPPA “DEL MÈ”

It is the custom of the people of the Cembra Valley to welcome a true friend into their home by offering the best wine from their cellar. In short, “te dago del mè” translates to “I’ll offer you my best”. The Pilzer Distillery has made this concept its own by applying it to “Del Mè” grappa, a blend of grappas from eight different grape varieties. This product blends the aromatic complexities of grappas made from Moscato Giallo and Traminer grapes, the apparent simplicity of the aroma of Chardonnay Noiola and Müller Thurgau grappas, as well as grappas made from Teroldego Schiava and Pinot Noir, which make it much more rich, persistent and also very smooth. It is recommended to serve it in a large glass, chilled but never cold. ABV 40%



PILZER GRAPPA “DEL MÈ D’OR”

In the aged “Del Mè d’Or” grappa, the olfactory and aromatic complexity of the blend of different grappas come together with the effect of time in wood aging. Aged “Del Mè d’Or” grappa matures for over five years in French oak barriques, receiving specific and different aromas from the wood that refine in the flavour. Hints of vanilla and chocolate are enhanced in its structure. ABV 43%



PILZER GRAPPA ISLAY CASK 85

This limited release is a Pinot Gris grappa aged for 85 months (7 years) in ex-Caol Ila Single Malt Whiskey casks from the early 1980s. An excellent example of great elegance and cleanliness, Islay Cask 85 is pleasantly aromatic and on the palate it provides an evolutionary complexity, dry with a delicately peaty finish. ABV 43%

PILZER GRAPPA QUANTUM BONUM

A traditional grappa, with a complex, slightly floral and pleasant aroma. A balanced, persistent, clean and fragrant flavour. Truly moving, it is a simple pleasure to taste the spirit of a land as beautiful as it is harsh. This grappa is also available in versions flavoured with plants or leaves: grappa with rue, grappa with woodruff, grappa with nettle, grappa with mugho pine, grappa with juniper, grappa with gentian root: ABV 40%





THE ODD COUPLE

Gin and Parmesan. Out of the ordinary, a combination that surprises and delights

BY VALENTINA RIZZI

Vinitaly was full of a good energy. Everyone was ready and eager, finally going back to that “normality” that we have not had for the last couple of years. Entry was limited to people from the industry. From Sunday to Tuesday, you could participate in all kinds of events, from conferences on DOC and DOP, to themed “lessons” on Burgundy reds, Italian whites, and champagne.

This year the focus was on sustainability as well as unusual and out of the ordi-

nary combinations. Among these, Parmigiano Reggiano came into play by breaking the mould. In addition to the classic pairings, the famous cheese chose to travel to cold and magical Scotland.

Scotland holds many hidden treasures. Everything seems to hide behind a double meaning there, or a peak into something that a few minutes earlier had been underrated. Often in a single day you pass from the bright sun in a clear sky to low, enveloping mists that are slow



and silky, the bare hills covered only by expanses of heather, to then return to fair weather, perhaps after a good storm. From this country came the idea of combining a gin with Parmigiano Reggiano.

What links gin and this cheese? Seasonality and uniqueness, for example. Seasonality linked to how and when it is produced, whether in spring or autumn or summer. Depending on the season in which an herb is harvested or a cow is milked, we will find different flavours, smells, aromas that make up a unique product. Each gin and every wheel of Parmigiano Reggiano has its own evolution over time which makes them “special”.

In pairing, Parmesans aged 12 to 40 months and over have been recommended. Four types of Parmigiano Reggiano were paired with four different Scottish gins, straight or mixed with ice and tonic water. An interesting double combination that shows us how the carbon dioxide of the tonic can open up the botanicals of the gin, soften the taste of the cheese while enhancing it at the same time.

Parmigiano Reggiano aged for 24 months (still considered a young Parmesan) was combined with Isle of Harris Gin, from the island of the same name in the Hebrides located off the north-west coast of Scotland. It is a special



gin that pays homage to the sea and its currents. 24-month Parmigiano Reggiano is straw-yellow in colour that tends towards ochre; the white crystals inside indicate how much tyrosine (amino acid) is present and therefore how long it has matured. Its colour and white crystals are two indicators of age.

