

Bartales

Best of

N. 40 | OCTOBER 2022

SUPPLEMENT OF BARTALES



LIQUID STORY / EL BART
A GIN WITH A COAT OF ARMS



REPORT / ACROSS THE BORDER
AN ITALIAN IN CHAMPAGNE



FOCUS ON / DRINKS&ENGINES
CENTAUR SPIRIT



LIQUID STORY / ANCIENT KNOWLEDGE
MENS SANA IN CORPORE SANO



REPORT / GRAPPA
SICILIAN NUANCES

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ONE HUNDRED OF THESE DAYS

The Italian edition, the “mother” edition of “BarTales”, celebrates one hundred issues, that is one hundred covers. Ten years ago, because that’s how many have passed, no one would have bet on it, and quite honestly, we wouldn’t have either. Besides a certain measure of satisfaction, I feel that we should stop for a moment, two minutes to take a breath and give thanks. To the team, first of all, one that is small, compact, and resilient and towards which experts and collaborators immediately gravitated. They believed in a project that may have seemed ambitious, and that month after month resulted in something we can be proud of. Together we worked to provide accurate and responsible information. Together we followed the trends, intercepted the news, identified the direction of the new mixology and cocktail culture. Together we have grown and faced the challenges. Without them, “BarTales” would not have existed, and least of all would it have been able to blow out the ten candles of this milestone birthday, despite the hard times. A dutiful thank you also goes to all the businesses that supported us. We would not have come this far without our partners and obviously without you, our readers, we would not even be able to imagine the next issues, the specials and the events we have in mind. Now it’s time to blow out the candles and wish a happy birthday to a magazine that has made its way across the Alps and the ocean, one that grew slowly, almost without us noticing. Happy birthday, and many happy returns.

Follow us



BarTales
Best of

N. 40 | OCTOBER 2022

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DRINK RESPONSIBLY



James Sceats

A GIN WITH A COAT OF ARMS

The story of the “noble” distillate that is the base of the Aviation Now in a more aromatic version

BY FABIO BACCHI

Years ago, we wrote about the Aviation cocktail and the gin that Hugo Ensslin mentioned in the recipe which was included in his

booklet “Recipes for Mixed Drinks”, published between 1916 and 1917 in two distinct editions. Ensslin, a German bartender who worked at the Wallick House

1852 Baptised at

St Barnabas Homerton



BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of <i>St. Barnabas Homerton</i> in the County of <i>Middlesex</i> in the Year 18 <i>52</i>						
When Baptised.	Child's Christian Name	Parents Name.		Abode.	Quality, Trade, or Profession.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
		Christian.	Surname.			
18 52. <i>Sept. 7th</i> No. 577.	<i>Edward</i>	<i>William</i> <i>Stub</i>	<i>Hughes</i>	<i>Homerton</i>	<i>Ant. Motter</i>	<i>J. M. Ansell</i> <i>Curate</i>
<i>Sept. 2nd</i> No. 578.	<i>Sydia</i>	<i>George</i> <i>Murrayson</i>	<i>Stewart</i>	<i>Homerton</i>	<i>Anthony</i> <i>Pike</i>	<i>J. J. Ansell</i>
<i>Sept. 19</i> No. 579.	<i>Danu</i>	<i>Joseph</i> <i>Sumner</i>	<i>Scates</i>	<i>Homerton</i>	<i>Gardener</i>	<i>J. M. Ansell</i> <i>Curate</i>

Hotel in Times Square, New York, was part of that generation that would typify the bartending scene of the time.

We are pleased to return to the topic of El-Bart after coincidentally making contact with Peter and Austin Sceats, Englishmen who are the direct descendants of the man who first produced a gin that would go down in history as El-Bart Gin. It is a fascinating story.

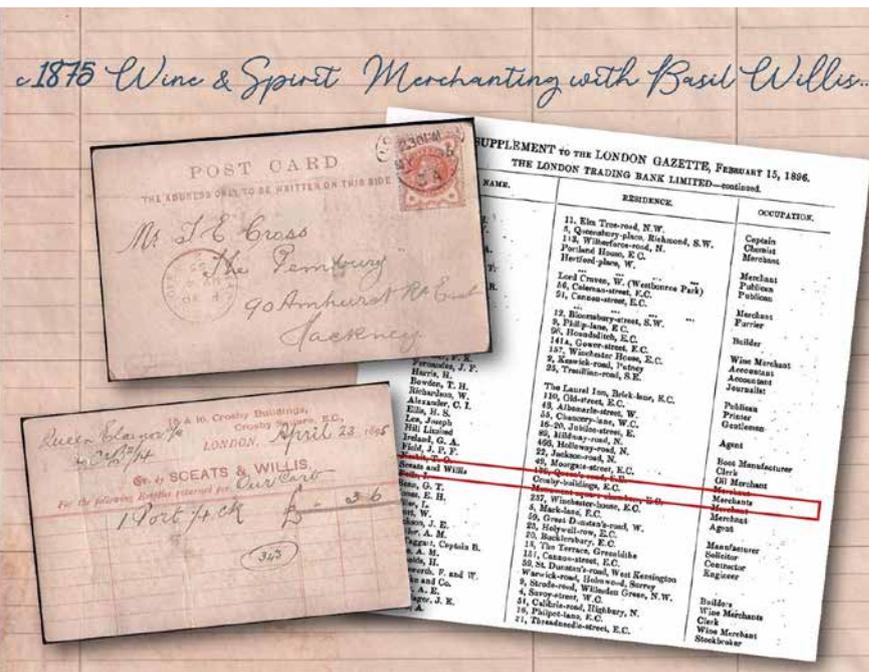
The adventure of El-Bart Gin is tied to the gin of the Camberwell Distillery, which at the time was in Addington Square, in southeast London, and was owned by James Sceats. But let's start at the beginning. During the second lockdown following the recent global pandemic, Peter Sceats decided to use ancestry.com to

research his family tree. "It was actually more for fun, without taking it too seriously," explains Peter.

After a month of research and tracing his genealogy, Peter ran into his ancestor James Sceats, born in 1851 to Joseph, a craftsman of good financial standing.

As a child, James Sceats was struck by scarlet fever, a disease that would cause complications in his life. After school, the young James chose to follow in the footsteps of his father Joseph, a skilled cooper.

At 19, James Sceats had a shop on Little Pulteney Street (now Brewer Street) in Soho. James and Austin Sceats' father keeps an 1870 photo of James taken right in front of the barrel workshop.



Married to one of the daughters of the owner of Hill's watch shop in Coventry, James would later start a wine and spirits business in partnership with another trader in the sector, Basil Willis. The company offices were in the Crosby Building in Bishopsgate, London.

