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Wine and Dine – Donnafugata Sul Vulcano 2019 Etna Rosso DOC with Creamy Chicken Tetrazzini

Oct 18, 2022 Cindy Rynning

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While I stirred, whisked, poured, chopped and sauteed, aromas of garlic, onions, mushrooms, thyme, nutmeg and more wafted throughout the kitchen. I couldn't wait to complete the prep for Giada de Laurentiis' Chicken Tetrazzini, a dish I was making for a special dinner with friends. With its creamy herb filled sauce and linguine cooked al dente, I knew that the texture and flavors would delight – and it did. The wine for pairing? I chose a bottle of **Donnafugata Sul Vulcano 2019 Etna Rosso DOC** (\$30) from Sicily and *sent as a sample*.

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Donnafugata, now guided by the fifth generation of the family, has “revolutionized the style and perception of Sicilian wine in the world.” The name alone not only signifies delicious, affordable wine, but represents the Italian island that has become recognized as a producer of world-class wines. The focus at Donnafugata is not only the production of exceptional wine crafted from the best grapes possible, but to promote the awareness of Sicilian wine produced from a variety of terroir throughout the island.

The wine I chose for dinner is from Donnafugata’s vineyards at Mount Etna, one of the most active volcanoes in the world and found in eastern Sicily. There are five different sides for viticulture: north, northeast, east, southeast and south. Thanks to its constant activity, different volcanic soils are rich in complex minerals. The mountain’s elevation is the highest in Sicily yet there are different climates: xeric, Mediterranean, mountain and Alpine. Its low latitude offers a unique solar irradiation and due to Mt. Etna’s proximity to the Mediterranean seas, a marine influence is noted.



Photo Credit: Donnafugata

Donnafugata has chosen the northern side of Mount Etna to produce its mountain, volcanic and Mediterranean wines. Varieties cultivated are native to the area: Carricante, Nerello Mascalese and in small quantities Nerello Cappuccio. They flourish thanks to the area's lower average annual rainfall than the eastern side, refreshing, windy summers and significant diurnal temperature shifts in August and September that help lengthen the growing season. Sandy soils originating from the area's lava help produce highly aromatic wines that express unique terroir.

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Discover Etna - Donnafugata in chapter



While the chicken tetrazzini was baking, I poured the first glass of **Donnafugata Sul Vulcano 2019 Etna Rosso DOC**. Of mostly Nerello Mascalese and a small amount of Nerello Cappuccio, the wine was pure elegance. On the nose, I found plenty of red raspberries and bright red cherries with hints of balsamic, mint leaves and white pepper. Flavors of fresh red fruits and minerality were lifted by bright acidity and soft tannins. Balanced with a lingering finish, the wine was delicious now but has the potential to be cellared for up to five more years.

Donnafugata Sul Vulcano 2019 is about as food friendly as it comes. Sip and savor a few glasses with any Mediterranean antipasti, braised meats, roast stew, eggplant and mushroom dish, burgers, quesadillas, empanadas, spicy Asian fare or even American-style chicken wings. But with Giada de Laurentiis' Chicken Tetrazzini, the flavors of the wine were magnificent. Savory mushrooms, chicken and herbs combined with the creamy texture of the linguine and sauce were lush counterpoints to the red fruit and balsamic notes of the wine. Enjoy!



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Chicken Tetrazzini – Courtesy of Giada De Laurentiis

Ingredients

- 9 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 boneless chicken breasts
- 2 1/4 teaspoons salt
- 1 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1lb white mushrooms, sliced
- 1 Large onion
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme leaves
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1/3 cup all purpose flour
- 4 cups whole milk, room temperature
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream, room temperature

- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 12oz linguine
- 3/4 cups frozen peas
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley leaves
- 1 cup grated Parmesan
- 1/4 cup dried Italian style breadcrumbs

Directions

Step 1

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F.

Step 2

Spread 1 tablespoon of butter over a 13 by 9 by 2 inch baking dish. Melt 1 tablespoon each of butter and oil in a deep large nonstick frying pan over medium-high heat. Sprinkle the chicken with 1/2 teaspoon each of salt and pepper. Add the chicken to the hot pan and cook until pale golden and just cooked through, about 4 minutes per side. Transfer the chicken to a plate to cool slightly. Coarsely shred the chicken into bite size pieces and into a large bowl.

Step 3

Meanwhile, add 1 tablespoon each of butter and oil to the same pan. Add the mushrooms and saute over medium-high heat until the liquid from the mushrooms evaporates and the mushrooms become pale golden, about 12 minutes. Add the onion, garlic, and thyme, and saute until the onion is translucent, about 8 minutes. Add the wine and simmer until it evaporates, about 2 minutes. Transfer the mushroom mixture to the bowl with the chicken.

Step 4

Melt 3 more tablespoons butter in the same pan over medium-low heat. Add the flour and whisk for 2 minutes. Whisk in the milk, cream, broth, nutmeg, remaining 1 3/4 teaspoons salt and remaining 3/4 teaspoon pepper. Increase the heat to high. Cover and bring to a boil. Simmer, uncovered, until the sauce thickens slightly, whisking often, about 10 minutes.

Step 5

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the linguine and cook until it is tender but still firm to the bite, stirring occasionally, about 9 minutes. Drain. Add the linguine, sauce, peas, and parsley to the chicken mixture. Toss until the sauce coats the pasta and the mixture is well blended.

Step 6

Transfer the pasta mixture to the prepared baking dish, Stir the cheese and breadcrumbs in a small bowl to blend. Sprinkle the cheese mixture over the

pasta. Dot with the remaining 3 tablespoons of butter. Bake, uncovered, until golden brown on top and the sauce bubbles, about 25 minutes.

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Cheers! ~ Cindy

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