The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Have Your Wine and Drink It Too at Wine Bazaar

And drink we did — a generous 10 wines from light to dark that displayed quite a chunk of the Alma Valley range.

By Grace Watson

March 01, 2018



Viacheslav Vasilyev

Evgenia Kachalova, the energetic and inspiring founder of Wine Bazaar, is oftenasked how to get into the wine world. It's with good reason — who wouldn't want todevote more time to drinking wine? And while there's no simple answer, it may notrequire traveling as far as you'd think.

The 45th parallel that has given the South of France its ideal winemaking conditionsalso passes through the Northern Caucasus and Crimea, lending the region a nearlyMediterranean climate. The Crimean terroir's heritage spans back to the ancient Greeks, who first introduced wine grapes there in apparent approval of the land.

TMT Clubs got a crash course in domestic production by someone who knows itinside and out — Igor Serdyuk, wine expert, journalist, and deputy director at AlmaValley vineyard. We managed to squeeze around our table at Wine Bazaar's newestlocation on Sadovaya. It was only Thursday, but it was packed. We leaned in, readyto taste some Russian wine and learn all about it, way back to the beginning.Wine Bazaar's Spanish-inspired tapas were meant to accompany specific wines, butthey came all at once. Much of the pairing structure was thus abandoned, thoughfew complained. In fact, Serdyuk himself openly condones such rule-breaking,dismissing highfalutin wine attitudes in favor of drinking wine when and how youwant it.

Related article: Old Friends and New Beginnings at Moscow's 12 Wine Bar

And drink we did — a generous 10 wines from light to dark that displayed quite achunk of the Alma Valley range. Their whites are fruity and floral, thanks to stainlesssteel rather than oak barrels. Reds are brooding and full of character. In keeping withSerdyuk's attitude, AV's Summer Rosé is just as good in winter. Each wine we triedwas thoughtful and drinkable, but the Reserve versions (made from the crop's mostpromising expression of flavor) are outstanding. The group agreed — ChardonnayReserve and Merlot Reserve topped the list. Our favorites from the WB kitchen werethe tuna sashimi and the beef escalope with Gorgonzola sauce (though we found thebread lackluster).

Wine Bazaar is a gently lit, foliage-adorned backdrop for the things it values most:good company, life's simple pleasures and wine without fussiness. The friendly,enthusiastic atmosphere was so enjoyable that the following weekend found us atSosedi, another branch with a different menu and a personality all its own. Sosedialso features intricate design touches, from handmade ornaments hanging overheadto candle arrangements brightening up corners. The especially snowy walk from ParkKultury metro was worth it once we were sipping pleasantly tart mulled wine andchatting over poached egg and salmon appetizers, surrounded by steaming piles ofdecadent blini and homemade spreads. Kachalova's philosophy is felt in herestablishments, which exude warmth and comfort. They're the place to be withfriends, and to have your wine with (or without) whatever you want. No rules, nojudgment.

If you want to read more about Wine Bazaar, Alma Valley, and the people behind them, see our full interviews with Evgenia Kachalova and Igor Serdyuk here and here.

You can sign up to The Moscow Times' club events here. Or follow us on Facebook!

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/03/01/have-your-wine-and-drink-it-too-at-wine-bazaar-a60828