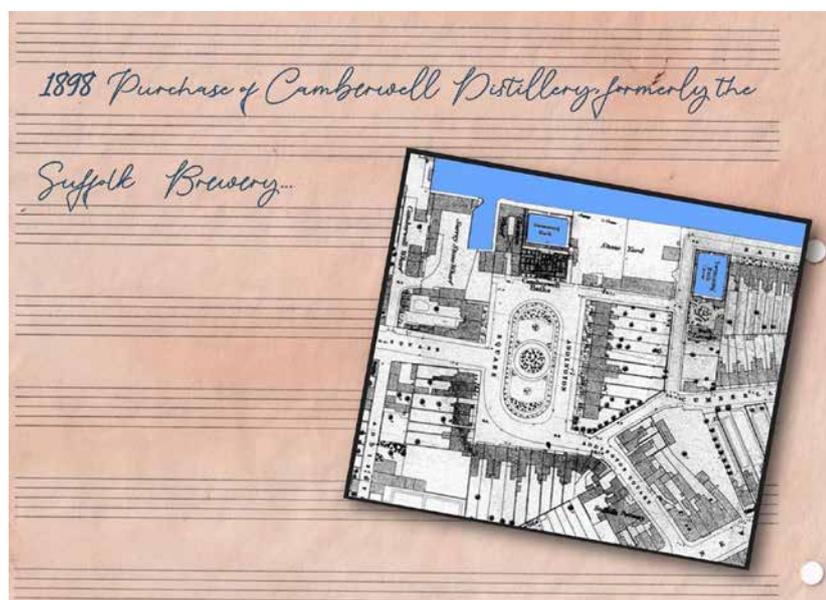
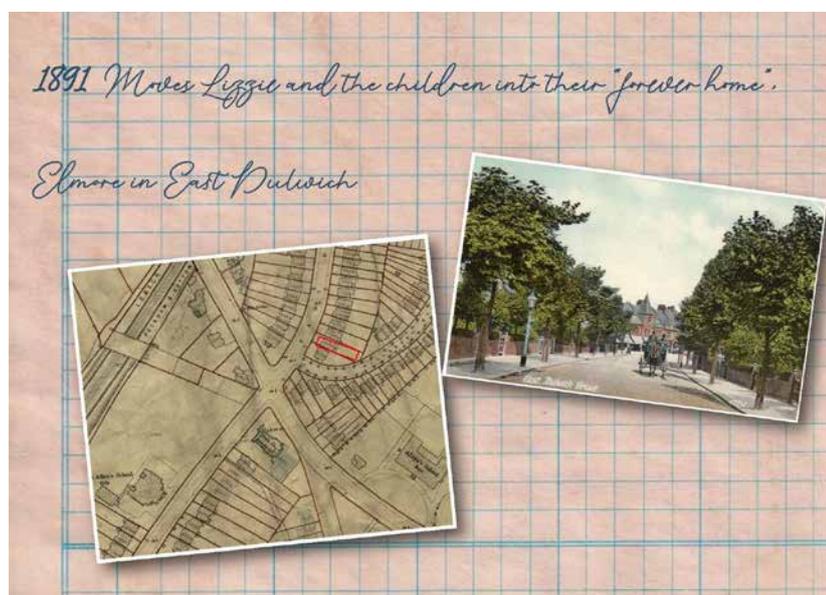
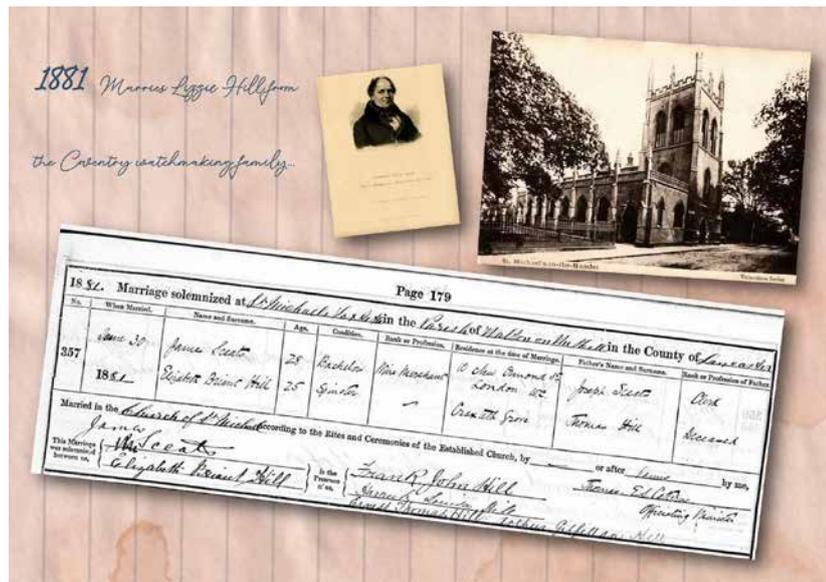
In 1898 the Camberwell Distillery was put up for sale and the two partners bought it. With its proximity to Camberwell Wharf and the Grand Surrey Canal (a canal connected to the Thames at the time) the distillery was in the perfect location. The two partners ran the gin distillery together for a few years, until 1902, when James' health deteriorated.

Some historical articles on the distillery report that Sceats and Willis extracted alcohol residues from used barrels (known as grogging) at the distillery. This technique, illegal in the UK but permitted in the US, was used to recover alcohol intended for the pharmaceutical industry and not for consumption as a beverage.

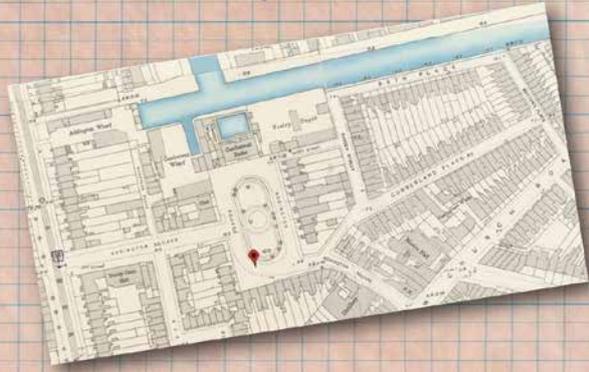
Would legal consequences then have economic and legal implications for the distillery? James Sceats' descendants do not know if the end of the grogging business was really that significant for the distillery. The Act of Parliament removing the tax break on "recovered spirits" went into effect on 1 July 1898, just when Sceats & Willis bought Camberwell Distillery. It is therefore hard to imagine Sceats engaging in alcohol recovery during his management. However, they believe it is possible that James developed a method for extracting alcohol from the barrels used in the wine and spirits trade.

This would make sense as James was a cooper, a wine and spirits trader and was clearly entrepreneurial. What is certain is that in 1902 the property, stills and recipe of Camberwell Gin were sold to the Wilson Distilling Co. of Pennsylvania, owned by an Irish immigrant James knew, Robert Wilson.

Basil Willis left the business, retired to Scotland but went bankrupt after the sale of the distillery. Austin and Peter Sceats believe it is possible that James may have sold a method of recovering alcohol from barrels to a contact of Robert Wilson's, Cyrus J. Seltzer, also from Pennsylvania. Cyrus was a surgeon and pioneering inventor of devices designed for the medical industry and applied for a U.S. patent in 1901. Thus it was that Camberwell Gin arrived in the USA, and also in the hands



1898 to 1902 The Camberwell Distillery is served
by the Camberwell Wharf and the Grand Surrey
Canal...



of Hugo Ensslin, and became one of the best-selling London gins in the early decades of the twentieth century. But in the USA the gin was given a new name: El-Bart.

The bottle of Camberwell Gin celebrated the product's English roots, but the new owner thought the original name did not work well in marketing. He decided to change its name. "Bart" is an aristocratic term attributed to a member of the British Order of Honour. A Bart ranks below a Baron but above a Knight, it is the abbreviation of Baronet and as such, El-Bart is the abbreviation for "English Baronet". The Wilson Distilling marketing department probably thought that such a name worked with the gin's English roots, but was also Spanish enough to have more appeal in the South American market.

El-Bart Gin was found from coast to coast in America until 1955, the year in which the brand was bought by the Seagram group which decided to remove it from the market so it would now compete with its own gin brand.

El-Bart was the first name chosen by Ryan Reynolds for his gin. As we know that gin would later take the name of the cocktail born using El-Bart. Now, Austin and Peter are deepening their knowledge of gin.

