

## Executive Chef Maître Rôtisseur Roberto Donna



Born in the Piedmont region of Italy, Roberto Donna arrived in Washington, DC at the age of 19 with almost a lifetime of cooking school education from his native Torino and throughout Europe. In 1984 he opened Galileo and gained a strong following in the DC Metropolitan area. The addition of his Laboratorio and Osteria made Chef Donna's restaurants destinations for those seeking the best in Italian cuisine. Currently he is the Executive Chef at Roberto's Ristorante and Le Bistro in Vienna, Virginia, where he enjoys working with his wife, Nancy, who manages the front of the house.

Roberto is an active supporter of the DC Central Kitchen, the American Institute of Wine & Food, Share Our Strength, the James Beard Foundation, and numerous other charitable organizations. His civic-minded activities are an important part of his life and are his way of giving back to the community that has helped him succeed in achieving his dreams.

In June, Chef was honored by The Italian Cultural Society of Washington at the Italian Embassy Gala as a top Chef who has maintained the excellence and high quality of Italian cuisine.

Maître Rôtisseur Donna is a long-standing member of the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs and the Bailliage of Greater Washington, DC. The bailliage last enjoyed Chef Donna's cuisine at an October 2022 event at his restaurant. In October 2020, when the pandemic precluded in-person gatherings, Chef Donna crafted a spectacular multicourse Piedmontese dinner delivered to members' homes. During an engaging Zoom session, the chef led participants through the final preparations to create a restaurant-quality experience at home.

*Roberto's Ristorante Italiano*

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*The Bailliage of  
Greater Washington, D.C.*



*July 21, 2024*

**Monte Rossa Flamingo Rosé Brut, NV***Franciacorta, Lombardy, Italy*

Franciacorta lies between Lake Iseo, Monte Orfano, and the Oglio river. Deposited by a glacier, the soil is rich in minerals that impart distinctive flavors to wine from this region. Flamingo is made with 40% Pinot Nero and 60% Chardonnay using the traditional méthode Champenoise. Fermentation is partially in steel vats at controlled temperature and partially in oak barrels, and the wine is aged in the bottle for at least 24 months.

**Castello di Neive Monteberatto Arneis, 2023***Langhe DOC, Piedmont, Italy*

Since at least the 1760s Castello di Neive was dedicated to production of red wines, especially Nebbiolo. The project for selecting an Arneis clonal variety began in 1976. Its success and the qualitative improvements to the Arneis variety are owed to Italo Stupino, head of the family-owned company, and his wife's predilection for white wines, the reason everything started. Trained as an engineer, Italo Stupino has been active in research since the 1970s in collaboration with the University of Turin, both in the vineyard and in the cellar, never forgetting the heritage of centuries of winemaking.

**La Mesma Etichetta Nera, 2020***Gavi DOCG, Piedmont, Italy*

Three sisters, Paola, Francesca and Anna Rosina, bought land in Gavi in 2001. Their mother insisted it was silly to have a beautiful house in Monterotondo – a prestigious cru for the Gavi region – and not even a little vineyard. Today 63 acres are under vines growing Cortese grapes. La Mesma is a certified organic winery. The vineyards are about 1,000 feet above sea level, elevation essential to contend with heat waves and climate change. During warmer periods the sisters, and their farm hands, spray an inert white clay on the vines to shield them from sunburn. La Mesma is dry farmed; they do not irrigate their vines. The wine we are drinking this evening is from a 35-year old Monterotondo vineyard. Fermentation and aging are in concrete with 8 months on the lees.

**Stéphane Robert Domaine du Tunnel Cuvée Prestige, 2020***Saint-Péray, Rhône Valley, France*

Stéphane Robert created the Domaine du Tunnel in 1996. There is an actual tunnel: In 2014, Stéphane rehabilitated a disused 550 foot railway tunnel in Saint-Péray to set up a winemaking and aging cellar. Cuvée Prestige is made from 80% Marsanne and 20% Roussanne grapes, all from old vines (average 50 years) growing in six acres of granite-dominated soil. The grape harvest and other work in the vineyards is done by hand, and sometimes with horses when the vines are more accessible. Stéphane vinifies parcels separately and uses oak sparingly, preferring wines characterized by fruit intensity rather than oak.

**Fidora Monte Tabor Amarone della Valpolicella, 2015***Amarone della Valpolicella DOCG, Veneto, Italy*

Having been producing wine in the Veneto since 1927, the Fidora family started its organic farming project in 1974 and today is farming biodynamically in all its estates. This evening's wine comes from the northern hills of Montorio Valley, just a few kilometers from Verona. It is a blend of 60% Corvina, 30% Corvinone, and 10% Rondinella. It is made using a technique invented by the Romans called appassimento: The hand-picked grapes are dried on wooden gates for 3 to 4 months in the fruttaiolo (drying facility). During the drying process, the grapes lose 40-50% of their original weight, yielding concentrated flavors. Each year in January, the grapes undergo the pigiatatura (pressing) and then the fermentation process for a month. The wine matures in French oak barrels for 42 to 50 months, followed by ageing in bottle for one year.

**La Giarretta Recioto della Valpolicella Classico, 2016***Recioto della Valpolicella DOCG Classico, Veneto, Italy*

Cantina la Giarretta, founded in the late 1950s, makes their Recioto from the same grape varieties as the Amarone della Valpolicella, following essentially the same appassimento process. The grapes are pressed later, in March, and the wine is aged in small French oak barrels for two years followed by ageing in the bottle.

*Roberto's Ristorante Italiano*

Summer Tomato Watermelon Shot

Fresh Date filled with Gorgonzola

Melon and Culatello

Mini Crab Cakes

*Monte Rossa Flamingo Rosé Brut, NV**Franciacorta, Lombardy, Italy*

Inslata di Aragosta, Granchio, e Avacado

Lobster and Crab Salad

*Castello di Neive Monteberatto Arneis, 2023**Langhe DOC, Piedmont, Italy*

Taglierini al Ragù di Quaglia Bianca

Egg Taglierini with White Quail Ragù

*La Mesma Etichetta Nera, 2020**Gavi DOCG, Piedmont, Italy*

Ippoglosso con Crosta di Scalogni al Vino Rosso

Verdure e Salsa di Astice

Braised Halibut Filet, Red Wine Shallots, Lobster Sauce

Chive, Potato, Leek

*Stéphane Robert Domaine du Tunnel Cuvée Prestige, 2020**Saint-Péray, Rhône Valley, France*

Petto di Anatra, Budini di Fegato, Endivia al Frutto della Passione

Roasted Aged Breast of Duck, Parfait of Duck Liver

Endive Braised with Passion Fruit

*Fidora Monte Tabor Amarone della Valpolicella, 2015**Amarone della Valpolicella DOCG, Veneto, Italy*

Cioccolata, Albicocca, Fragole

Chocolate, Apricots, Strawberries

*La Giarretta Recioto della Valpolicella Classico, 2016**Recioto della Valpolicella DOCG Classico, Veneto, Italy*