

A 16

Reviewed by Joshua Ridless

As you enter A 16, named for Autostrada 16, a road that stretches from Naples to Tavari, you're greeted by subtle greenery, rich chocolate wood, and a dozen or so coveted high-back chairs situated at the Italian marble bar and bay windows that look out onto Chestnut Street (a great perch for people watching). A colorful floor-to-ceiling chalkboard displays the pride of A 16, its wide selection of wines.

The concept for the establishment was born from a trip to the Campania region of Italy, where co-owner Shelley Lindgren fell in love with the region's food and wine. Lindgren, local entertainment attorney Victoria Libin, and chef Nate Appleman teamed up to ensure that the grapes complemented the southern Italian cuisine.

The Campania region, dubbed *oenetria* or *land of wine*, by the ancient Greeks, has a long history of great wines. First up, Lindgren poured a glass of Clelia Romano, Fiano di Avellino, 2005—a dry white, with hints of honey, almonds, and evergreen and a smokiness from the still-present volcanic soil of the Mount Vesuvius eruption, which destroyed Pompeii in 79 A.D., literally creating a rich history in the wine itself.

We also tasted the Cantine del Taburno, Falanghina, 2005—a light, crisp, aromatic wine with hints of pear and mango; the Benito Ferrara, Greco di Tufo, 2005, a 70-year-old vine Greco, grown from limestone “Tufaceous” soil, also found in the Loire Valley in Sancerre and Chablis—with rich stone fruits like white peaches, nectarines, and a dry finish; and the I Favati, Taurasi, 2004—red currants, with red fruits like plum and cherry, medium tannins.

A 16's knowledgeable staff serves forty wines by the glass and half-bottle carafes (assuring that no bottle stays open for too long), predominantly priced between \$8 and \$14 per glass. The selections change often with some staples of Campania there to stay. Some of the varietals of Campania include Falanghina, Fiano, Greco (whites), Casavecchia, Aglianico, and Piediroso (red).

Best of all, A 16 is not just a wine bar, it's also a restaurant—which means you can pair your grape of choice with any of the establishment's delicious southern Italian dishes while enjoying a wine bar experience.

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