Following extensive research, they surprisingly got their hands on an unopened bottle of El-Bart from 1939. The tasting, according to Peter, was enough to make it clear that "a gin from 1898 would never have understood the vast range of botanicals used in current gins". The recipe that the Sceats family chose to relaunch its gin includes only four botanicals: juniper, angelica, coriander and iris and a character that goes well with the taste of violet, in

1902 Gin Stills and recipe sold to Wilson Distilling Co.

Pennsylvania...



1903 Passes away leaving Lizzie and the children
well provided for... Laid to rest in Highgate Cemetery...



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AN ITALIAN IN CHAMPAGNE

Alberto Massucco, the Piedmontese among the vigneron. The story of a challenge flavoured with passion

BY ANTONELLA PAOLINO

This is a story of champagne and passion, of visionary but prudent entrepreneurship, at times pioneering and courageous, perhaps ahead of the times. It is the story of a French sparkling wine and an Italian, who first became an importer and then a producer, and who is winning the admiration of local producers.

From importer to producer, then, a

step that may seem a natural progression but is never a certainty. Because Alberto Massucco, from Piedmont, is the only Italian to own a vineyard in the Champagne region and to be registered in France as a producer of the famous wine; an Italian who produces champagne in Champagne.

It was instant love between Alberto Massucco and champagne which hap-



opened in Alassio, in 1964, when he uncorked his first bottle of champagne, specifically Laurent Perrier. I came to know about Massucco Champagne because today leading vigneroni (winemakers) talk about it, fascinated by the courage of this Italian who plays on their turf.

Knowing the champenois environment, consisting of vigneroni whose ultimate belief is the distinctiveness of the terroir, I wondered what an Italian is doing in the region making a product that could not be more French. Basically, the project was based on a dream he wished to realise and a special teammate to work with: his wife Mirede. To the love of a lifetime (yes, sometimes it exists!) a pinch of luck was added, which never hurts. And since luck favours the brave, Alberto Massucco met two people on his way, who today have become great friends, who influenced and helped him make his dream come true. They are Alberto Lupetti and Erick de Sousa.



PRODUCERS
ABOVE AND ON
THE OPENING
PAGE, ALBERTO
MASSUCCO.

For the Italian champagne lovers, Alberto Lupetti, a champagne journalist and writer, is one of the leading experts of the famous wine and needs no introduction. Those who know champagne also know Alberto Lupetti. In the heart of the prestigious Côte des Blancs for three generations, on Grands Crus terroir

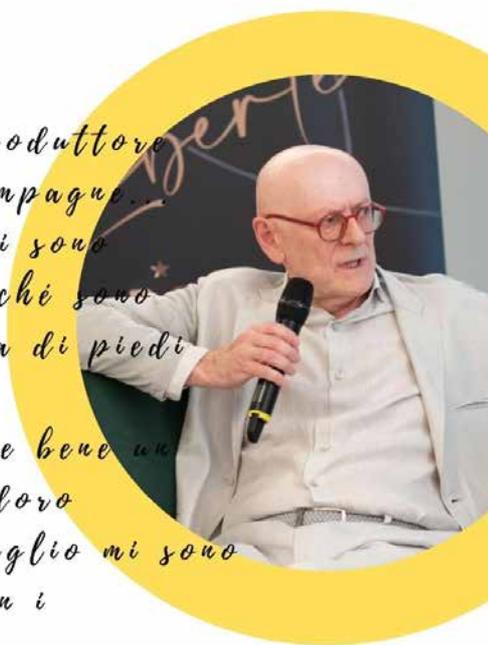


“

Sono il primo produttore italiano in Champagne. I francesi non si sono arrabbiati, perché sono entrato in punta di piedi

volevo conoscere bene un prodotto che adoro per farlo al meglio mi sono confrontato con i produttori

ne sono rimasto incantato e ci siamo promessi fiducia



classified as Avize, Cramant, Oger and Mesnil/Oger, Erick De Sousa, from a family of Portuguese origin, is undoubtedly one of the best producers of champagne,

and one of the key characters of the Massucco project.

Erick de Sousa works with Alberto Massucco on the special assemblages for “tailored” prestiges cuvées. Erick De Sousa takes care of the Alberto Massucco Champagne range in the cellar and created the Millesimato Alberto Massucco Champagne Grand Cru, 100% Chardonnay, with the first two vintages of 2018 and 2019, and the Cuvée Mirede, dedicated to Alberto’s wife, who unfortunately passed away. It is the consecration of a project in which French tailor-made meets Italian know-how. Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier and Chardonnay are ranged and assembled in different percentages to please the most demanding palates.

Another Champagne great, Jean-Philippe Trousset, created an additional product for Massucco, the cuvée Mavi, this time dedicated to his granddaughter Maria Vittoria. Alberto Massucco has clear ideas, even when it comes to his ac-

tions. Like, for example, in the "Mon Idée de Cramant" cuvée, made with the 2018 vintage from the Cramant vineyards, a Grand Cru village in the Côte des Blancs area: only 500 bottles produced, which have already been booked, or in other words, sold.

Fascinated by his story, I ask Massucco how his project was received in France. "I would say very well, the French have appreciated my passion. They even accepted my suggestion to change the tasting glasses normally used."

Women have always been very important within Alberto Massucco's circle. Sales manager, Cinzia Zanellato, is the one who keeps close contact with customers. This also includes chefs from famous restaurants and prestigious hotels who have a direct relationship with her. It is a commercial strategy that is based on a close relationship, friendly I would say, between producer and consumer. "In Italy we have built a network of contacts, and we don't have an external network of agents. At the moment we prefer to maintain a direct, special relationship with our customers to whom we distribute directly," explains Cinzia. "We are present throughout Italy. Currently, large cities such as Milan, Turin and Rome are our main markets. However, we are seeing growth in areas that are very receptive to champagne, such as Emilia Romagna and major tourist destinations". Very conscientious, Cinzia also manages other areas of business: the personalisation of labels, exports and marketing.

Massucco explains to me that a champagne label offers little but essential information. "A bottle, with its shape, somehow hints towards something more. It is when it is uncorked, poured and



CHAMPAGNE
AT THE TOP,
ERICK DE
SOUSA. ABOVE,
CINZIA
ZANELLATO
AND JEAN
PHILIPPE
TROUSSET.



tasted that its structure, character and dream are understood. Where does it come from and, above all, where it wants to take you.”

The “Champagne en liberté” project, which he conceived, aims to make first-class but lesser-known producers known

in Italy. Like the Fa’Bulleuses, seven young female vigneronnes who got involved in a purely male sector and of whom we have extensively discussed. The Fa’Bulleuses are: Laureen Bailleite (Champagne Bailleite-Prudhomme), H el ene Beaugrand (Champagne Beaugrand), Claire Blin



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DRINK RESPONSIBLY

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ABOVE,
ALBERTO
MASSUCCO
AND THE
FA'BULLEUSES.
BELOW,
ANOTHER
PHOTO OF THE
FA'BULLEUSES.

(Champagne Mary-Sessile), Charlotte De Sousa (Champagne De Sousa), Mathilde Devarenne (Champagne Rochet-Bocart), Sophie Moussie (Champagne Guy Méa) and Delphine Brulez (Champagne Louise Brison). Considering all this, I imagine how exclusive and explosive the mix of tradition, savoir faire and culture of terroir that France and Italy embody in their DNA can be.

