

The Wine Company

Loud, brash and very, very Gurgaon

If you walked into The Wine Company, a recently-opened wine restaurant in Gurgaon, you would be forgiven if you thought you had walked into the wrong place! Wine restaurants conjure up images of white tablecloths, elegant refinement and the discreet murmur of the sommelier in your ear as he tips the wine into your Riedel crystal. Nothing could be further from the truth at The Wine Company. The restaurant is much more in the nature of a bistro or restobar, done up with exposed brickwork, minimalist wooden furniture, a live bar with blackboards displaying specials and an outdoor seating section. It is brash, it is loud, it is packed and it is very very Gurgaon.

Propping up one end of the newly opened and very happening Cyber Hub restaurant complex in Gurgaon, The Wine Company embodies a new concept that has caught on like wildfire with young working professionals who know very little about wine but are eager to learn. Its USP is the ability to buy a bottle of wine from a reasonably wide selection of domestic and international labels and then drink it along with your food, in much the same way you might select your own fish at a fish restaurant. Bottle prices are quite affordable though they have gone up a bit since the restaurant opened a few months ago. And they even have an alcohol menu so as to cover all bases and tastes, something which I found mystifying and don't personally agree with!

We seated ourselves at a high table near the window so that we could observe the crowd both inside and outside. The restaurant was packed to the gills and a DJ was playing soft rock in keeping with the ambience of the place. We ordered the signature Carari Roti which comes in the form of a giant bowl and tastes like a cross between a papad and a plain

dosa, totally delicious and leaves you craving for more. As an aperitif we ordered a glass of the Zardetto Prosecco from Veneto which was quite satisfying with a fresh fragrant aroma and a long and generous finish.

Next was a bruschetta platter and grilled pesto mushrooms stuffed with pine nuts and goat cheese. We paired that with a glass of Claar Cellars unoaked Chardonnay from Washington State - the perfectly balanced acidity made this a soft yet lively taste experience. And for good measure and moving back home to India and Pune, we also had a glass of Fratelli Chardonnay which proved to be a worthy competitor to its American counterpart.

For the main course, I decided on a juicy cut of filet mignon while my companion settled for the lighter char grilled tiger prawns. The wine we chose to finish off with was one of my favourite varietals, African Horizon Pinotage, which is a cross between Cinsault and Pinot Noir, a varietal unique to South Africa. The wine is a Sula Selection imported by Nashik Vintners. Deep red in colour and with an inviting aroma of vanilla and mocha, it did not disappoint with its soft, spicy tannins and a satisfying finish.

Overall The Wine Company is an excellent addition to Gurgaon's culinary range and well suited to its young and aspirational clientele. It is priced in the mid-range and affords an overall enjoyable experience catering to both those who drink wine and those who don't. Just don't go expecting a fine wine education, go for the wine and the company! ♦

— Ranjan Pal

The Wine Company,
Shop No 22 and 23,
DLF Cyber Hub, Gurgaon.
T +91 11 4949684

Personal Recommendation

What to Know

Monday night is Latin night for ladies with a deal on sangria and martinis and a salsa group that both performs and teaches

What to eat

The signature Carari Roti (₹150) is a must starter, not available anywhere else in the city

What to drink

Take your pick of domestic and imported wine available for purchase by the bottle

How much

₹2,000 per couple (without wine)

Photo Finish

Of Wine Galas & Black Tie Dinners

Taj Bengal, pulled out all the stops for a two-day wine festival in April. The first of its kind in Kolkata, "The International Vine and Food Experience" was both educational and enjoyable with a smorgasbord of gourmet food and wine experiences that included masterclasses and guided tastings of some of the best Indian wines along with international stars such as French Champagne, Canadian ice wines, Tuscan and Napa Valley reds and refreshing New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, to name but a few. The grand finale was a Champagne Drappier gala dinner at the imposing Crystal Hall of the Taj Bengal for Kolkata's bright and beautiful.

The mastermind behind it all was General Manager K Mohanchandran, ably assisted by guest Sommelier Keith W Edgar who curated the festival, visiting Master Chef Marc Thuet from Canada, Taj Bengal's Executive Chef Sujan Mukherjee and the entire Taj Bengal team.



General Manager K. Mohanchandran and Michel Drappier of Champagne Drappier



Canadian master chef Marc Thuet and his wife speak about the gourmet food he prepared



Pinky Kenworthy, Patricia Fernandez Ortiz and Samira Prime



Cecilia Oldne, Reva K Singh, Mickey Chenoy, Modhurima Sinha, Shernaz Chenoy and Arthy Muthanna Singh



A wine masterclass in progress at the Taj Bengal, Kolkata

TBBT and the Titanic

The Bangalore Black Tie club's last dinner of the season replicated the 10-course Escoffier meal served to first class passengers when the Titanic was struck by an iceberg in April, almost to the day, 102 years ago. The good ship Oberoi, as Stanley Pinto puts it, outdid itself with the same Escoffier menu. "The ten courses were all uniformly, brilliantly cooked and plated, the wines magnificently paired and the service impeccable."



Arjun & Saroj Ray and Jeff West



Dev & Uma Naganand, Indu Karumbayā and Rita West



Zerina Burns and Aloma Lobo



Stanley Pinto pictured with the ice sculpture of the Titanic



Rolf Frei, Sneha Rao and Chetan Kamani



Iqbal Sultan, Stanley Pinto and Shawqi Sultan