Isle of Harris Gin was born in 2015

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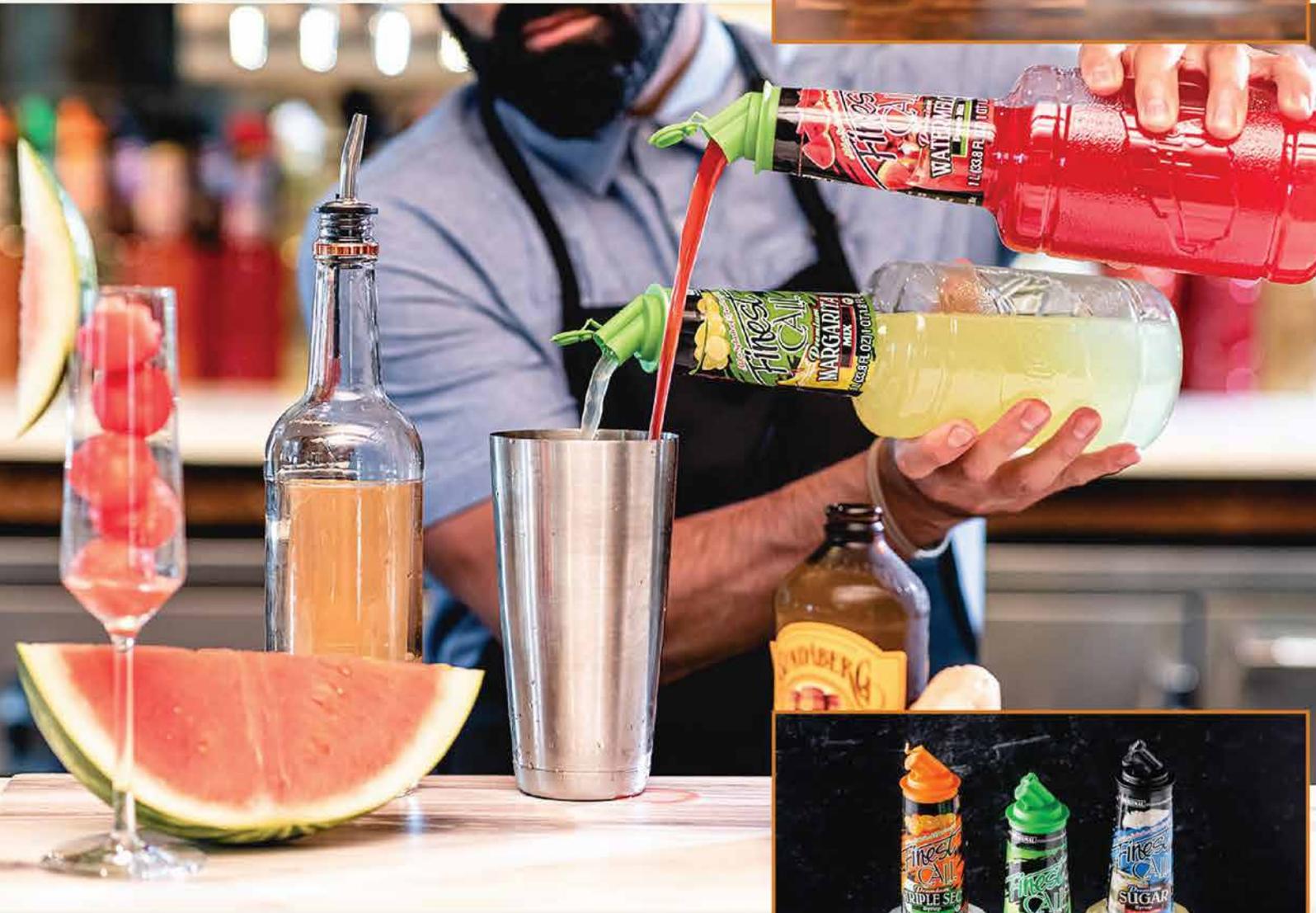
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thanks to Anderson Bakewell who inaugurated the distillery in the small village of Tarbert.

This gin uses nine select botanicals, including a true specialty of the Hebrides, sugar kelp collected from the seabed, which is dried and then used in infusions.

Distillation takes place in a small copper still and the gin is lowered in alcohol content with the sweet and pure waters that flow from the source stream of Abhainn Cnoc a 'Charrain. It is crystalline and transparent on appearance. The olfactive profile is remarkably refined, with delicate fragrances of Scots pine, medicinal herbs, citrus hints of lime and grapefruit peel, balsamic aromas of juniper berries, spicy notes of white pepper, hints of iodine and marine scents. On sipping, it is balanced, soft and enveloping, crossed by a clear saline trail, which continues towards a persistent finish of





clean balsamic freshness.

These characteristics go very well with the still young part of Parmigiano Reggiano which needs to be challenged and that cleanse the mouth of its “fattiness”.

The 48-month Parmigiano Reggiano

increases in structure with age and its assessment is mostly on the nose.

Here there are strong hints of meat broth, spices and mushroom. Thanks to these clear and decidedly distinguishable notes, the gin that pairs best with it is

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Kintyre Botanical Gin.

Nestled in the rolling hills of Kintyre, in the heart of the Torrisdale estate, is the Beinn An Tuirc distillery.

Here we embrace rainy weather. Kintyre Gin is produced with two unusual botanicals: Icelandic moss and sheep sorrel, both used in Scottish cuisine to season pork.

Did you know? Beinn An Tuirc, means Hill of Boars in Gaelic, an animal that is found on the bottle to symbolise the origin of the gin but also the company's commitment to environmental sustainability.

Crystal clear and translucent, Kintyre Gin outlines an aromatic bouquet of delicate notes of juniper, citrus and flowers on the nose. On the palate it is direct, warm but with an extremely pleasant spicy finish. Overall, it is a gin that once again contrasts the note of the Parmigiano Reggiano, enhancing the main characteristics of the 48-month aging – an already medium-structured cheese that needs to be sustained by the alcoholic notes of gin and made more palatable by its botanicals.

