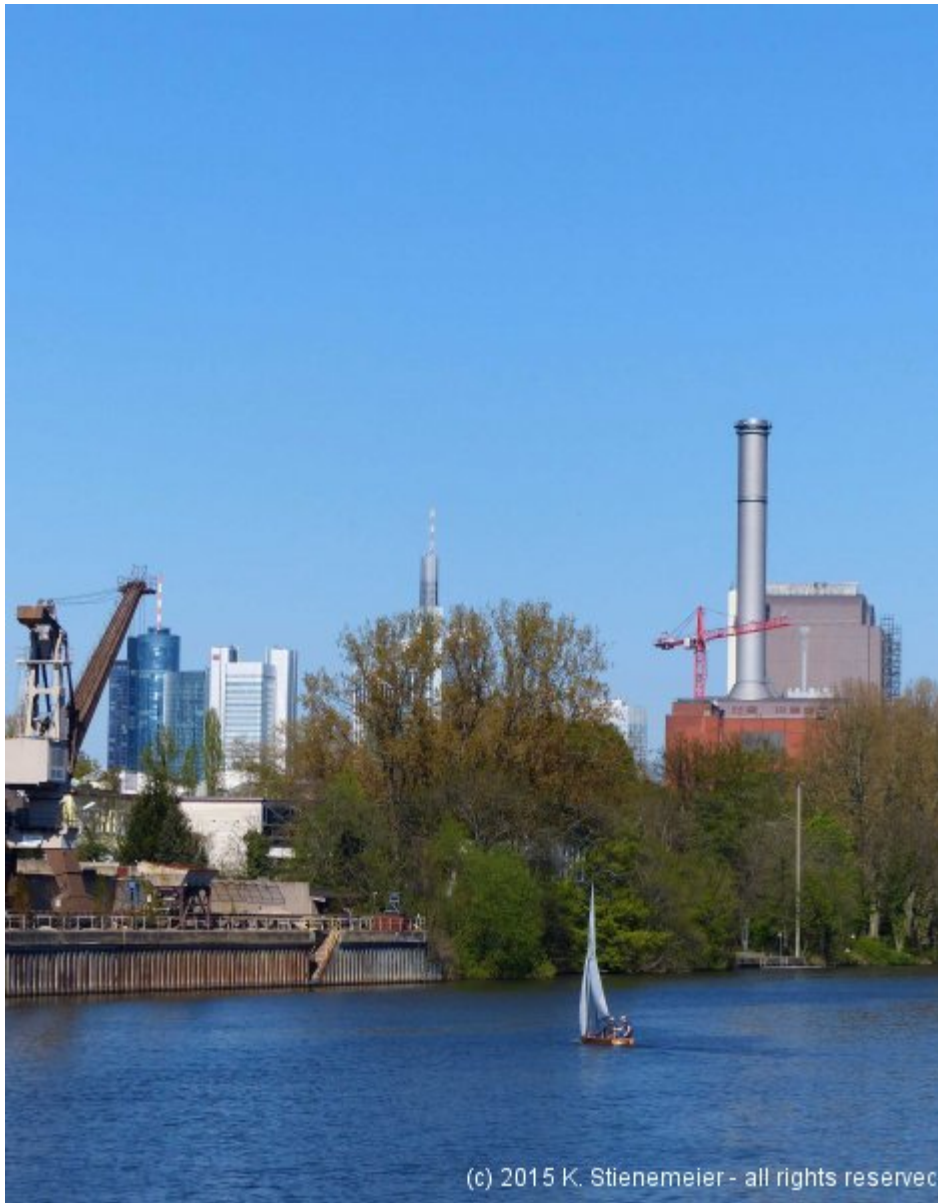


Exquisite Italian Lunch Floating Down the River Main

Karin Stienemeier

To really appreciate the unusual architecture mix that **Frankfurt am Main** has to offer, one should observe it from the **River Main** which runs through the city.





