

Grand Chapitre Welcome Dinner
Grand Hotel Excelsior
21st March 2025

Pre-dinner Reception

Canapes:

Red Snapper, Home Made Dill Mayonnaise, Chervil and Keta Caviar, Blini
Vivaneau rouge, mayonnaise à l'aneth maison, Cerfeuil et Caviar Kéta, Blini

Cured Barbary Duck Breast, Golden Beets, Berry Gel, Tart, Chevron Cheese
(Magret de Canard de Barbarie Salé, Betteraves Dorées, Gelée de Baies,
Tartelette)

Onion Marmalade, Compressed Asparagus, Mustard Cress, Croute
(Fromage Chevron, Marmelade d'Oignons, Asperges Comprimées,
Moutarde au Cresson, Croute)

Aperitif: Remy Champagne Blanc de Noir NV

Remi Leroy harvests for his use only the best 3 of his family's 9 hectares in Meurville, selling the remaining fruit. He has a non-interventionist policy except for a small addition of sulphur. This wine is entirely Pinot Noir, fermented with native yeasts and vinified in stainless steel on its lees. Noticeable was the cherry note but also raspberry and orange zest aromas and flavours with a good minerality, acidity and a fine perlage. It frequently is awarded 90/92 from critics. ABV is 12% (Ramiro Cali Corleo - RCC).

Menu

Amuse Bouche

Gruyere Gougeres Cheese Sauce, Chicken Liver and Foie Gras Macaroon,
Glazed Smoked Haddock Rillettes, Nori Tart.

(Gougères au Gruyère Sauce au fromage, Macaron au Foie de Volaille et Foie
Gras, Rillettes d'aiglefin fumé glacées, tarte au Nori)

The amuse-bouche was extremely delicate, balancing sweet and savoury. The Chicken liver and Foie gras macaroon was exquisite, but the nori tart with the smoked haddock rillettes really shone! This dish has Umami in bucketfuls. Five star (JX).

Wine: Meridiana Isis Chardonnay 2023

Meridiana was established in 1987 by Mark Miceli-Farrugia with the help of late wine expert Roger Aquilina to make 'world class wines' In 1992 Marchese Piero Antinori became partner and now is the majority owner. The grapevines for this Chardonnay take up almost half of the 17 hectares forming the estate. The grapes are hand harvested, fermented and aged in temperature controlled stainless steel vats. This DOC wine had the typical tropical fruit flavours expected in hot zone Chardonnays yet still has floral notes and a crisp citrus acidity with a good length. Alcohol is 13.5% (RCC).

Starter

Duck liver parfait, beetroot gel, apricot chutney and pain d`epices
(ginger bread)

The duck liver parfait was of extraordinary finesse and paired with the beetroot gel and apricot chutney was a marriage made in heaven. The pain d`épices gave the dish a lovely crunchy texture (JX).

Wine: Meridiana Isis Chardonnay 2023

Main Course

Pork belly, braised cheek handmade tart, fresh spring black truffle, pomme Anna, pearl onions, Calvados jus
(Poitrine de porc, tarte artisanale de joue braisée, truffe noire fraîche du printemps, pomme Anna, oignons perlés, jus de Calvados)

The main course, pork belly, braised cheeks tart, pomme Anna and calvados jus was very well cooked, the pork very moist and tender with a very good sauce (MBe).

The pork belly main course was delightful, taken to giddy heights with the braised cheek tart and the black truffle (JX).

Wine: Donnafugata Bell Assai Frappato 2022

Donnafugata is a leading Sicilian wine maker founded in 1980. The name is derived from the legend of the escape of Queen Carolina of Naples from Napoleon's army and roughly translates as 'woman on the run' It has 270 hectares under vine. This medium bodied wine is made from 100% Frappato. This wine is fermented and aged in steel vats. This wine was juicy and fresh with aromas and flavours of ripe cherry, strawberry and ground pepper. The tannins were light and rounded which with the fresh acidity that paired well with the pork main course. It received a critical review of 90/100 and is intended to be drunk young. Alcohol is 13% (RCC)

Dessert

Origin Milk Chocolate Sphere, Nutty and Vanilla Bean Praline, Anise and Apple Gel, Almond Genoese
(La Sphère Sphère Chocolat au Lait Origine, Praliné aux noisettes et à la vanille, Gel Anis et Pomme, Génoise Amande)

For dessert, we had a milk chocolate sphere that looked like art on a plate, very tasty with lots of different textures (MBe).

Dessert was an exceptionally well-executed milk chocolate sphere with a nutty and vanilla bean praline being the surprise in the centre. The gold leaf added a touch of class (JX)

Wine: Donnafugata Kabir 2022

This sweet wine, again from the Donnafugata winery is considered one of the top 10

*Moscato di Pantelleria wines achieving critic scores reaching 98/100. **Muscat of Alexandria** is an ancient grape variety and can produce high-quality wines. This wine had a luminous golden color with abundant notes of fresh fruit especially ripe peach and apricot. The aromas were intense with a delicious and syrupy sweetness without being cloying. Alcohol is 11.5% (RCC)*

Coffee/Tea and Petits Fours

Chef de Cuisine: M. Melvin Sammut