Age is of great significance in 60-month-old Parmigiano Reggiano. Here we concentrate on its flavour, the most important aspect, together with the aromas. It is a Parmesan with character that



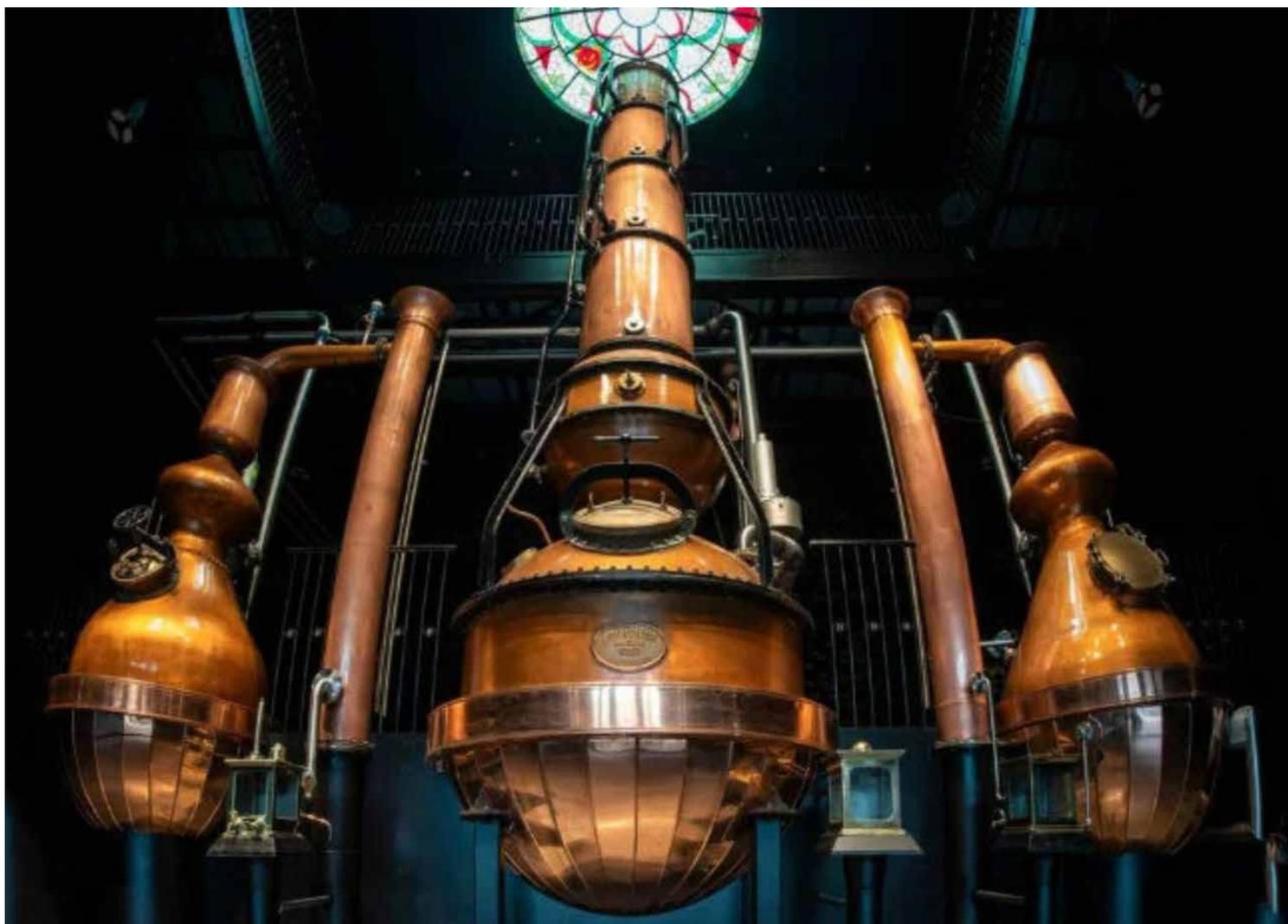


needs to be supported by something weighty but with the ability to refresh the palate with every bite. The gin used in this case is The Secret Garden Lemon Verbena produced by Hand Harvested, a peculiar gin that amazes with its refreshing hints. This distillery grows all the botanicals in its garden.

Verbena and lemon are distilled along with juniper, coriander, angelica root and summer savory. Made with care and 100% natural, Secret Garden gins reflect the artistic skill of the distillery and the wonders of nature.



Bright and clear on appearance, on the nose it is fresh and citrusy, accompanied by a fine and delicate sip that brings us back again to the lemon and citrus fruits. These fresh and slightly acidic citrus notes are perfect for combining a 60-month Parmesan with a gin and tonic that cuts the fattiness and make the mouth surprisingly fresh. Here the alcohol content is not the most important feature, which is usually used to support a structured dish, but it is the contrast that becomes fundamental. Fatty, tasty, fresh and thirst-quenching. A truly re-



markable game of flavour if you are in the mood for experimenting.