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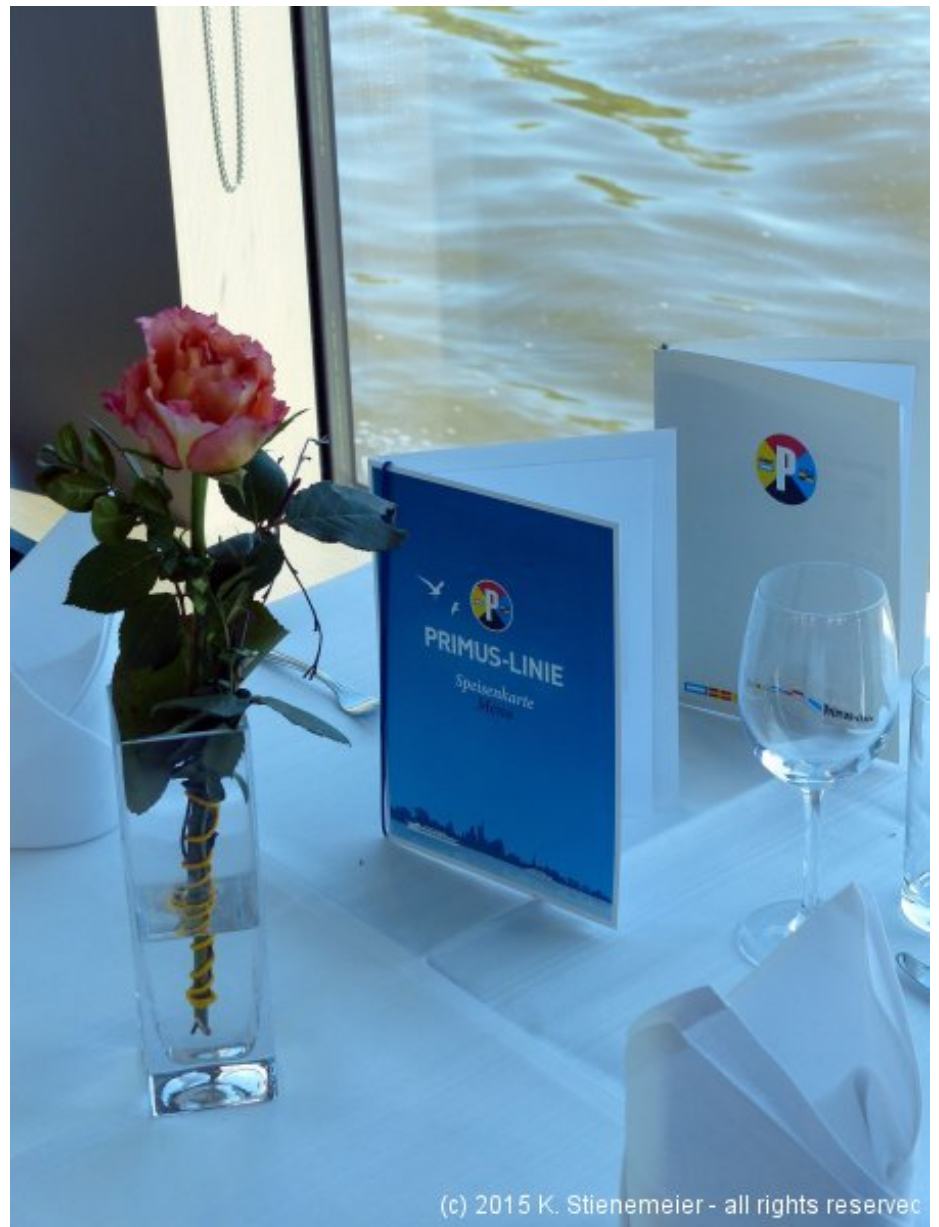
There is no better way to do that than to take a **river cruise** with the **Primus Line**. This traditional Frankfurt company which was established in 1880 by the **Nauheimer Family** primarily to transport workers across the city, has reached new and innovative heights.



Several years ago, **Dr. Marie Nauheimer**, joined her father **Anton Nauheimer** in running the company and expanding it to include more modern concepts such as the cooperation with Michelin Star cook **Carmelo Greco**, who serves a four-course **Italian gourmet menu** each year on board of the restaurant and party ship '**Maria Sibylla Merian**', in operation since 2012, to mark the opening of the **Primus Linie's** summer season.

Marie was on board this Sunday to personally greet guests, ensure the desired quality of the cruise and answer guests' questions. She is easily approachable and very knowledgeable on all aspects of the business. It is a pleasure to see her in unpretentious action and is the perfect hostess and manager to continue the quality of the Nauheimer family business.

Chef Carmelo Greco, who owns and runs his own **restaurant in Frankfurt Sachsenhausen**, brings along his kitchen and service crew to join the ship's crew in creating a unique cruise and dining experience. Carmelo, a somewhat shy native Sicilian, raves about the wonderfully sized and equipped kitchen on board the Maria Sibylla Merian, smiling when he tells us it is larger than his restaurant kitchen.



