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La Ponca Pairs Its 2020 Schioppettino With an Ischia Pizza Built Around Pepper

Lisola Restaurant’s new pie uses mushrooms, guanciale and toasted peppers to match the Friulian red’s spice and tannins

Thursday, November 26, 2026



La Ponca, a winery in Scriò, Dolegna del Collio, and Lisola Restaurant in Forio on the island of Ischia have introduced a new food-and-wine pairing built around the producer’s 2020 Schioppettino and a pizza created by pizzaiolo Ivano Veccia.

The collaboration was announced on Thursday, November 26, and links two distinct Italian regional traditions: the wine culture of Friuli’s Collio area and the pizza heritage of Campania. The project centers on a red wine from northeastern Italy and a pizza designed to match its structure and spice profile.

According to La Ponca, the 2020 Schioppettino has a ruby-red color with violet tones and aromas of woodland berries, blackberry, raspberry and pepper. The winery said the wine has a warm palate, balanced tannins and a finish that returns to ripe fruit and pepper notes. Those characteristics shaped the pairing with Veccia’s new pizza, which was developed to echo the wine’s spice and stand up to its tannic structure.

The pizza features a Parmesan cream base, fior di latte mozzarella and oven-dried tomatoes, with sautéed porcini and cardoncelli mushrooms. After baking, it is finished with crispy black Casertano pork guanciale, thyme, basil and a blend of three toasted peppers. The use of pepper is central to the concept, creating a direct link to the defining aromatic note that La Ponca says is a signature of its Schioppettino.

The pairing also reflects Lisola’s effort to position pizza within a broader fine-dining setting. The restaurant was created by chef Nino Di Costanzo of Daní Maison in Ischia, Veccia and entrepreneur Federico de Majo. Veccia, who is from Ischia, has built a national reputation for a contemporary interpretation of Neapolitan pizza that combines traditional references with a more structured tasting approach.

That approach has recently drawn attention from Gambero Rosso, one of Italy’s main food and wine guides. Lisola Restaurant received the Tre Spicchi designation in the Pizzerie d’Italia 2027 guide, the publication’s highest recognition for pizzerias, and also received the special award for best tasting menus. The recognition places Lisola among the more closely watched names in Italy’s evolving pizza scene, where chefs and pizzaioli increasingly present pizza as part of a curated gastronomic experience rather than only as an informal staple.

For La Ponca, the collaboration offers a different context for a wine that is often presented through more traditional pairings. The winery described the project as a way to show how Schioppettino can work beyond conventional meat-based or regional combinations and can instead engage with another strong culinary identity. In this case, the goal is not to blend the two traditions into something new, but to keep each one recognizable while allowing the wine and pizza to reinforce each other.

The partnership also highlights how regional Italian producers are using cross-territory collaborations to reach diners outside their home areas. Collio, known for its winemaking, and Ischia, long associated with southern coastal cooking and hospitality, sit at opposite ends of the country. By pairing a Friulian red with a pizza rooted in Campanian tradition, the producers are betting that diners will respond to combinations that are still deeply local in identity but broader in cultural framing.

At the center of the project is a straightforward tasting logic. The wine’s peppery note is matched by the pizza’s toasted peppers, while the guanciale and mushrooms add fat and depth that can absorb tannin and support the wine’s body. The Parmesan cream and mozzarella soften the sharper edges of the pairing, and the herbs add freshness. The result, as presented by the winery and restaurant, is meant to show that pizza can serve as a serious platform for wine pairing, including with structured reds that are not usually the first choice in that setting.