A 72-month Parmigiano Reggiano has a special appearance and structure. This is a product that is distinctive, full, unique, strong in character and very structured. Aging is significant, immediately noticeable by the ochre colour and strong smell of vegetable broth, spices, dried fruit and undergrowth. The long ageing infuses flavour, sweetness, and a piquant note. A very crumbly texture melts beautifully in the mouth.

This Parmesan is the perfect match for Hendrick's Gin, the first premium Scottish gin. Hendrick's recipe includes 11 botanicals: yarrow, coriander, juniper,

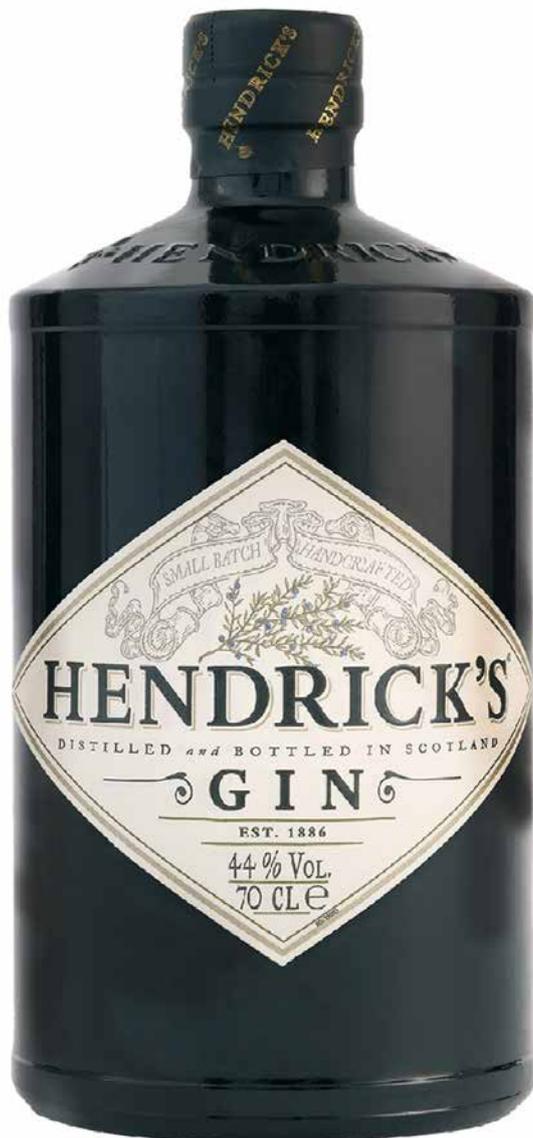
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chamomile, cumin seeds, cubeb berries, elderflower, orange peel, lemon peel, angelica root and iris root. Added to these are Bulgarian rose petals and German cucumbers, infused just before bottling.

It is crystalline and clear in appearance, has marked floral notes of narcissus and elderflower, with hints of white pepper and anise. On the palate it is



round, delicate, fresh and very balanced when sipping.

Cucumber and rose, its two most famous botanicals, are the ones that gave life to the game of flavour in this tasting.

The cucumber magically disappears and rose takes over. The full rose remains on the palate, which manages to lengthen the persistence in flavour of the Parmigiano Reggiano, making it less fatty and fresher. A very interesting and unexpected play in flavour. This combination is surprising both in terms of taste and on an emotional level – it makes us reflect on how going outside the box is sometimes good for innovation.

With its long history behind it, Parmigiano Reggiano has nothing to envy anyone, yet it put itself on the line, creating a unique event and risking not being appreciated. I never expected to discover alternative flavours and taste sensations or even new ones. Let us then make space for creativity, experimentation and even a few gambles. Vinitaly 2022 was truly full of surprises.

Valentina Rizzi

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it is a delicious infusion
of ancient officinal plants

BY FABIO BACCHI



The Liquoreria Erboristeria Marco Sarandrea, a jewel of the Italian liqueur industry that is over 100 years old, is located in Colleparado, a small town of 1,000 inhabitants in the province of Frosinone.

The name Colleparado probably derives from the wild cats, ocelots and in ancient times, perhaps, lynxes found in the region. In fact, a wild cat is also depicted on the municipal coat of arms. The geography and climate of the Colleparado area are influenced by a continental Apennine Mediterranean climate, supporting the growth of lush vegetation that alternates between mountain varieties and other Mediterranean species of plant.

The legend of Centaur Chiron’s Garden is linked to this region and its 1,400 plant species. Chiron was a mythical creature who counted as his disciples Achilles, son of Peleus, and the precursor of medicine, Aesculapius.