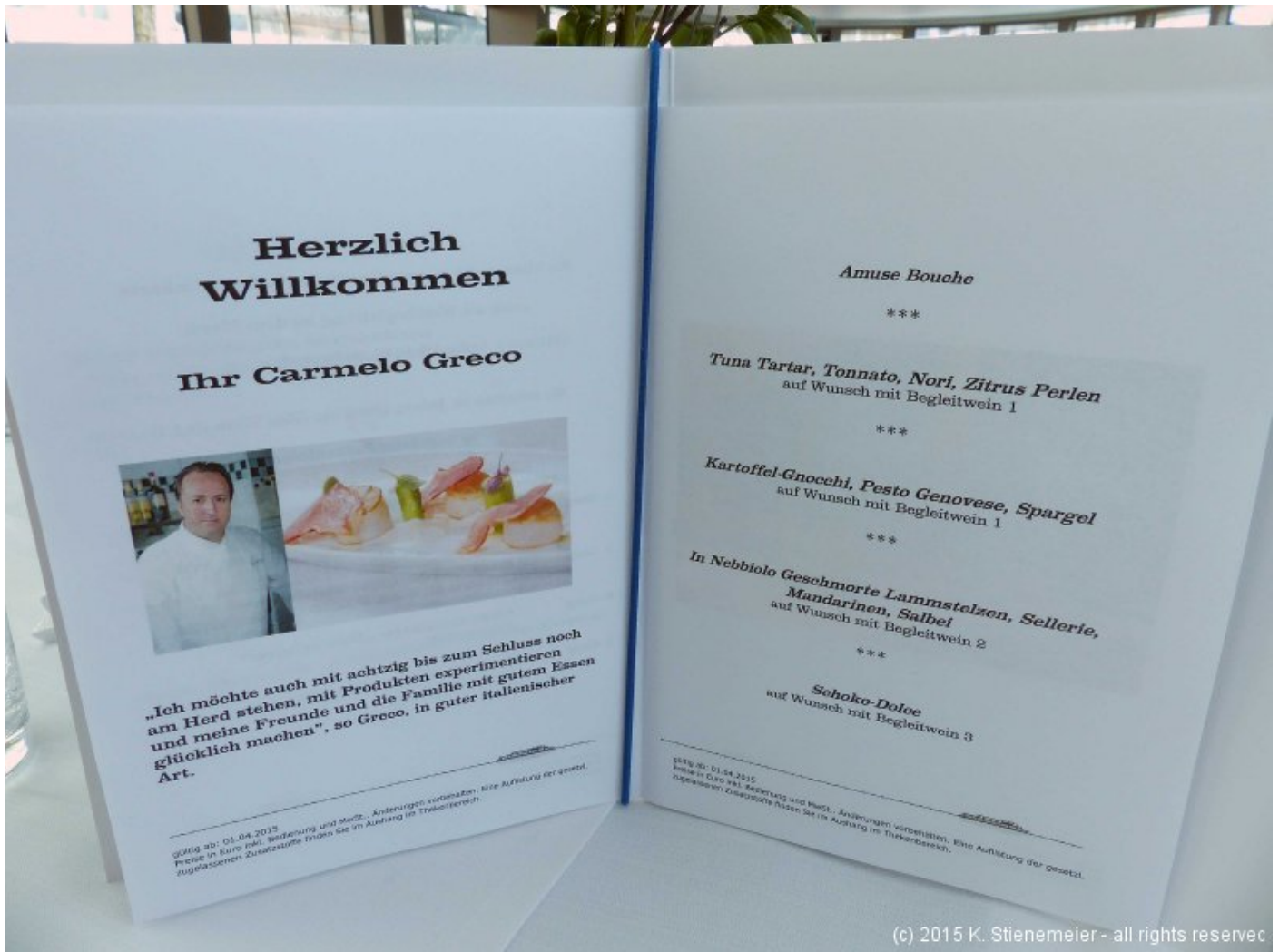
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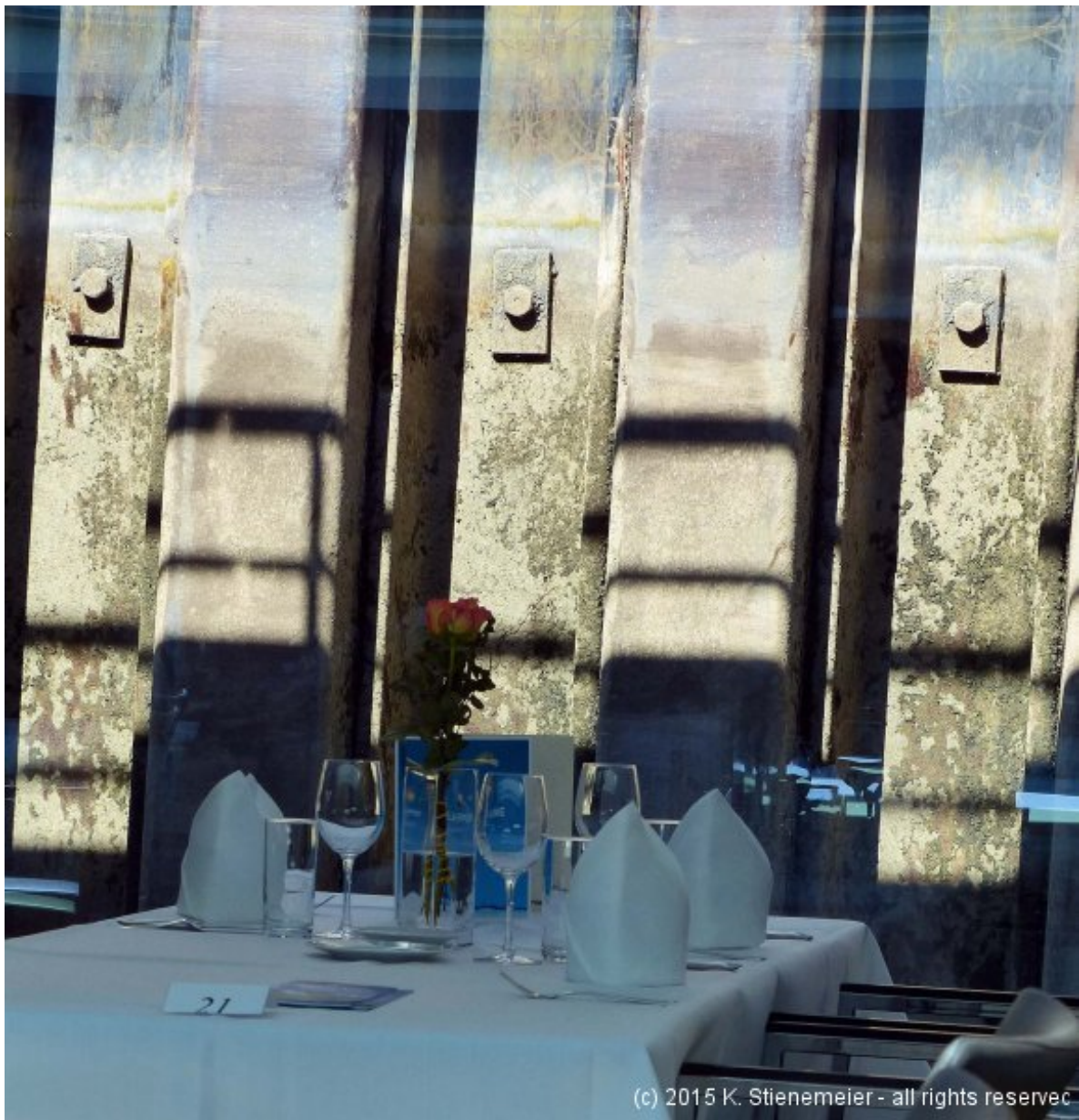