On 4 July, Massucco organised an evening event at Villa Cinema, a historic neoclassical villa in the hills of Turin's Po area, during which he presented his challenge: Champagne “of Italian taste” produced by an Italian in the home of champagne.

We will hear more and more about Al-



berto Massucco's champagne in a future that is surely not too far away.

Antonella Paolino



AMC 00

Grape varieties: 50% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Meunier, 30% Pinot Noir.

Soil: clay and chalk.

Average age of the vines: 15-40 years.

ABV: 12.5%

Farming method: biodynamic conversion. 100% manual harvesting.

Elevage: tank

Dosage: nature

Filtration and fining: no

Reserved: 40%

Disgorgement: March 2022



AMC 02

Grape varieties: 50% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Meunier, 30% Pinot Noir.

Soil: clay and chalk.

Average age of the vines: 15-40 years.

ABV: 12.5%

Farming method: biodynamic conversion. 100% manual harvesting.

Elevage: tank

Dosage: 2g/l

Filtration and fining: no

Reserved: 40%

Disgorgement: March 2022

MC00 and MC02, two acronyms that say a lot. 00 stands for zero dosage. Zero dosage is making a strong comeback.

We will hear a lot about it in the coming months and Alberto beat the market to it. A visionary? These champagnes delight with their notes of citrus, apples, candied pears, but also quince. Beautiful presence on

the palate, in balance between enveloping warmth and invigorating freshness. These champagnes are perfect as aperitifs.

AMC MON IDÉE DE CRAMANT

Grape varieties: 100% Chardonnay
Vinification: grapes from the only Grand Cru village of Cramant, 2018 vintage, fermentation in tank, on the lees for 3 years and dosage at 2g/l.
Nose: a generous tropical fruitiness, followed by floral tones, with citrus coming through.

Palate: the mouth offers a certain fruity sweetness and then it becomes juicy and decidedly mineral with orange and a nice freshness returning. The finish is dry, clean and saline.



AMC CUVÉE MIREDE

Grape varieties: 100% Chardonnay
Vinification: this champagne is a tribute from Alberto to his wife, Mirede. Fruit of Grand Cru Avize (30%) and Oger (10%) grapes from the 2017 vintage, fermented for about one third of the time in barriques, 30% of grapes from the estate vineyard as well as a further 30% of 2018 vins de réserve.

Nose: rich and elegant nose, with the minerality of chalk to support the floral tones and a slight reference to the exotic, dried fruit and a citrus note.

Palate: fresh and vertical, with a very long mineral finish.





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CENTAUR SPIRIT

Violet and Chinese tea in Gin S72
from motocross champion Stefan Everts

BY FABIO BACCHI



“S72” is a household name in motocross. Truly everyone knows who it refers to. Belgian Stefan Everts was born in 1972, and to date is the only professional rider to win 10 motocross world titles. A true legend, and a brand.

“When I retired from motocross, the promoter assigned me the rider number 72 forever,” explains Everts. “Only my son, Liam, can wear this number at the world

championship. I want to expand the S72 brand further. Where? In the world of spirits. My ultimate goal is a wide range of S72 products.”

Stefan Everts’ passion for spirits was born when meeting another Belgian athlete, Filip Meirhaeghe, during a show on Belgian television. A European and world champion cyclist and mountain bike silver medallist at the Sydney Olympics in 2000, Meirhaeghe is also passionate about spir-



its and distillation. It was 2012 and after that meeting, Stefan Everts threw himself headfirst into reading up on gin and distillation and expanding his knowledge of spices. “A new world opened up for me!”

After hanging up his racing helmet in 2006, gin was the first thing, second only to his sport, that attracted the interest of the champion. Everts collected gin from all over the world and tasted it, but his



MOTOCROSS
STEFAN EVERTS
IN ACTION AT
THE 2006
GPMX IN
AGUEDA,
PORTUGAL.
(PHOTO CREDIT:
PLONS).



vision was to produce a gin that had a unique flavour. It was a very exciting and experimental time.

The S72 spirits project began to take

shape in 2016. Stefan's father, Harry, also a four-time world champion, was familiar with the Massy distillery in Houtalen-Helchteren, Belgium, specialists in private label



MOTOCROSS

STEFAN EVERTS
IN ACTION AT
THE 2006
GPMX IN
ERNEE,
FRANCE.
(PHOTO CREDIT:
PLONS).

small batches with 110 years of experience. Harry explained to them that Stefan had a passion for spirits and after a short chat and meeting, the project came to life. However, Everts envisioned a product that could be regarded as a business gift for his sponsors.

The first release of S72 appeared in 2016, a gin infused with winter heath, a very common local botanical in Houthalen. The colour of the gin was yellow, to pay homage to the colours of the Suzuki team Stefan worked with at the time.

An ambitious man, Everts was looking for a flavour that would clearly distinguish his gin from the rest of the market. During one of his frequent trips to his sponsors in Italy, he tasted a violet sweet. It was a revelation and he decided that his gin would be distinguished by the flavour of violet. Another important flavour would be that of Chinese tea.

In March 2017, the first batch of 200 bottles was produced which Stefan in-



tended to use as a gift for sponsors and friends. The positive feedback received convinced Stefan to launch his gin, which was introduced to the market on 1 June