Colleparado’s very old herbalist tradition is also proven by the ancient Carthusian



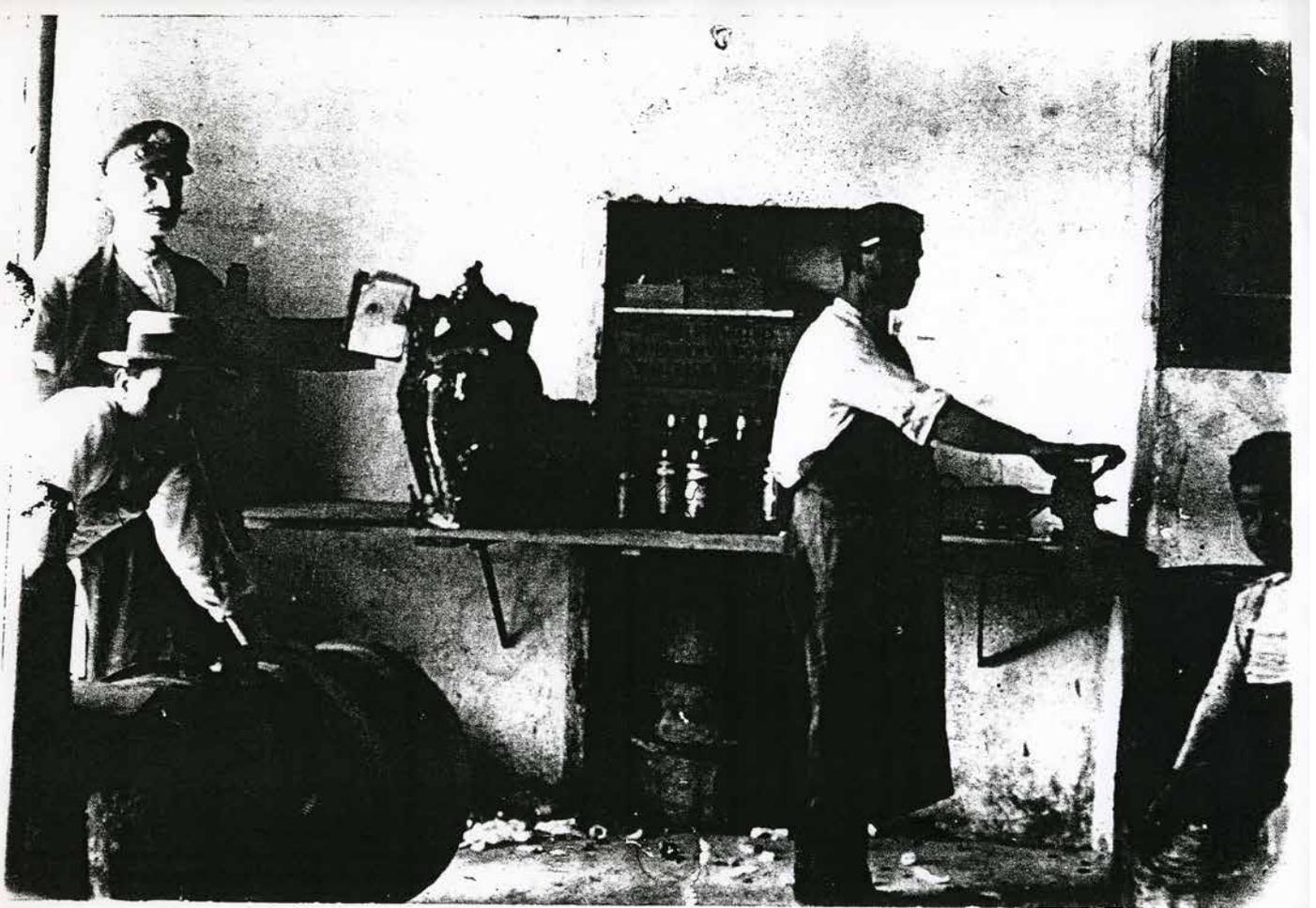
pharmacy of the Trisulti Charterhouse dating back to the 14th century.

The Sarandrea Liquoreria, founded in 1918 at the end of the Great War, is symbolic of the most noble Italian tradition of quality liqueurs. Liqueurs, which for the longest time have characterised the industriousness of Italian monasteries, are still today made in the ancient Trisulti Charterhouse.

The Trisulti Charterhouse was founded in 1204 on request of Pope Innocent III. On the road leading from Colleparado to the monastery, is the “Flora Ernica” botanic garden, unique in its kind in Lazio and among very few Apennine gardens with hundreds of naturally occurring species. From its beginnings as a small factory, with time, effort and entrepreneurship, the Sarandrea Liquoreria became

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well-known and famed, and it was the first to introduce sambuca with anise to the world. It is highly likely that sambuca was born in Colleparado in the Trisulti Charterhouse. Known as “Vecchia” because it still uses the old Carthusian recipe, Sarandrea Sambuca is produced with a



LIQUEUR OF THE YEAR



AMARO SAN MARCO
Sarandrea Marco & c srl
Country: Italy

BEST IN SHOW BY COUNTRY



AMARO SAN MARCO
Sarandrea Marco & c srl
Country: Italy
Category: Liqueurs

LONDON SPIRITS COMPETITION

Gold Medal 2022
94 Points

AMARO SAN MARCO
Sarandrea Marco & c srl

TASTING NOTES
Aromas of maple syrup, chocolate shaving and mint on the nose. A well-integrated flavour of dried herbs and complementing chocolate flavour on the palate with a note of liquorice towards the finish.

spirit made from elderflowers.