Carmelo has been in gastronomy since learning from Lidia Vanzino Alciati, the recently deceased 80 years old grand dame of Piemontesian culinary art, he has held a **Michelin star** and 17 points in **Gault&Millau** since 1996, his restaurant is among the **top 5 best Italian restaurants** in Germany.



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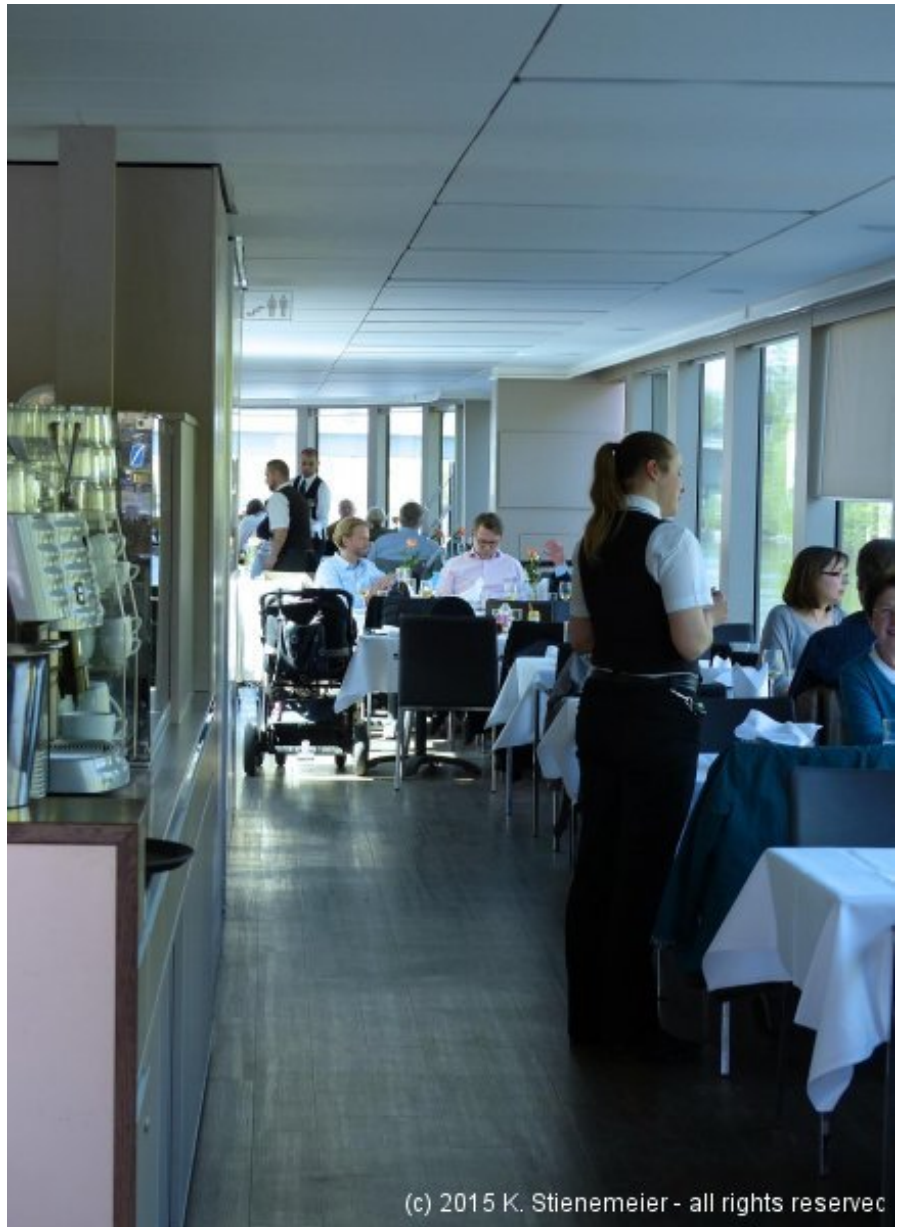
The ship, **Maria Sibylla Merian**, was especially built for river dining and party pleasure, has a sleek but comfortable interior design, with large panorama windows in the dining area and an outside deck with full bar facilities on top. Soothing jazz background music and good insulation lets you speak with your dining guests in a normal ton of voice, without being disturbed by the conversations at other tables.



