

Montserrat with husband Bernabe Marti, outside their home in Gerona (above). At a private mass (below), they gave thanks for 25 years of happy married life, the result of "true, sincere love"

WORLD-FAMOUS SOPRANO

MONTSERRAT CABALLE

CELEBRATES HER SILVER WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Montserrat Caballe and her husband Bernabe Marti decided to make their Silver Wedding anniversary a strictly family affair at the dinner they gave on their lovely farm in Gerona, one of Spain's greenest provinces.

Montserrat looked elegant in a black and white gown, and proudly showed everyone the superb diamond and sapphire ring her husband gave her to mark this significant stage of their lives together.

Bernabe and Montserrat were married 25 years ago in the Monastery of Montserrat named, like the singer, after the revered Virgen of Montserrat. Since then, they have worked hard to build a stable and loving relationship, which has weathered the long separations thrust upon them by Montserrat's demanding profession.





The couple have two children, Bernabe, 22, and Montsita, 17, and both are extremely proud of their parents.

As young Montsita, short for Montserrat, told us, "I admire the way they love each other and how delicately they treat each other. Theirs is definitely a very unusual marriage nowadays."

We spoke to the singer and her husband shortly before dinner. Montserrat, what is marriage to

you? "Marriage for me is the result of a true and sincere love, not of an illusion nor of a simple attraction. I believe my husband is very much in love with me, at least as much as I am with him, otherwise he wouldn't have been able to put up with me these 25 years. As you can see, I'm not a sylph, not a perfect woman by any means. And it's this mutual love that can help iron out the obstacles that arise in marriage. Mutual understanding becomes more alive, more real, with the years." Bernabe adds, 'We're such a

close family because we've always said yes to Montserrat! No, joking apart, I have a marvellous wife in a very tough profession. But thanks to her great humanity, we've overcome the difficulties. Now, after 25 years of marriage, I confess that I would marry her again, even though I'm aware of our differences. Maybe the secret of our happiness is that we always agree on the big things."

Montserrat, what advice would you defects. give to young couples today?

I learnt this from my hus-stand each other and they made an band and luckily, he happens to love me effort to bring together those "First, I would advise them not to with all of mine ..." people they loved who had grown

question themselves about the Did you inherit anything from your apart because of their differences. other person, because that means parents that you'd like to pass on to your They taught me how to gain strength from unity." they're not really in love. Secondly, children?

they must realise they have to "Yes, their mutual understanding and accept the other person as a whole, their closeness. They always made a including the defects. We all have point of trying to under-

INTERVIEW: EUSEBIO FERRER PHOTOS: CARRERO/SCORPIO

The celebrations were a strictly family affair. The couple cut their anniversary cake (above). With their children, both named after them (below). From left to right: son Bernabe and his fiancee Mirella and (far right) daughter Montsita