In 1961, Pope John XXIII authorised the Marco Sarandrea Liquoreria to bear the title of Vatican supplier. Today the production line of the Antica Liquoreria Sarandrea includes a series of extracts obtained from the Mediterranean flora that grows naturally in pollution-free areas.

The liqueurs are prepared using fresh plants macerated in a hydroalcoholic solution. Spring water is used from the untouched surrounds of the Ernici Mountains in the upper Ciociaria area. The al-



cohol is obtained from distilling fruit and pomace.

Among its most renowned products is Amaro San Marco (30%), a liqueur made from an infusion of several medicinal herbs and recently the winner of gold medals such as “Liqueur of the Year” and “Best in Show by Country” at the London Spirits Competition 2022.

Amaro San Andrea was born around 1920 at the end of the First World War when Capuchin monk Paolo Sarandrea resumed his studies as an herbalist after leaving his post as military chaplain. His intention was to highlight the benefits of the medicinal plants that abound in the Ernici Mountains, using them improve liqueurs.

Supported by his brother Marco, Paolo

developed the ancient recipes of medicinal liqueurs such as the “Biosfero” restorative tonic, now known as “Amaro San Marco”. The digestive properties of the plants in it are heightened when infused in high-quality alcohol and spring water. The right quantities of carefully dosed ingredients make Amaro San Marco a very high-level liqueur with properties that go beyond the simple digestive.

The judges of the London Spirits Competition had the following to say in their tasting notes: “Aromas of maple syrup, chocolate shaving and mint on the nose. A well-integrated flavour of dried herbs and complementing chocolate flavour on the palate with a note of liquorice towards the finish.”

Fabio Bacchi

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UNITY IS STRENGTH

The “correction” liqueur par excellence in a friendship that has lasted centuries

BY MAURO UVA TOGETHER WITH VITTORIO BRAMBILLA

Combining grappa and coffee has a long tradition in Italian bars, although its origins are uncertain. When we speak of “correction”, thoughts immediately go to the practice of adding a liqueur or spirit to coffee.

One of the most popular alcoholic beverages used to correct coffee is certainly grappa, the most widespread spirit in the northern regions, and in particular in Friuli, Lombardy, Veneto, Piedmont and Valle d'Aosta. Its use is not customary throughout Italy though, where other local spirits

and liqueurs are used for correction. Fruit and citrus liqueurs are not recommended as they bring out the acidity of the drink. In addition, coffee without sugar is preferable to sweetened coffee, so as not to interfere with the delicate aromatic balance that is created between coffee and grappa. To ensure a good balance of flavour, between five and ten millilitres of grappa suffice, and a grappa whose aroma is not overwhelmed by the intense aroma of the coffee should be used.

The friendship between grappa and



coffee takes us back a few centuries to northern Italy and along the entire Alpine ridge where, also due to low temperatures, it was customary among workers to add a little grappa to coffee. In addition to being pleasurable, this practice comforted those who were at the mercy of the weather while working.

Records show that the by-now centuries old tradition of “Caffè alla Valdostana” or “Caffè alla Montanara” appeared in Valle d’Aosta as early as 1700. This drink, which still symbolises sharing good times today, was made of grappa, g n py, coffee, sugar and citrus fruits, mixed together in a characteristic container, a wooden cup, with a unique shape: the so-called “grole of friendship”. Around the edge of the grole’s lid, also made of wood, there are six spouts for shared drinking.

The term “grole” probably derives from “graal” (grail), which in the archaic oil languages (i.e. ancient northern Gallo-Romance languages) was the term used for a vessel or cup used to drink



wine. Originally, then, a grole was nothing more than a simple cup of generous dimensions. The grole of friendship was therefore a punch from north-eastern Italy enjoyed many years before punch spread around the world.

Taking a leap forward in time, we reach the Alpine front during the Great War. Entrenched on the cold peaks at high altitude, the Italian soldiers used to prepare “Caff  dell’Alpino”, a coffee where grappa was used instead of water. To understand



TRADITIONS
THE TYPICAL
GROLE OF
FRIENDSHIP.

the use of this drink, we need to analyse that time in history. Following defeat at the Battle of Caporetto, the Italian army took a risk by advancing along the Piave river to stop the Austrians. The long and tense times waiting for the enemy required the military to be constantly alert. With a circular dated November 1917, the military leaders established that each soldier should receive eight grams of coffee and ten of sugar every morning. This dose was later increased to 20 grams a day. In the trenches it was often easier to find grappa than drinking water, since water was often contaminated due to the poor hygiene conditions. Back home, the soldiers continued drinking coffee throughout the day, thus causing a definitive change in the consumption habits of Italians.