The tables are widely spaced for comfort and set with lovely linen, glassware and dishes, and simple but creative flower arrangements. No detail is left to chance, all is well organized, prepared and the quality and friendliness of the service personnel is impeccable. Each course is announced and explained individually at each table; a delight for all lovers of great cuisine. **Wines are matched and paired to the menu course**; the prices for further beverages are similar to other restaurants and reasonably priced.

Carmelo Greco's menu for this day presented the following courses:

Amuse Bouche



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Crème brûlée of foie gras served in fresh egg shells with strawberry pearls

Deliciously creamy and well paired with the fruit pearls, the foie gras taste is excellent without being overpowering, the presentation in the eggshell was lovely.

Paired with a **2013 Verdicchio Superiore „Terre die San Paolo“ Piersanti** – dry white wine with a note of rhubarb and strawberry.

1st Course

Tuna Tatar, Tonnato, Nori, Lemon Pearls



Very fresh chopped tuna and ginger, lightly seasoned sits on a bed of classically delicious tonnato sauce, slightly bitter cress covers the tuna and a puffed nori chip sits elegantly on top. This is a well balanced dish with surprisingly tasty blends of flavor.

This course was also paired with the **2013 Verdicchio Superiore „Terre die San Paolo“ Piersanti**, as with the amuse bouche a good complimentary choice.

2nd Course

Potato Gnocchi, Pesto Genovese, White Asparagus

An amusing idea that worked well and combined classic Italian cuisine components in a new way.

This course was also paired with the **2013 Verdicchio Superiore „Terre die San Paolo“ Piersanti**, a light red might have been nice here too.

