

Created by: Debra C. Argen

Trattoria San Lawrenz

Dining at **Trattoria San Lawrenz** at the [Kempinski Hotel San Lawrenz](#) on Gozo in the Maltese Islands under a moonlit sky was the perfect introduction to this enchanting island.



Edward F. Nesta and I stayed at the hotel in June 2007 and spent our first evening dining at Trattoria San Lawrenz, which features Italian cuisine. Although the restaurant is beautiful with an arched wood ceiling, it was the first day of summer, and we wanted to dine al fresco on their pretty terrace embellished with potted palm trees and lit by black wrought iron lamps. Sitting on wood chairs with comfortable green printed cushions at a wood table draped with an artistically arranged beige linen runner, and accessorized with a rosemary plant in a terra cotta pot, and a votive candle, we watched the magic of the evening unfold as the sky deepened from twilight to night under a crescent moon.

The Maltese Islands are noted for their wines, so we decided to begin our Maltese wine experience by sampling the 2005 Marsovin Cabernet Sauvignon, which we enjoyed with warm herb bread accompanied by tapenade as we waited for our first course to arrive. Chev. Anthony Cassar founded A & G Cassar in 1919, and incorporated the family run [Marsovin](#) in 1956. Tasting notes for the 2005 Marsovin Cabernet Sauvignon, 12.5% alcohol, include an aromatic nose of rich black fruits, predominantly black currants and blackberries, with fruity and chocolate notes on the palate. Although young, this fruit forward wine was delicious and hinted at its aging potential.



Edward began with Carpaccio di Manzo su pan carsau, scaglia di grana e olio al tartufo (Beef Carpaccio served with typical Sardinian bread, Parmesan cheese, and drizzled with truffle oil). Francesco Colore, Executive Sous Chef beautifully presented this course on a large, round, puffed, crisp disk of Sardinian bread, layered with an abundance of carpaccio, topped with mixed greens and a profusion of shaved Parmesan cheese, and decadently drizzled with truffle oil.

Created by: Debra C. Argen



I began with a first course of Torre di Mozzarella con melazane e zucchini al pesto Genovese (Tian of Fried Aubergines, zucchini, and fresh mozzarella drizzled with pesto), served on a large cobalt dish with an impossibly tall tower of luscious layers of aubergine, zucchini, and mozzarella, drizzled with pesto, with cherry tomato halves and artistic balsamic reduction lines on the plate.



For his second course, Edward selected the Medaglione di Maiale in Crosta di Parmiggiano con Asparagi (Pan-fried Pork Medallions Encrusted with Parmesan Cheese and accompanied with Green Asparagus). This was another well-executed dish, with three succulent pork medallions topped with round Parmesan cheese crowns, accompanied with fresh green asparagus and roasted potatoes, and an appealing flavorful swirl of sauce.



I continued with Penne Rigate con Pomodori Secchi, Pesce Spada Affumicato E Olive (Penne Rigate with Sun-dried Tomatoes, Smoked Swordfish, and Black Olives). This was a plentiful dish served in a large art glass bowl redolent with sun-dried tomatoes, swordfish and olives, with a distinct delicious taste of the Mediterranean.

In lieu of dessert, our waiter, Mario, convinced us that we should sample Leila Digestive Liqueur, a Maltese digestive made from Mediterranean carob and aromatic herbs, that according to the label on the bottle, "Tastes good and does you good!" so we thought, why not. With 25% alcohol, and a delightful melding of carob and herbs, it was the perfect way to end our first evening in Gozo.

Created by: Debra C. Argen



We returned to the restaurant two nights later, once again dining under the inky black sky with a single shining star, and when time Mario suggested that Chef Francesco prepare us an antipasto as a starter, we readily agreed. When he returned to our table carrying a large platter with salamis, prosciutto, bruschetta made with fresh tomatoes from the hotel's organic garden, large chunks of Parmesan cheese, bleu cheese, red pepper cheese, and an assortment of Gozian cheeses, we knew that we could have been more than happy just enjoying the antipasto paired with a 2005 Marsovin Chardonnay, with fresh, crisp, citrus, young pear fruit on the nose and the palate.



However, since Gozo is known for its fresh fish, when Edward heard that Chef Francesco had created a lovely Grouper dish as the fish of the day, he definitely wanted to try it. He was more than pleased with his selection when the grouper arrived on a bed of pureed potatoes, accompanied with fennel cut like tagliatelle, fresh sautéed broccoli, black olives, cherry tomatoes, capers, with scallions and marjoram garnishes.

When I interviewed Chef Francesco and Chef Jonathan Spiteri of L'Ortolan and learned that they make their own pasta, I selected the ravioli with funghi in a cream sauce, which were deliciously tender ravioli in a mushroom sauce.



When it came to dessert time, Mario was very persuasive, and we decided to indulge in a white chocolate mousse tart with a chocolate crust, garnished with fresh mint and a delectable marzipan cookie on a dollop of Nutella, and drizzled with passion fruit sauce.

Sitting at a corner table overlooking the pool, we soaked up the ambience, the culture, and of course, the gastronomy and wine; another perfect ending to a wonderful day in the Maltese Islands.

Read **Chefs' Recipes** where **Executive Sous Chef Francesco Colore** takes time for an interview and shares some of his recipes in **English** and **Italian**.

Read other articles on the **Kempinski Hotel San Lawrenz** and the **Maltese Islands** in the **Destinations, Hotels and Resorts, Restaurants, Chefs' Recipes, Spas,** and [Adventures](#) sections.

Created by: Debra C. Argen



Trattoria San Lawrenz
Kempinski Hotel San Lawrenz
Triq ir-Rokon, San Lawrenz
SLZ1040 Gozo, Malta
Telephone: +356-2211-0000
Fax: +356-2211-6373
Email: reservations.sanlawrenz@kempinski.com
www.Kempinski-Gozo.com

For information on the **Maltese Islands**, please visit: **Malta Tourist Authority**, www.VisitMalta.com, and **Heritage Malta**, www.HeritageMalta.org.

© July 2007. Luxury Experience. www.LuxuryExperience.com All rights reserved.