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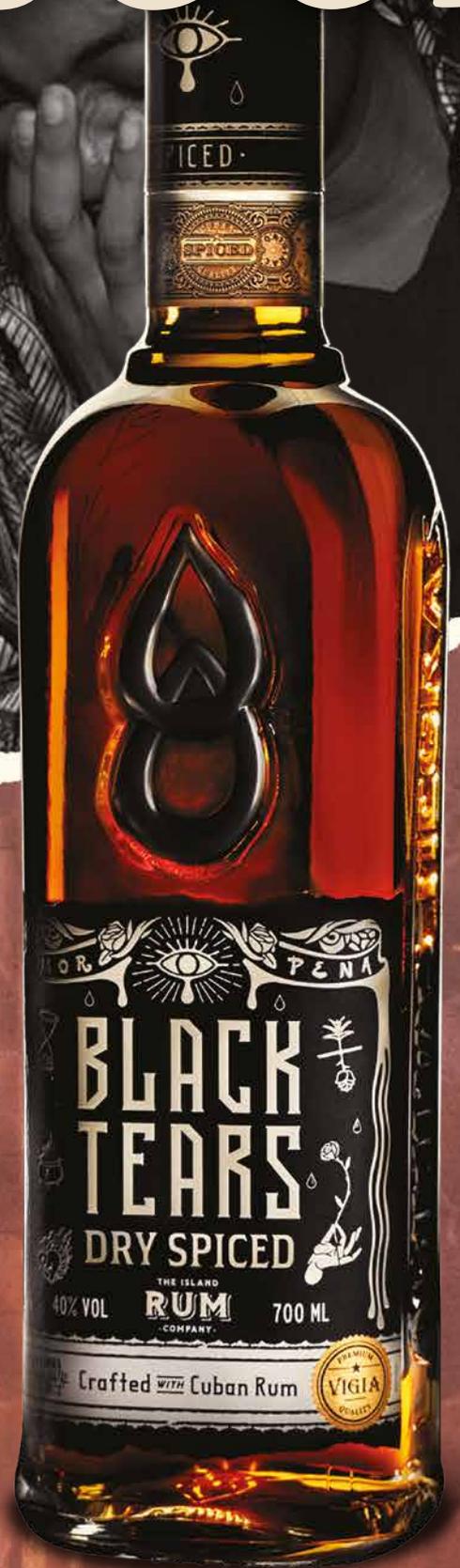
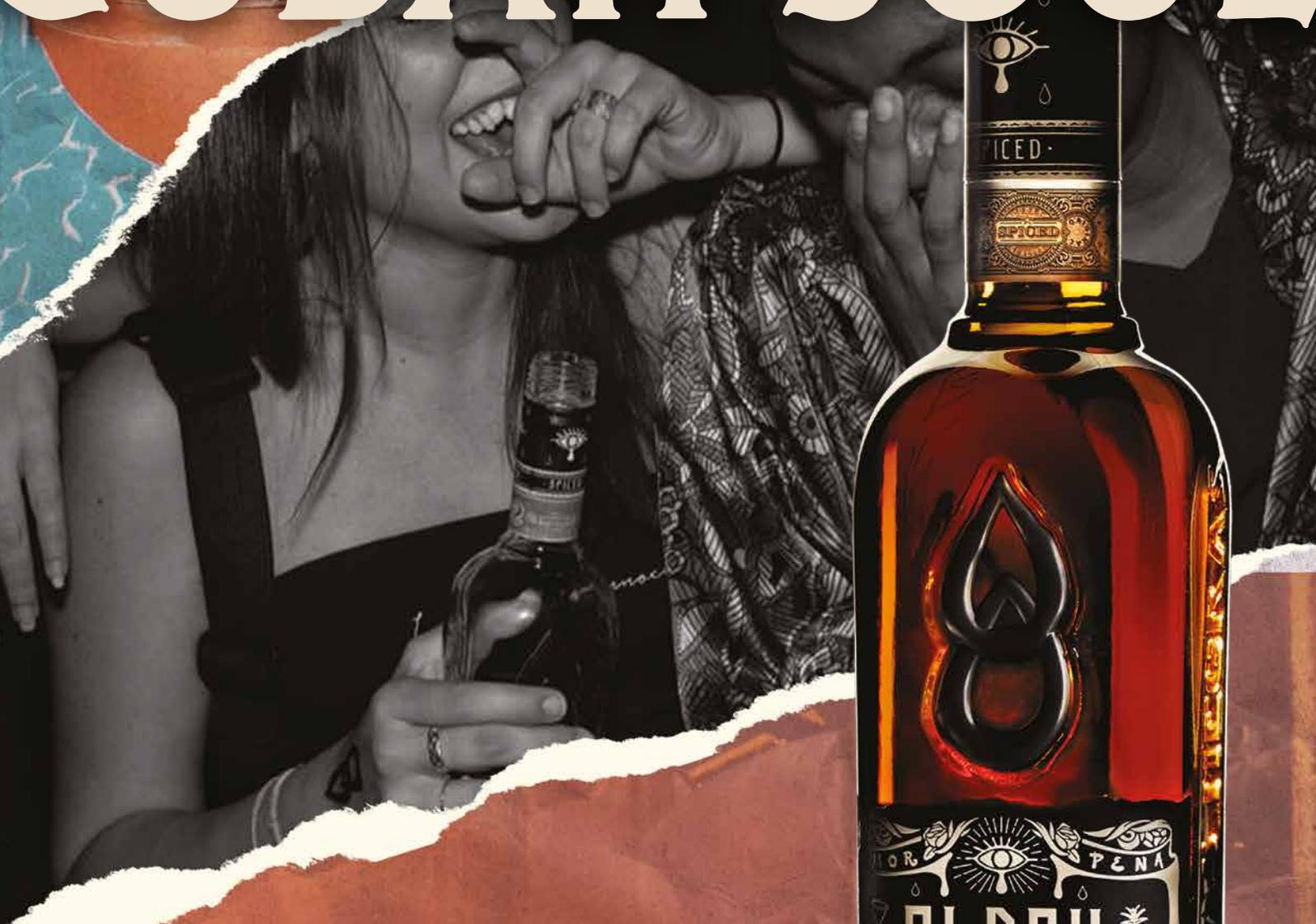
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for the facts



2017. The new bottle was produced by the Vetro Elite company from Treviso.

On the bottle (Vetro Elite's Denver model) the colour purple stood out, a very significant colour for Stefan Everts, as well as the logo and an image of him in action.

In 2018, Stefan launched his violet flavoured vodka. In 2019 the S72 bottle became wider, and a limited edition 3-litre magnum was introduced. S72 Gin, with an ABV of 43%, is a distilled gin with a profile where the dominant violet sets it apart from the rest of the market. It is a Gin that focuses heavily on floral richness, with a clearly distinctive botanical body, that is easy to drink and remember, smooth and elegant.

Everts imagined in his legendary gin the smoothness and style that was a feature of his racing. As a result, it is very important to choose the right tonic for a G&T. The botanical body consists of juniper, coriander,





lime, orange peel, ginger, violet blossom, rowan berry, heath flowers, elderberry and a secret blend of Chinese tea.

Stefan Everts loves spending time in the distillery's infusion room – like a kid in a candy shop. That is how a very distinctive limited edition was created, a curious and fashionable version of S72 Gin flavoured with bubble gum and a 40% ABV. All special releases are packaged in an elegant metal box. In 2021 S72 Gin won the Silver Medal at the London Spirits Competition.

As part of the project Everts considered the importance of his gin in blending and brought in Belgian bartender Kwinten Ghysens to create some drinks. The signature recipes of S72 Gin all have names related to motocross jargon.

In his DNA Stefan Everts has the passion needed to reach the top of his every goal, an ambition that seems to be reflected in his last name reminding us of the highest mountain on earth.

Fabio Bacchi



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MENS SANA IN CORPORE SANO

Compagnia degli Speciali: recipes and formulas from the 1800s

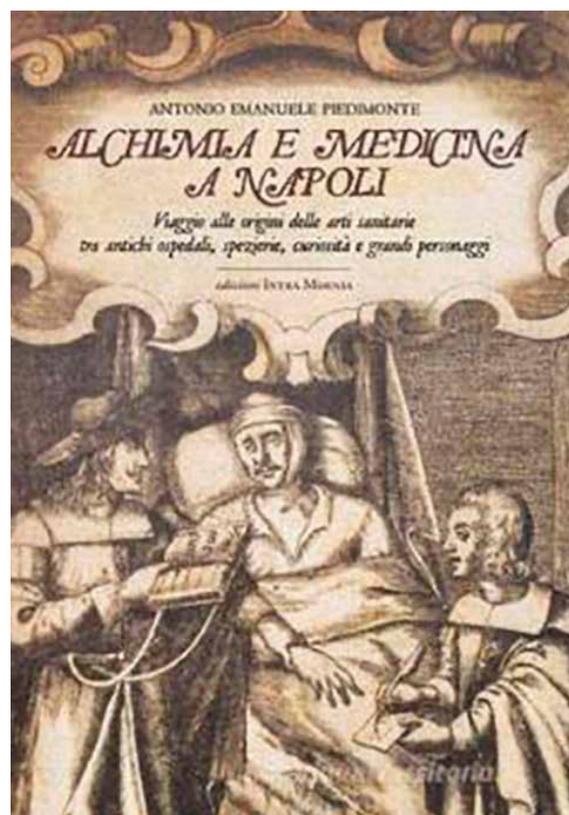
BY ALESSANDRO PALANCA

In the Middle Ages being an apothecary was likely a profitable profession. In his shop, the apothecary prepared medicines, sold spices, medicinal herbs and more. There one could also find perfumes and essences, wax, colours used by painters, ink and even sweets.