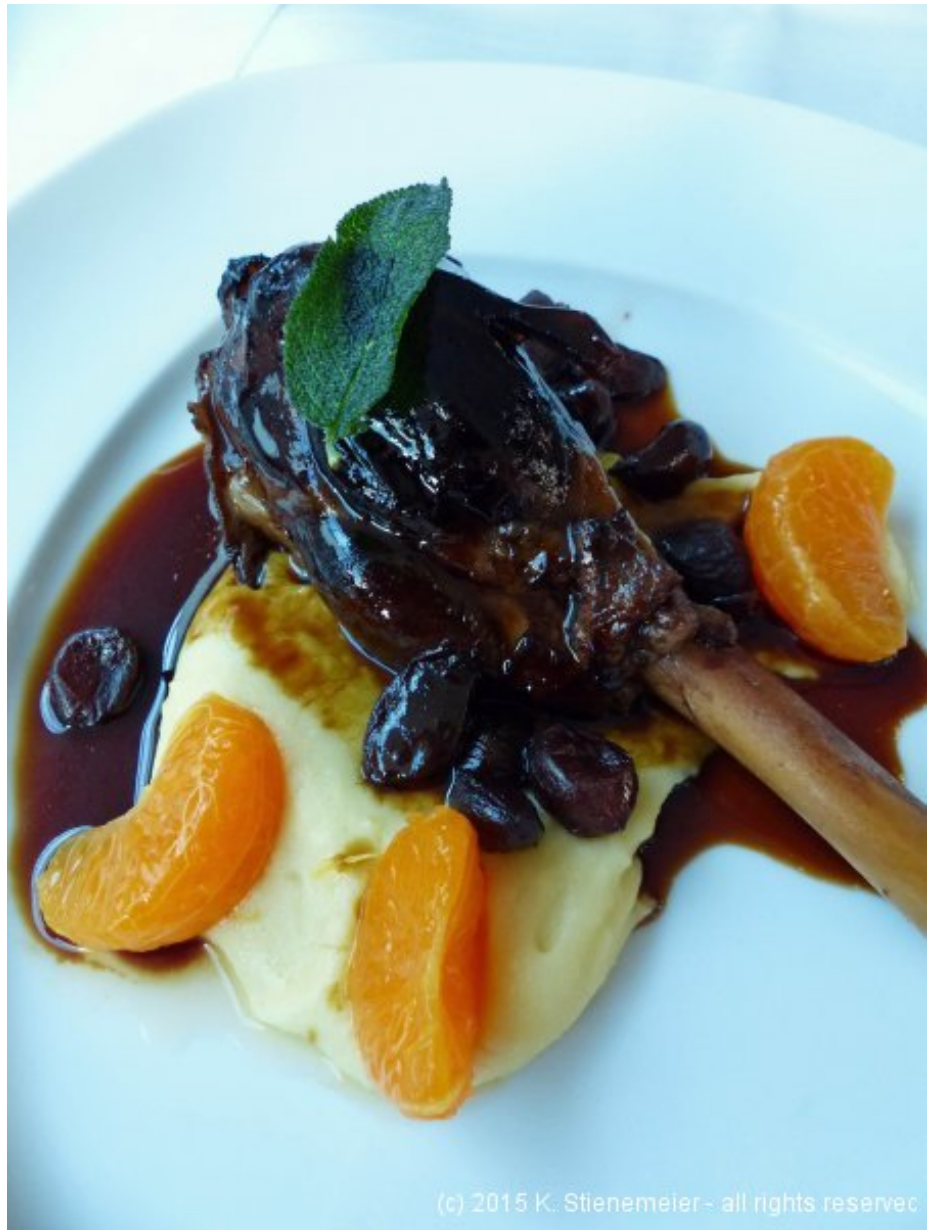
3rd Course

Lamb shanks braised in Nebbiolo, Celery Mash, Mandarines, Pearl Onions and Sage

The lamb shanks were so tender the meat easily separated from the bone, they were lean and the reduction and sauce a dream.



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The reduction was based on the lamb jus and tiny onions stewed in **Nebbiolo wine** from the Piedmont region of Italy. Nebbiolo a lightly-colored red wine can be highly tannic in youth with scents of tar and roses. When aged, the wine take on a characteristic brick-orange hue at the rim of the glass and matures to reveal other aromas and flavors such as violets, tar, wild herbs, cherries, raspberries, truffles, tobacco, and prunes.*

The shanks were bedded on celeriac puree and garnished with mandarines, fried sage leaves and the awesome onions and sauce.

Non-meat eaters were offered a fish or vegetarian course, which were equally delicious.



A 2008 Dolcetto „Briccolero“ Chionetti, from the Monferrato hills of northwestern Italy was served with this course a bold red soft-styled, fruity wine a deep ruby color and low acidity, hence is the source of the variety’s name; *Dolcetto* means “little sweet one”. A typical Dolcetto offering dark, gently spicy aromas with earthy undertones of almonds or walnuts, it paired perfectly with the lamb shanks.

Dessert

Chocolate Dolce



Chocolate Dolce, was the simple title for this delightful final course. Imagine a hollow **cupcake of chocolate mousse**, feather-lightly crunchy on the outside of the cake to hold the batter of chocolate mousse in form, then filled with chopped stewed and fresh cherries, topped with freshly-made caramel ice cream and served with fresh fruit.

It was an original and delicious combination that was perfectly executed and is a **signature dish at Carmelo Greco's restaurant**.

It was paired with a **2014 Moscato "Fiordaliso" Albino Rocca**, a semi-sweet, lightly sparkling, low-alcohol wine from Piedmont. The wine is made from Moscato grapes grown in vineyards near the town of Asti and characterized by elegant floral aromas and notes of peach, apricot and fresh grape juice.*

I had personally never before had the pleasure of dining in **Carmelo Greco's restaurant** but I am now a fan of his fresh approach to both classic dishes and innovative techniques.

The [ship left the dock at Frankfurt's well-known Eisener Steg](#) at 1 pm, proceeding East and passing the Offenbach Sluice and then turning around to again pass Frankfurt and on to Niederrad on the West side of Frankfurt, and redock at 4:30 pm. The **price** of an adult ticket for the meal and cruise was 89 € per person, the wine pairing was an additional 18,40 € all in all a very acceptable price-quality ratio. Other beverages could be ordered a la carte. Regular Sunday brunch cruises are 37 € per adult and 18.50 € for kids up to age 12.

The day couldn't have been more perfect, bright sunshine, a light breeze, the outdoor cafes, embankments, parks and paths were packed with people out enjoying a beautifully warm Spring Sunday.







