
Vini e Capricci opened in Gozo

Prime Minister Joseph Muscat praised the owner of Abraham's for his vision and for making a dream he has had for many years come through, creating jobs in Gozo. Dr Muscat was inaugurating a new retail experience in Malta and Gozo, Vini e Capricci (Wines & Whims), within Abraham's complex at the Gozitano Agricultural Village in Xewkija, Gozo, on Friday, 11 October.

In his inaugural address, Abraham Said, Managing Director of Abraham's Supplies Co. Ltd, operators of Vini e Capricci, revealed that the opening of the concept store was the fulfilment of a dream that he first thought up some three years ago.

"Not only was it my vision to create an outlet supplying retail and trade clients with an exclusive selection of gourmet foods, award-winning wines and spirits to delight even the choosiest connoisseur," Mr Said said, "but I wanted to integrate a strong educational element. Not only do we want clients visiting Vini e Capricci to try before they buy, but we want to host events, including art exhibitions, tastings and the marrying of food, wine and art – all under one roof."

Vini e Capricci, which was then blessed by Xagħra Archpriest Mgr Carmelo Refalo, will be the venue from time to time of media launches, trade events with a strong educational emphasis targeted at the catering trade, and specialised events aimed at specific target groups. International chefs will be invited and the principals of the various products imported will be invited to talk about the very latest techniques and technologies in their line of business.

Vini e Capricci, whose interior décor was entrusted to designer Paul Stellini, is divided into three main sections. As soon as you enter, you will be struck by the aroma of coffee and the array of coffee, teas and chocolate confectionery on display, including Saquella premium coffee, Guido Gobino premium quality, artisanal chocolate and confectionery, which can be bought by weight, and other dry food products, including dry pasta from Gagnano the Pastificio dei Campi and Alfieri.

Fresh pasta from Surgital is available over the counter in the second section with a selection of cured meats and cheeses. Chiappella Salumi, Salcis Salumi e Formaggi and Beppino Ocelli are among the brands on display. A nice selection of antipasti and delicacies from Antica Sicilia are offered at the delicatessen counter. As you enter the second section, there is a display with a wide selection of genuine Gozitan products including oil, conserves, wines and liqueurs.

There is a selection of Italian olive oils by Cuffrol and Poiana. A feature in this section is: bring your

own bottle and have it filled with Gozo olive oil fresh from a stainless steel vat.

The third section includes the temperature-controlled wine cellar and a comprehensive selection of alcoholic beverages. There are no fewer than 12 brands of high quality Belgian beer. The wine cellar contains over a thousand different wines divided according to geographical region. Special, modern wine bottle holders, incorporating LED lighting, designed by Emme 2 Design from Castagnito, Cuneo, Northern Italy, are used to display the bottles.

Italy has the most comprehensive display with wines from regions from north to south: Tenuta San Leonardo – Alto Adige; Cavit– Trentino Alto Adige; Michele Chiarlo – Piedmont; Livio Felluga – Friuli Venezia Giulia; Carpenè Malvolti – Conegliano, Masi – Veneto; Sella & Mosca – Sardegna; Terrador di Paolo – Campania; Leone de Castris – Puglia and Vini Scilio & Tenuta delle Abate from Sicily.

France is represented by Cordier – Bordeaux; Michel Picard and Jadot – Burgundy, E. Guigal – Rhone, Champagne Jacquart and a selection of Bordeaux Grands Cru Classé. There are wines from Bodegas Farina – Spain, Niepoort – Portugal and Château Kefraya – Lebanon, apart from a wide selection of New World wines: Trinchero Wines – California, Viña San Pedro – Chile, Finca la Celia – Argentina, Simonsig – South Africa, Peter Lehman – Australia and Hunter's – New Zealand. There is also a selection of dessert wines, fine ports, sparkling wines and champagnes.

Distillerie Berta also takes pride of place, with a wide selection of their world-renowned award winning reserve grappas.

Extensive use has been made, especially in the wine cellar of Gozo stone, sourced from the same quarry in Qala where the finishing blocks of the Valletta Parliament buildings have been sourced.

As you come out of the wine cellar, you will find a display of single malt whiskies, Armagnacs, special rums and Calvados.

Above the wine cellar there is a multi-function room that is to be used to host media launches, art exhibitions and pairings of food, wine and art. It comes with a fully equipped kitchen that is to be used for seminars, demonstration purposes and to provide assistance to local restaurants for catering demonstrations. A large 55-inch flat screen TV has been placed above the open kitchen so that guests can see close-ups of the food being prepared and any other visual content that needs to be shown.

This room, finished with American Pecan parquet flooring, and walnut doors and panelling, can host 26 persons seated on four long table tables with an oak finish when put together. Alternatively, there could be theatre-style seating or cabaret table seating, depending on the occasion.

The LED lighting includes rail-mounted lights suitable for exhibitions and ceiling lights that can be switched from warm to cool white, depending on the occasion. The open kitchen has a bar finished with Arabescato marble from Italy and a walnut bar shelf, while the white walls and ceiling are offset with a feature in Gozo stone.

Among the owners and executives from the various brands who attended were: Mr and Mrs Michele Chiarlo of the eponymous wine producer, along with Ms Simona Chiarlo, company architect, and export assistant Ms Annamaria Serafino; Mr Gianfranco Berta, grappa maker and owner of Distillerie Berta, along with his wife as well as export manager Mr Giovanni Bocchino; Dr and Mrs Piernicola Leone de Castris, owner of Leone de Castris; Mrs Donatella Cinelli Colombini and Mr Carlo Gardini (Mrs Colombini is the owner of Cinelli Colombini Wines); Ms Daniela Mastroberardino, owner of Terradora di Paolo; Mr Carmelo Cantone and Ms Patricia Strano, who own Antica Sicilia; Sergio Piantà and Debora Malvezzi, owners of Emme 2 Design; Allesandro Casamiri, export manager of Sella & Mosca; Thomas Van Muylder, export executive of Cordier; and Fabrizio Berra, export manager of Saclà coffee.

Vini e Capricci is open from Monday to Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, visit www.abrahams.com.mt.

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Abraham Said, Managing Director of Abraham's Supplies Co. Ltd, speaking at the grand opening of Vini e Capricci



Prime Minister Joseph Muscat, Mrs Said and her two sons listen to Mr Said's speech



Prime Minister Joseph Muscat speaks at the opening of Vini e Capricci



Prime Minister Joseph Muscat unveils a plaque at the grand opening of Vini e Capricci with Abraham Said looking on



Abraham Said makes a point to Dr Muscat with Dr Franco Mercieca, Parliamentary Secretary for Rights of Persons with Disability and Active Aging (centre)