

**WINE**

Wines of Porto enters Kenyan market

BY WINNIE WANGU

The wine market in Kenya has been on an upward trend. International wine makers have been coming to Kenya to give wine lovers more variety. Wines of Porto specialises in Portuguese wines and have been in the Kenyan market since early this year. The unique factor of

their wines is attributed to the climate and rich soils in Portugal. The Conde Villar a unique type of young white wine also known as Vinho Verde is only produced at the demarcated Vinho Verde region which extends across north west Portugal in the area traditionally known as Entre-Douro-e-Minho (between-

Douro-and-Minho Rivers). This wine differentiates itself with its vibrancy, elegance, lightness and the aromatic fruit and floral notes. The white and red Tapada de Villar (DOC) possess a characteristic firmness of the Alentejo wine region caused by the lack of physical barriers which block condensa-

tion of humidity coming in from the ocean removing any hint of the Atlantic ocean expression in the Alentejo. Wines of Porto is planning to host a wine-tasting towards the end of the year. We have two red and white suggestions you can start with. The Conde Villar (white) whose flavour presents itself in a well-balanced medium structure features tropical aromas similar

to pineapple, mango and citrus. This wine is ideal for pairing with fish, seafood salads and poultry dishes and costs Sh1,695. On the other hand, if you fancy a full-bodied variety, the Tapada de Villar (red) is a robust wine with intense fruit notes. This wine pairs best with beef dishes and only costs Sh2,275.

Tapada Villar, (Right)
Conde Villar Vinho Verde Ros.

**PUB REVIEW**

Forty Thieves bar that keeps beckoning

BY JACKSON BIKO

You can't be in Diani without trying out Forty Thieves bar and bistro. It's almost sacreligious. I was down in Diani two weeks ago, rather I was in Kwale, talking to NGO people. I spent half the day driving down a godforsaken road inside a park, then spent the other half talking to NGO people about a damn that was built a year ago. Happy days. Then I spent my evening driving back, through dust, tall shrubs and then palm trees and human life.

When I got to the hotel (Baobab Lodge) I was so knackered I couldn't lift a leg. I had quick dinner and went to the hotel bar, the lovely sunken one near the beach. I asked for the drinks menu and there wasn't any whiskey worth drinking. Especially not after the kind of day I had had. So I called a taxi and made it to Forty Thieves. It was heading to 10pm, which I was told was too early for Forty Thieves.

The bar had the usual suspects: groups of Caucasians, out of towners in shorts, couples on dates and the odd person seated alone at the bar, staring into his phone. Wait, that was me.

No calls

I ordered a Abejourn, retrieved a piece of paper from my pocket and started conducting phone interviews. After 20 minutes, the barman put a sign before me reading: "Phone calls at the bar will attract a fine," or something mad like that. So I ignored it. After five minutes, an elderly white Caucasian man who was chatting with some two girls showed up and said, "Sorry, but you can't make phone calls at the bar." I sighed and said, "That, honestly, doesn't make sense!" He shrugged and said, "well, sorry, it's the rule." So I looked at him and asked him, "who are you, do you work here?" He said he was the owner. I asked him for a card and he handed one to me. I don't remember his name, but I took two more calls down at the beach.

The ambience of Forty Thieves is fantastic. You can always take a walk down to the beach if you feel like you have had enough to drink. It's quite romantic. If the sky is cloudless and there is a moon, the ocean sparkles and the beach looks like a place where men come to sell their soul.

You should try out their pizza. But wait until much later into the evening, once you have had a few to drink, pizza tastes better then.

INDIAN CUISINE

Witty cocktails, great food at Masala Twist



Enjoy new flavours, drink from dramatic bulb-like container

BY FRED MWITHIGA

Masala Twist by Venom is an Indian restaurant that is quite unlike any I've been to. Their food breathes life into your soul as my colleagues and I recently learned.

Located on the 9th floor of the Victoria Plaza in Westlands, Masala Twist is an adventurous restaurant that seeks to impress with its expansive Indian menu. Whether you're vegetarian or an old-fashioned meat lover, this simple restaurant is guaranteed to fill the hungriest of tummies with their well-flavoured food.

Cocktail bubble

We kicked off the night with a few cocktails. What I love most about the cocktails at Masala Twist is the flare they are served with. I ordered one of their most popular drinks—Edison's Invention—and was thoroughly pleased.



Edison cocktail.

The cocktail comes served in a light bulb, an ode to Thomas Edison, the father of the light bulb. The serve of this drink was impressive, but the dry ice in the bulb, making the cocktail bubble and smoke, was even more dramatic.

Above: Braised mutton. Inset: Pan-tossed mushrooms with truffle haze.

COURTESY

The Masala Twist cocktail menu will have you spoilt for choice with all their unique offerings.

Each cocktail comes in its own unique glass, some reminiscent of your high school days in the chemistry lab. It is this attention to detail that sets the restaurant apart

from their competitors. After a round of banter and selfies, our starters arrived. The braised mutton chops topped off with maple fokum glaze were an absolute crowd pleaser. The meat was full of flavour, soft and pulled off the bone without the slightest hesitation. I would have fought for more of those mouth-watering ribs. We then got to try the pan-tossed mushrooms with truffle haze and once again it was another hit.

I've loved mushrooms since I was little, but this simple meal took that love to a whole new level. It was vibrant, full of flavour with an unbeatable earthy taste from the truffle.

We were eager for our mains and the aroma of food wafting to our table signalled arrival.

Once again, we ordered both the vegetarian and non-vegetarian menu. Armed with my garlic naan, I was quick to dig into the methi chicken.

The combination of the garlic naan and the chicken resulted in an explosive medley of sweet and sour flavours with a little heat from the black pepper used in the chicken. It was delightful and every bite felt as exciting as the first.

Garlic naan

The garlic naan was quickly snapped up by the rest of my colleagues. Once there was no more naan, I opted for some jeera rice, a helping of yellow tadka dal to get a taste of vegetarian offering. I'll admit, I'm not the first to jump out of my seat for a vegetarian menu, but this was an eye opener. I couldn't help myself and by the time I was done, I was pleasantly full, but with some room for dessert.

For dessert, we opted for the jalebi caviar with saffron foam, almond pistachio rabri, an interesting, but delicious dessert that was well appreciated.

The presentation was impressive, with the jalebi caviar offering a vibrant orange tone to the dessert.

We also had the German chocolate cake with vanilla ice cream and coffee sauce, the perfect end to an impeccable dinner. If you are serious about Indian cuisine and appreciate new flavours with a twist, you should visit Masala Twist. You will thank us.