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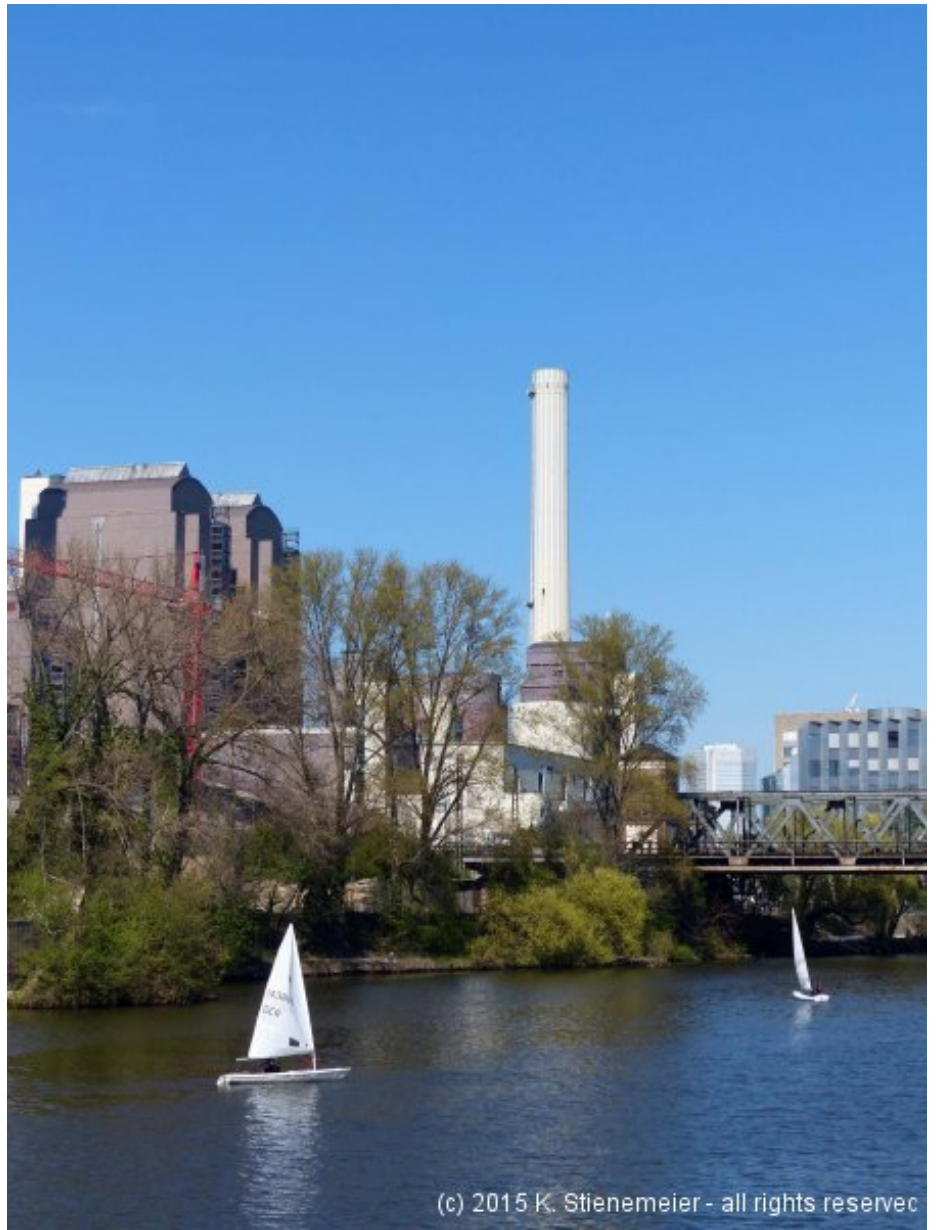


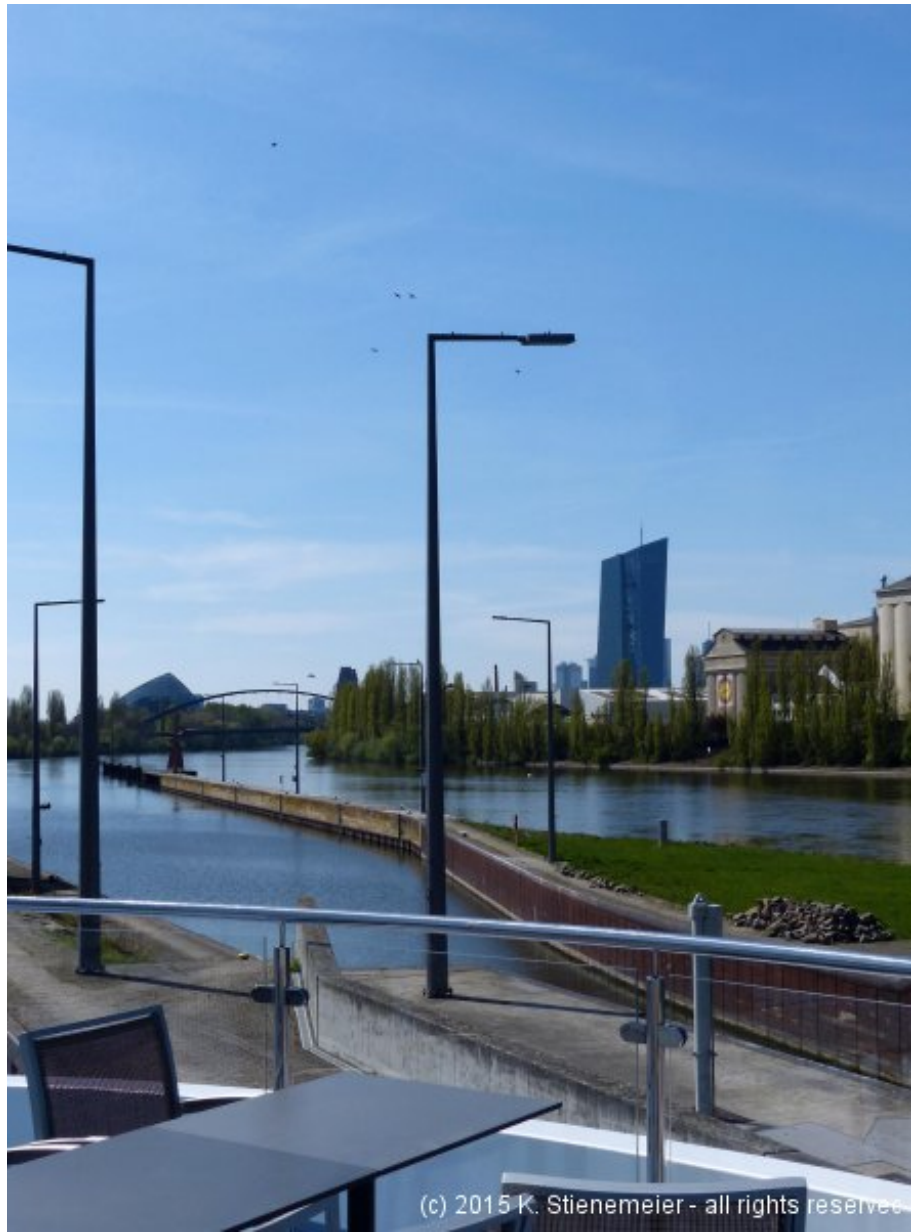
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Industrial lots with cranes and sand, former power plants transformed into lofts and event locations, skyscrapers and recently built dock housing in both the West and Eastern sides of Frankfurt amidst the high rises of the banking district and the new European Central Bank building make for a stunning backdrop.