In the age of Communes, apothecaries were organised in guilds, one of the most important ones being the 'Arte dei Medici e Speciali' (the guild of doctors and apothecaries), which Dante Alighieri was also a part of. The guilds set working standards and monitored their application.

In the nineteenth century, significant changes impacted the profession. In order to formulate medicines, the apothecary also had to know chemistry, otherwise he could be just a grocer. Thus, the first pharmacy schools were born and the role of the apothecary evolved into that of pharmacist, one who was qualified to formulate medicines.

In Naples apothecaries and their shops played a very important role as revealed in many books. It could not have been



otherwise, as this was the city where for millennia knowledge had been passed on from the most ancient and advanced civilizations.

The link between apothecaries and Naples can be found in essence and form. In essence because only in Naples was



it possible to access the highest forms of knowledge; in form because the work that came from it was in turn the materialisation of that knowledge. This concept dates to Greek philosophy, where there was a contrast between εἶδος (form) and ὕλη (substance).

Thanks to their studies, apothecaries had a deep knowledge of the essence of man, knowledge according to which life was a perfect combination of energies: “A body is healthy only if there is harmony in it”. The apothecary had the task of “bringing together what was scattered”, collecting the essences, extracting the active ingredients, and balancing them into a single product with unique healing properties for the body and soul.

In large urban centres, apothecary

shops became pharmacies. The Giglio pharmacy was in the heart of Naples, in via dei Tribunali. Over two thousand years earlier, an Egyptian colony called “Nilense” settled in tribute to the great African river, in the area of Regio Nilensis (now known as the Nile area) between via Tribunali and via San Biagio dei Librai.

The professionalism of the owners of the Giglio pharmacy has been known in Naples for over a hundred years. There, as good apothecaries, the owners prepared mixtures, Galenic formulations and various medicaments. While researching and experimenting, they got the idea to create products that had a double purpose, that of treating certain illnesses while at the same time being pleasant on the palate, considering that the med-



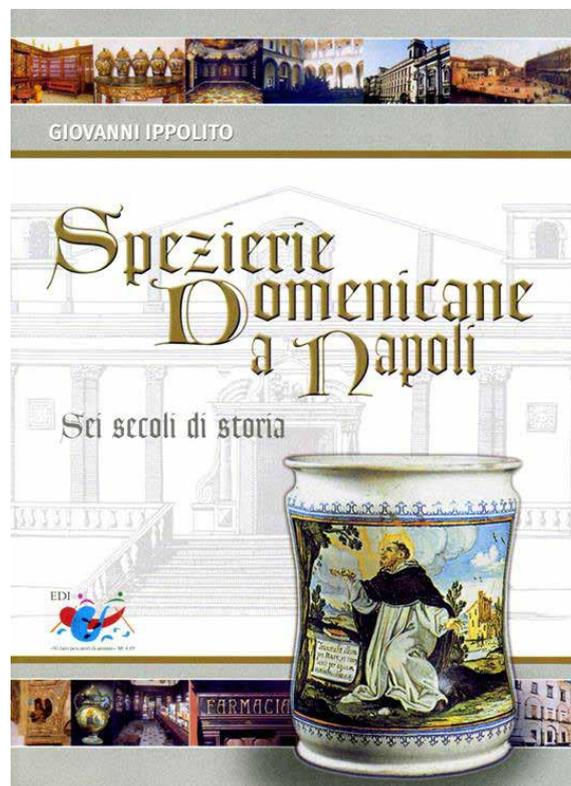
HISTORY

THE STATUE OF THE NILE GOD IN NAPLES, NEAR VIA TRIBUNALI.

icines of the time were not always very enjoyable to take. These products, transformed into liqueurs, helped spread the reputation of the pharmacy far beyond the city. They became widespread in major Italian cities, in Paris, London and at the beginning of the twentieth century, also in the United States of America.

Today the historic Farmacia del Giglio no longer exists but its liqueurs continue to be produced by its descendants who founded La Compagnia degli Speciali liqueur factory in their honour, to bring back those products made by the family pharmacy between 1800 and the early 1900s.

The invaluable and ancient inherited recipe book is a treasure trove of deep knowledge, part of a larger work consisting of herbal information, texts and notes, proof of the research carried out



by three generations of apothecaries. With a passion equal to their ancestors’,

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those same products are made and sold, a perfect combination of wellness for the body and soul. Preparation is not limited to combining single raw materials, but starts with the alcohol chosen, which must be very pure, and then continues with selected herbs and roots, all exclusively certified as organic.

The selection and processing of the herbs is as important for flavour as it is for health, as incorrect use of roots and spices can be harmful to the body. The same preparation ritual as recorded in the ancient manuscript is faithfully followed in the production process. The other ingredients are molasses alcohol, pure water and very little sugar.

The rich and aromatic flavours extracted with cold maceration result in unique bouquets where one can distinguish the aromas of the individual spices used. It is

like a symphony in which the sounds are nuances and tones, fragrant notes and memories of nature, a balanced gustatorial structure. Once obtained, the product is filtered with care and no colourants, preservatives or additives are used.

The Easy Gin line (38% ABV) includes two flavoured variants that are opposite in taste, the **Saffron Edition** and **Vanilla Edition**, produced with the cold compound method used during the Prohibition. Single cold macerations are carried out for about thirty days. In the botanical body we find juniper, coriander, Corinth raisins, Florentine iris and Madagascar vanilla.

China Speciale (33% ABV), **Nettare della Costiera** (33%) and **Zeus** (20%) stand out in the rich range of liqueurs. *Nettare della Costiera* is a traditional citrus-based liqueur from the Sorrento pen-



HISTORY

ALONGSIDE, THE COAT OF ARMS OF THE GIGLIO FAMILY. RIGHT, RAFFAELE CONTE.



insula. Citrus fruits used include the IGP Femminello di Massa Lubrense lemon, sweet and bitter orange, all coming from local harvests.

The Massa Lubrense lemon, also known as the “oval lemon”, is characterised by a straw yellow pulp, a juice that is rich in vitamin C and mineral salts and a peel rich in essential oils. The flavour is sourer than that of local lemons.

Finally, **Zeus** – an aperitif obtained from the maceration in alcohol and wine

of botanicals such as gentian, wormwood, cinchona, sage, orange and others. The Zeus recipe was perfected by Raffaello Conte, the last pharmacist of the Giglio Pharmacy.

The story of La Compagnia degli Speciali is an ancient one that has survived the generations, passing on ancient knowledge, a sense of belonging and pride, as symbolised by the family crest whose origins date back to 1176.

Alessandro Palanca

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BEVI RESPONSABILMENTE



SICILIAN NUANCES

The island's climate favours the distillate, giving it a strong and intense character

BY VITTORIO BRAMBILLA

Terroir is always associated with wine, and much less with spirits, which is a cultural oversight. In fact, many spirits are closely linked to the regions where they were historically born, being ambassadors of their flavour and culture.

Grappa's link to Sicily boasts numerous historical accounts. Conquerors and colonisers, the people who over the centuries populated Sicily, the influences they imported and exercised on local customs have contributed to developing the art of distillation and its products.

The largest island in the Mediterranean enjoys an optimal climate for making spirits of strong character. Grapes have always been grown in Sicily and the abundance of fresh and fermented pomace has helped root grappa production in the area.

Grappa Siciliana GI or Grappa di Sicilia GI was recognised in 2008, albeit with some attempts to hinder it, and traditionally is obtained from directly processing local pomace, which is distilled and bottled in distilleries located across Sicily. Its production disciplinary considers and regulates the rules established by the Euro-



pean Community that protect grappa as a pomace distillate made exclusively in Italy.

