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Strada del Sagrantino, San Francisco

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walk around tasting



For lovers of Umbrian wines, the Sagrantino Umbrian Essence event, held on June 10th at San Francisco's The Press Club, was a rare treat. Eight producers were on hand to showcase

their wines, with an emphasis on the star of the region, Sagrantino di Montefalco.

The indigenous Sagrantino grape produces very tannic wines that are high in resveratrol. Local producer Marco Caprai, of Arnaldo Caprai, perhaps the best known producer in the region, says wine made from Sagrantino is the healthiest in the world. The Sagrantino di Montefalco DOCG must be 100% Sagrantino, so the wines are rich, intense, and heartily tannic while young. They are similar in many ways to a Barolo, but are heavier and more bitter. The lighter, softer, and more affordably priced Rosso di Montefalco, a blend of 70% Sangiovese, 10-15% Sagrantino, plus up to 30% of Cabernet Sauvignon or Merlot, is softer, lighter, fruitier, and easier to enjoy, if simpler.

trade question



Producers on hand included Antonelli San Marco, Arnaldo Caprai, Tenuta Castelbuono, Le Cimate, Perticaia, Romanelli, Scacciadiavoli, and Tenuta Bellafonte.

After tasting through

the reds, I stopped back at Scacciadiavoli to try their Rose Brut Metodo Classico, made exclusively with Sagrantino. I was blown away.

Extended skin contact gave this rich, bone dry fully sparkling wine a soft, gentle, chewy tannic impression on the palate. Sparkling wine

producers typically go out of their way to avoid skin contact. This was a first and I absolutely loved it. What passion and pride this producer has for their local grape!



The event was a joint venture between the Consorzio Tutela Vini Montefalco and the Strada del Sagrantino, or Sagrantino Wine Road, which winds through the hills and towns of Umbria,

including Todi, Assisi, and Spoleto, giving tourists a road map to the various wineries, olive mills, castles, churches, museums, and monuments. Their saying is, "Strada del Sagrantino, Discover the Good Life." I couldn't agree more.

Have you ever tried an Umbrian wine before? What was unique about it?

Did you know the Umbrian Tartufo Nero, or Black Truffle, is sought after all year round? Do you think a dish prepared with it would pair well with the local wines?

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