Discover the [Primus Linie's large variety of quality excursions](#) and choose from sightseeing, river dining, brunch cruises, firework highlight cruises or book your personal charter event, both on the Main and Rhine river throughout the year and see why their claim is well deserved: ***Primus Linie: 365 days of variety on Main and Rhine!***





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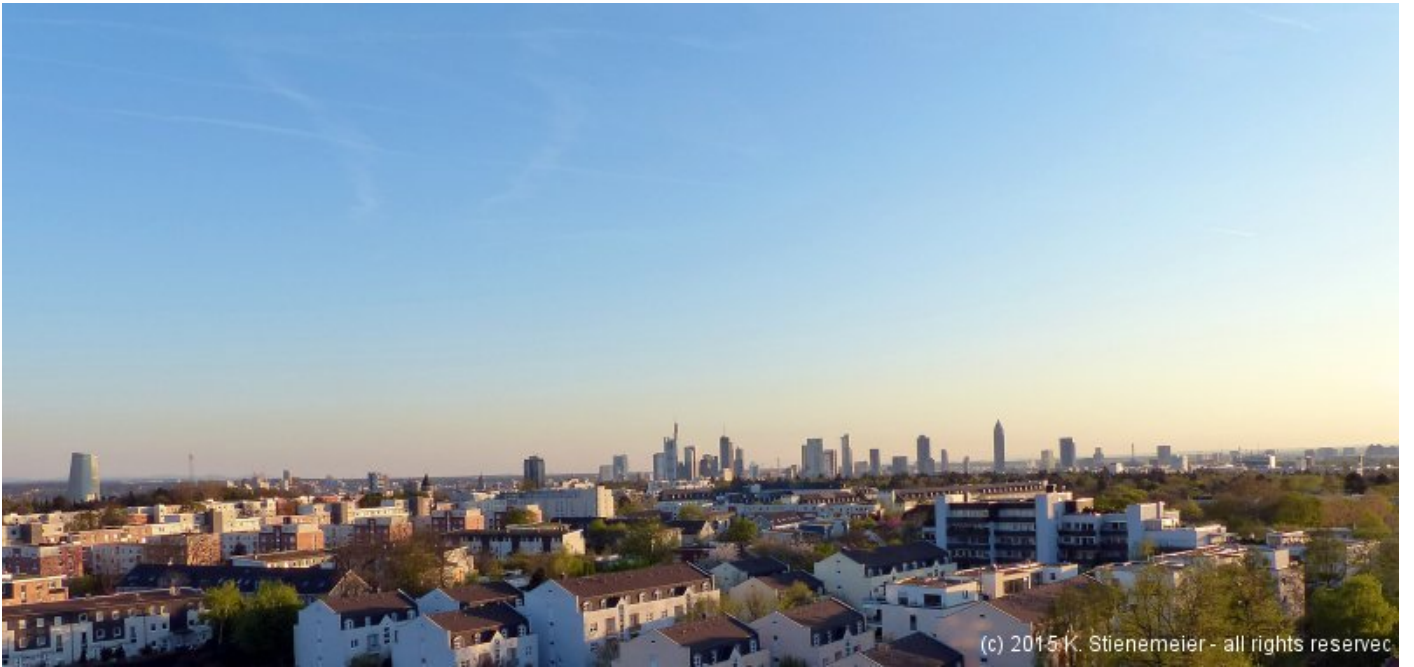
**Wine descriptions courtesy of [Wine-Searcher](#).*

Disclaimer: I was a guest of [Gourmet Connection](#) for this event. I received no further remuneration or requests for review than this exquisite meal and delightful excursion. All opinions are mine.



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For contrast here is a land view taken that same evening from my 10th floor balcony.



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