The Trapani area is particularly suited to the production of Sicilian grappa, with its ancient wine-growing tradition, the best-known region being the areas around Marsala. Alongside the classic Italian Grappa GI regions (Piedmont, Lombardy, Trentino, Friuli, Veneto, Sicily) there are more limited and territorially confined geographical indications. Marsala is one of the two Italian sub-areas, together with that of Barolo, which perfectly represents, albeit with different characteristics, the tradition and culture of artisanal grappa production.

Spirit production in Marsala can be traced back to the end of the 1700s, when Marsala fortified wine became known all over the world. The Grappa di Marsala Geographical Indication is reserved exclusively for pomace brandy obtained from direct distillation of raw materials from vinification of grapes used to produce

Marsala DOC wine in compliance with its disciplinary, processed and bottled in establishments located in Sicily. The use of the name Marsala is therefore exclusive to the Grappa di Marsala Geographical Indication.

The Grappa di Marsala GI denomination can be completed by reference to the distillation method, continuous or discontinuous, and the type of alembic, with a minimum alcohol content of 40% ABV. The legislation prohibits the use of DOC and DOP abbreviations and symbols, both abbreviated and in full. The Grappa di Marsala Geographical Indication is registered in Annex III of Regulation (EC) no. 110/2008 relating to the definition, designation, presentation, labelling and protection of Geographical Indications and which repeals Regulation (EEC) no. 1576/89 of the Council (published in the OJEU L. 39 of 13.02.2008) as amended by Reg. 1067/2016.

- Cerasuolo di Vittoria
- Moscato di Siracusa
- Etna
- Sciacca
- Malvasia delle Lipari
- Marsala
- Alcamo
- Sambuca di Sicilia
- Delia Nivolelli
- Moscato di Pantelleria
- Contea di Sciacani
- Santa Margherita di Belice
- Faro
- Contessa Entellina
- Moscato di Noto
- Elio
- Menfi
- Monreale



EU Commission. In Italy, the procedure for submitting and approving these technical files for the purposes of subsequent community registration is defined by the ministerial decree of 13 May 2010. The technical data sheet of Grappa di Marsala GI is contained in the press release of the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies requesting registration of the Geographical Indication published in the Official Gazette no. 299 of 27.12.2014.

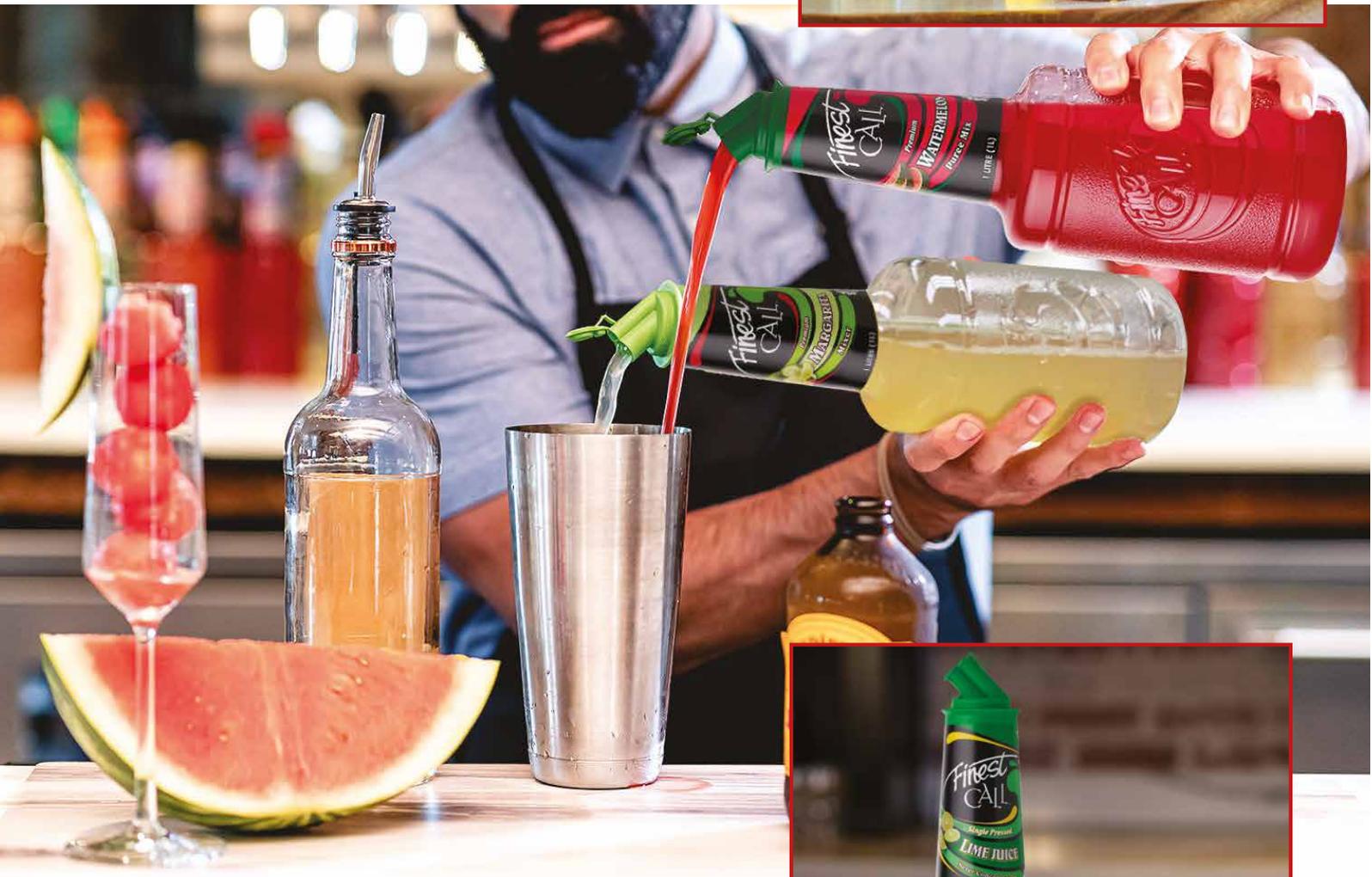
Grappa di Marsala GI is processed through direct distillation of fermented or semi-fermented pomace by means of water vapour or following the addition of water in the still. The pomace comes from the vinification of grapes suitable for producing the wine with the Marsala DOC designation of origin, in compliance with its disciplinary (Presidential Decree 17 November 1986). In particular, the grapes that comply with the specific processing standards are of the Grillo, Catarratto,

In general, Reg. 110/2008 provides that for each Geographical Indication (in art. 17 paragraph 1) a technical file containing the requirements prescribed in the same article be submitted to the



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Ansonica, Damaschino, Perricone, Nerello mascalese and Nero d'Avola varieties and come from vineyards in the province of Trapani (excluding the municipalities of Pantelleria, Favignana and Alcamo), grown according to traditional conditions aimed at giving the grapes and the resulting wine

their specific quality characteristics.

If Nero d'Avola is the most famous Sicilian grape variety, the production of single variety grappas is widespread throughout the island. Among these we remember Grappa Moscato di Pantelleria (from Zibibbo grapes), Grappa di Malvasia delle Lipari and Grappa di Inzolia, produced with the pomace of the grape variety of the same name, in this case grown in Licata (Agrigento). Nevertheless, apart from wonderful exceptions, grappa producers in Sicily are still few and far between; besides the areas mentioned there are some on Etna and one in Messina. But certainly, from north to south, grappa is still the main distillate that symbolises the tradition of the Italian spirit industry ever since its most remote origins.

