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## Madeira Wine Institute Master Class & Gourmet Pairing Dinner

By [Marisa D'Vari](#) | October 7th, 2014 | Category: [News](#) | [No Comments](#) »



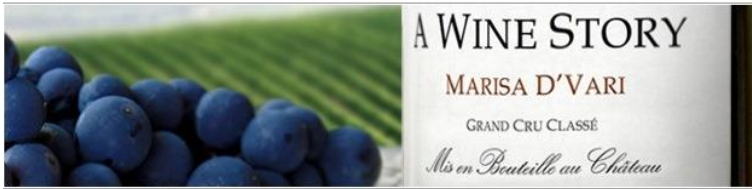
Consider this delicious looking (and tasting!) shot of Caramelized Foie Gras with Fresh Fig Infused with Spices. What wine would you pair with it? *Sauternes*?

Monday, October 6 was a brilliant day for Madeira, thanks to educators and producers from the island who came to New York to explain their exquisite wines and showcase their collectability, ability to improve with age (I tasted a delicious 1912, though wine expert Rui Falcao, who lead the tasting at dinner and the Master Class in the afternoon, has tasted Madeira wines as old as 1712 and pronounced them delicious, thanks to the natural acidity).



The events were organized by the Madeira Wine Institute, assisted in New York by American Sommelier Andrew Bell, President of the American Sommelier Society, who was a guest speaker at the afternoon seminars.

<http://awinestory.com/2014/10/madeira-institute-pairing.html>



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Many sommeliers and New York's finest wine writers were seated at the long white table in a ballroom at 1 United Nations Plaza, a very elegant venue for the afternoon Master Class.

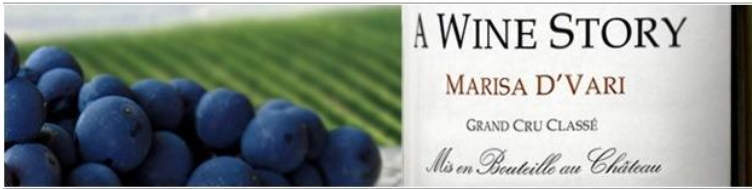
As I opened the tasting sheet, I must admit my eyes popped at the list of what we would be tasting ... HM Borges Sercial 1979, D'Oliveiras Terrantez 1977, Henriques & Henriques Single Harvest Boal 2000, Justino's Colheita 1995, Barbeito Single Harvest 2003, and Blandy's Colheita Malmsey 1996.

Though (I thought) I studied Madeira extensively (hallmark, high acidity, usually a topaz color) I learned quite a lot at the seminar. Perhaps when I first studied Madeira in 2007, the world was different ... Tinta Negra Mole was not quite considered a "noble grape" and technically it probably still isn't. Yet this black grape produces the majority of Madeira wine, and is now getting the respect it deserves. As I tasted the wines, I tried to imagine the dishes it would be paired with that evening at the formal Madeira tasting dinner ... mentally, I was thinking truffles, some sort of mushrooms, perhaps, some sort of gourmet version of an onion tart -- savory food.



The Madeira pairing formal dinner at Jean Georges, one of New York's finest destination restaurants, was overseen by Rui Falcao. The evening began with a warm welcome from Paula Cabaco, President of the Madeira Wine Institute.

The evening offered a number of delightful surprises, showcasing how well Madeira can be paired with cuisine. For example, the foie gras pictured above was paired with not one but two wines, Hendriques & Hendriques 15 Anos (years) Verdelho, a drier style, as well as the sweeter Blandy's Malmsey 10 Anos. At the end of the pairing, Rui asked the group what they preferred, and most preferred the drier Verdelho yet it was a fun experiment.



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The second course (not pictured) was one of my favorites at Jean Georges, Black Bass Crusted with Nuts and Seeds, Sweet and Sour Jus ... it was a delicious dish with fragrant spices, and for this Rui chose Barbeito Ribeiro Real Verdelho, 20 hours. The texture and sweetness/spicy character of the Madeira wine perfectly matched the dish with its small onions, mushrooms, and other vegetables.



Justino's Colheita 1995 accompanied the Muscovy Duck Breast Topped with Cracked Jordan Almonds, Amaretto Jus. Everyone at the table agreed this was an extremely successful pairing, with the almonds on top of the Duck really bringing the Madeira in harmony with the perfectly cooked duck.



The dessert, a small plate of ice cream, melted chocolate cake, and other delights, was paired with one wine, the HM Borges Malvasia 15 Anos (a perfect pairing) while the last wine of the evening, the 1968 D'Oliveira, was enjoyed on its own.



The image shows a wine label for 'A WINE STORY MARISA D'VARI GRAND CRU CLASSÉ' with the text 'Mis en Bouteille au Château' and a photograph of blueberries. To the right is a newsletter sign-up form titled 'Get your Monthly Newsletter and Food & Wine Pairing Guide, FREE'. The form includes fields for 'Name' and 'Email', a 'Sign up and enjoy' button with a 'Privacy' link, and a search bar with the placeholder text 'Type words, hit enter'. There are also social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, and a small portrait of a woman.

This special day of Madeira wines was so important as sommeliers and writers are the communicators to the public, who might not realize just how perfectly Madeira can be paired with cuisine.

The menu was indeed brilliant and Rui Falcao and the Jean George team did a fabulous job of creating what is possibly the most successful wine dinner in memory.