As already explained, correcting coffee entails adding a small amount of alcohol, usually grappa. Some read the future in the coffee grounds remaining at the bottom of the cup, others use them to preserve that typical north-eastern tradition where grappa remains the hero. This practice, known as “Resentin” or “Rasentin”, consists in pouring grappa into the empty “dirty” cup of coffee, after drinking it. In short, Resentin is slightly different

from coffee laced with alcohol, because it is usually enjoyed after having finished the drink.

“Resentin” derives from the Venetian and Friulian dialect term “resentare” or “rasentare”, which means “to rinse”. “Resentin” therefore indicates the tradition of using grappa to dilute what remains in the cup after drinking coffee, to clean the cup and enhance the aromas of the distillate. It is not only a delicious way to drink coffee, but also a social custom performed at the end of a meal, where diners, between a joke and a laugh, prepare the “resentin” to perfection. But take note: a bad quality grappa could ruin the experience, because when exposed to the heat of the coffee the grappa releases all its aromas and fragrances, for better or worse. It is therefore wrong to call a cheaper grappa a “correction” grappa, since it would inevitably ruin our “Resentin”.

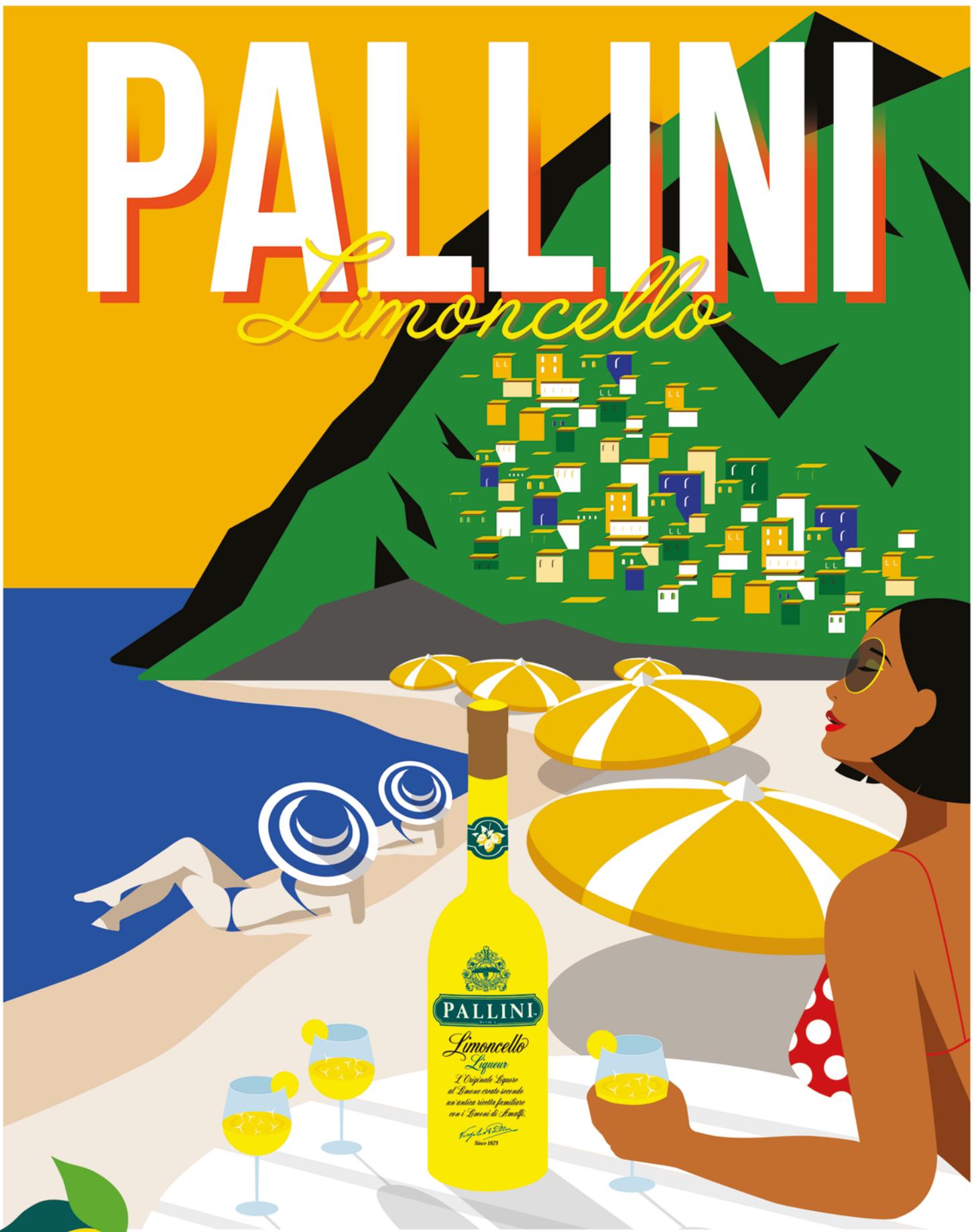
When mixed, grappa and coffee complement each other very well. A Collins with coffee syrup, lemon and coffee will amaze any customer. A twisted Gimlet with lemon and coffee cordial creates an exciting result in terms of flavour and for the senses. The options are endless.