Vittorio Brambilla

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GENZIANA VITTORIA

One might think that Genziana Vittoria is too new to already be a must-have in the biggest Roman cellars, but its story goes back a long way. The idea of a young farmer, Daniele Di Loreto, has the flavour of ancient entrepreneurialism. A lover of all things “delicious” but with no experience in spirits and beverages, Genziana Vittoria’s story starts at a dinner.

One evening around the dinner table with friends, a bottle of Amaro Formidabile made its appearance. Fascinated and curious about the flavour of that liqueur, Daniele decided to find out more. He discovered that the producer was the late Armando Bomba, whose artisanal workshop was not far from his home. It was Armando Bomba himself who brought

change to Daniele Di Loreto’s profession. Quite simply, Daniele arrived at Bomba’s home, rang the bell and introduced himself. He had set out to produce his own amaro and saw a mentor in Armando. The meeting was illuminating, and Armando could sense Daniele’s passion. He gave him his first bit of advice but explained that the road would be long, hard, and certainly not straight forward. Daniele immediately put the advice he received to good use and after a year obtained his licence to manufacture, bottle and sell alcohol.

Genziana Vittoria was already in Daniele’s head; what he needed was a laboratory to start off the project. He identified an area close to the Marcigliana Nature Reserve, where Daniele had always lived with his family. Together with his father, he

built the walls of the building and equipped the artisanal laboratory. The Liquoreria Di Loreto was born – it took three years of experimentation, scattered with moments of joy and disappointment, trials and errors before reaching the desired infusion. Genziana Vittoria entered the market last year.

Once the first bottle had been produced, Daniele felt it was only right to take it to the man who had offered him advice so selflessly and without whom Genziana Vittoria would not have been born. Perhaps chance does not exist. Today Armando is no longer with us, and Daniele remembers how that moment had been emotional for both of them.

The Di Loreto family is a mix of traditions and mainstays. Their maternal grandfather was a farmer, while the paternal grandfather was an Abruzzese shepherd who during the war moved his sheep to Rome, allowing them to graze in the area where the Olympic stadium stands today. In 1970 he moved to the capital, without ever giving up his origins and jealously maintaining his customs. Among such customs and traditions was gentian liqueur, an Abruzzese speciality, made by Vittoria, the maternal grandmother.

The Di Loreto family has been guarding the secret of her gentian for some time. In the family the story is told that only one person knew the real recipe of the infusion and that at midnight on Christmas Eve, he or she would reveal it to someone, the most fortunate among those present. The person who received this “gift” was not allowed to write down the recipe but had to memorise it and pass on the tradition when the time came. Daniele was chosen to keep the memory of his family and grandmother Vittoria alive.

Genziana Vittoria is rooted in the past,



PRODUCERS

DANIELE DI
LORETO.
BELOW,
GENTIAN.

in tradition, in grandfather’s long walks with his sheep and in the love of family’s land of origin. But Daniele is a child of the eighties, led to taking things into the future and creating something new. The

LOCATIONS

THE JOURNEY UNDERTAKEN BY DANIELE DI LORETO IN SEARCH OF HIS GENTIAN.

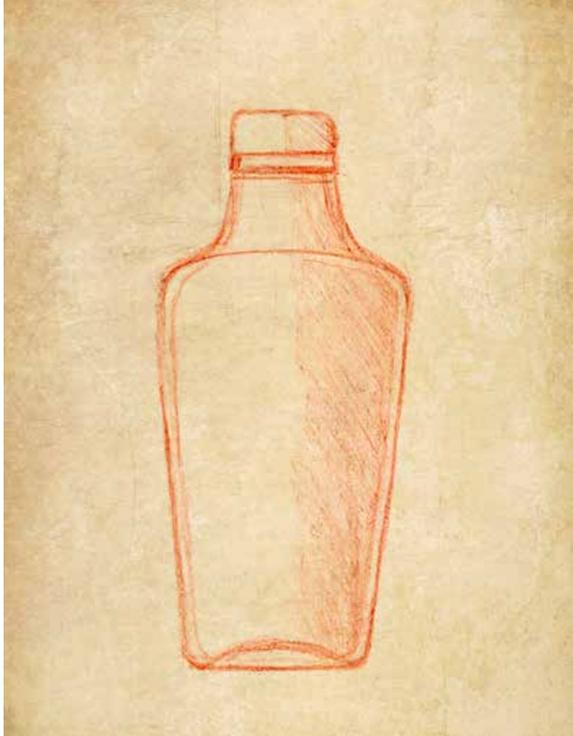


challenge was to squash the stereotype that gentian is a cheap drink and make it a “premium” beverage, maintaining its quality and enriching it in the right form. A product is only good if the raw materials that comprise it are too. Genziana Vittoria is just that – the meticulous and discerning search for the best possible ingredients.

In Italy, wild gentian may only be harvested in small quantities, while in France the legislation is more relaxed. Together with a friend, Daniele went to the region of Auvergne in France to meet with co-

operatives of independent grubbers, the *arracheur de gentiane*. Here he found sufficient quality and quantity of the root for production.

Another essential component of Genziana Vittoria is its vinous base of a Trebbiano d’Abruzzo Doc, from a winery in the province of Chieti. The wine used is from must, that is, what is obtained from the first pressing of the grapes. Production is almost entirely done by hand. The gentian root is macerated in the wine for several weeks and the infusion is then mixed with



DESIGN
SKETCHES OF
THE BOTTLE
AND LOGO.
ABOVE, THE
FINAL VERSION
ON THE
MARKET.

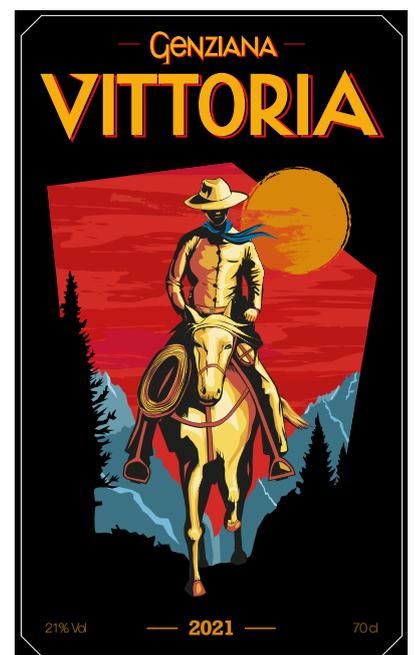
pure 96.5% grain alcohol. No chemical preservatives or colourants are used.

Genziana Vittoria has a sort of unofficial kinship with France; in fact, the logo was developed together with Thierry Potier, a graphic designer and friend who worked together with Daniele to create the label. A freehand pencil drawing was made digital to create the perfect label. What appears as a smug and melancholy cowboy, is in fact a young buck from Abruzzo, the son of tradition who is devoted to his land.

Genziana Vittoria is bright amber in colour with golden reflections. On the nose it has the typical elegantly bitter note of gentian. The marked notes of roots and herbs meet the characteristic aromas of Trebbiano wine, giving it an unmistakable character. Very pleasant with a bitter taste that is accompanied by a sure aromatic balance of great richness.

Best served chilled at 2°– 4°C, Genziana Vittoria (21% ABV) is a liqueur that, in addition to being served as a classic after a meal, lends itself well to mixing and as an aperitif.

The story of Genziana Vittoria is the story of a family and a grandmother named Vittoria. A gentian that seems young but comes from a far-off time.



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