Mauro Uva

Together with **Vittorio Brambilla**

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BEVI RESPONSABILMENTE



BORBONE LIQUEURS

Deciding to produce a vermouth and an amaro in Campania may seem like a gamble, but Mercanti di Spirits had been considering it for some time. “Since the launch of the Borbone Liqueurs range, we have been thinking of ways to promote the history, recipes and botanicals of our region. Though it may seem strange, in Naples we have a great tradition of drinking vermouth and producing it at home,” explains marketing manager Armando

Follari. From that moment, a dedicated research process began to leave nothing to chance.

As had already been done for Borbone Amaro, Rucola and Limoncello, Mercanti di Spirits started from the historical recipes of the Di Costanzo family of Procida, and then moved on to researching the history and consumption habits of that Naples which under the Bourbons was the largest city in Italy and second largest in Europe – a lively, unscrupu-



lous, carefree and bright metropolis, and above all, a meeting and leisure place for European nobles and scholars.

During these meetings, which in the homes of the Bourbon nobility were similar to a literary salon, lyrical singers were

hired to sing opera arias or classic Neapolitan songs. Sometimes the entertainer was a comedian who performed in the so-called “macchiette”, a comedy number that was a combination of a monologue and a humorous song, while



a cold refreshment was served.

In more modest homes, instead of opera singers or other artists people settled for a gramophone playing the songs and macchiette. In place of expensive cold refreshments, cheaper “tarallucci and wine” were served, or pinocchiate and sweet casarecci (both types of biscuits), rosoli in winter and ice cream coupes in summer. Once home-made rosolios were no longer popular, the more expensive vermouths were served with the pinocchiate.

In those years it became customary



among the nobles and the “populace” to produce a Neapolitan vermouth by reusing the discarded walnuts and spices of Nocino to flavour white wine and marsala.

Vermouth Borbone Rosso (16%), made from Trebbiano and Moscato grapes and flavoured with Roman wormwood, bitter orange, rhubarb, quassia and vanilla, is intoxicating on the nose, with pleasant hints of spices and fruit. On the palate it is herbaceous and bitter, revealing an

acidity that leaves room for a balanced flavour that is between the warmth of alcohol and spicy sweetness. The flavour is soft and fresh with a long, round and persistent finish. It is the perfect vermouth for pairing with typical Neapolitan desserts but was mainly created to be used in the great classics of mixing and in innovative recipes.

Vermouth Borbone is also accompanied by an amaro that Armando Follari of Mercanti di Spirits presents as follows:



“We started with the recipe that Giovanni Di Costanzo developed after World War II when, on vacation in Milan, he was amazed by a certain bitter liqueur served with soda. Back in Procida, Giovanni decided to try his hand at making an amaro similar to the one he tried in Milan, however using spices and citrus fruits that he had in his small liqueur factory. After working at it for a few months he managed to create a recipe for an extremely



balanced and aromatically complex red amaro, with a classic profile, but that at the same time had a well-defined character that set it apart from what was on offer at the time.

Bitter Borbone Pigmento Rosso (25%), still made according to the tradition that saw pharmacists and apothecaries involved in creating the great amari of the past, was designed to best express itself in great blending classics such as MiTo, Negroni, Boulevardier...

Made only with herbs and spices of the highest quality, Bitter Borbone Pigmento Rosso has a pleasant balance of sweet and bitter notes provided by different cultivars of oranges that go well with rhubarb and thyme. The very interesting aromatic profile, carried by 25% ABV, is enhanced by the tones of a botanical body that is well balanced on the nose, with a persistent finish and a pleasant aftertaste of cinchona.

In addition to the recipes, the pack-



BARTENDER
PASQUALE
GAZZILLO.

aging was also carefully created. The extremely complex labels are inspired by the typical textures of the fabrics made by the artisans from the Silk Royal Colony of San Leucio, founded on 25 March 1776 by Ferdinand IV of Bourbon. These fabrics can still be found today at Buckingham Palace, in the furnishings of the Oval Office of the White House and in some buildings of the Vatican and Quirinal Palace.

The date 1816 also appears on the label which is the founding date of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the coins represent the four rulers of the Bourbon dynasty of the Two Sicilies.

THE RECIPE

I BORBONE by Pasquale Gazzillo

INGREDIENTS

- 40ml Ron Relicario Superior
- 40ml Borbone Rosso Vermouth
- 10ml Pear syrup
- 4 dashes chocolate bitters

Method: stir & strain. **Glass:** Champagne glass.

Garnish: 75% pear-flavoured dark chocolate with whole hazelnuts.

Notes: This is a cocktail with a bold character but a delicate aftertaste and is unconventional. The Dominican ron and the Neapolitan vermouth form the main base of the cocktail. The pear juice softens the finish where delicate notes of chocolate also come through. Serve in an iced glass. Borbone is a perfect mix of tradition and modernity.



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