



Food & Wine

ASIA PACIFIC ZONE NEWSLETTER

APZ REGIONAL FESTIVAL TO BE HELD IN SYDNEY 22-26 OCTOBER 2010

By: Andrew Fegent
Chair, APZ Festival 2010
Sydney, Australia

The organizers of the APZ 2010 Super Sydney Festival have received more requests to attend than they have places from non-APZ members of the IWFS. The latter have been so keen that they have tracked down the organizers and requested places, although the event is yet to be released to APZ members.

Subscriptions for the Sydney 2010 Asia Pacific Zone festival shall open to APZ members when the event is formally launched this month.

APZ members should have their brochures by the end of September. Please respond with your subscription quickly as it is anticipated that the APZ will release all remaining places in late October to non-APZ members at large. All places are expected to be filled within a week. Act quickly to avoid disappointment. Attendance acceptances shall be on the basis of the date and time of receipt of subscription.

The venue hotel, The Marriot Sydney Harbour, has allocated rooms to the Festival, all with Opera House views. The hotel is located within 600 meters of ten restaurants holding one or more Sydney Morning Herald 2009 Hats, and is close to the historical Rocks area with good bars and pubs.

As one of the most multicultural cities in the world, Sydney has an advanced food and wine culture which we know is your passion. Those who attend will be lucky enough to gain access to venues the public rarely gets to visit. Most venues have magnificent harbour vistas.

The event is designed to give maximum access to the magnificent Sydney Harbour and beaches, while allowing guests to try food prepared by our very best chefs and caterers. If you arise early enough, the world-class Sydney Fish Markets can be visited. You might also have brunch at the beachfront Pilu Restaurant where the chef and owner Giovanni Pilu--- a man passionate about authentic Sardinian Italian cooking, with its unique flavours---will stage a special event for the Society. Dine under the sensuously curved vaulted ceiling of a shell of the Sydney Opera House designed by Jorn Utzo, in the Opera House-sited Bennelong, with a menu created by the reknowned Chef Guillaume Brahimi.



An Australian 12-course Yum Cha dinner specifically created for us can be enjoyed, utilizing Australian produce and spices not often seen outside of Australia. The event will be held at a venue amongst the most exclusive homes in Sydney with fabulous Harbour lights views.



The dinner will be cooked by the 2008 winners of one of the prestigious NSW Restaurant and Catering awards winners.

The Andre Simon Lecture, the first time the prestigious event will ever have been staged in the Asia Pacific Zone, will also be given at the event.

Further, delegates will visit the picturesque Hunter Valley and enjoy a private wine tasting at Tyrell's Winery, the home of their Lovedale Semillon regarded by some as the best of this variety in the world. They will also tour McWilliams Winery, home of the famous Maurice O'Shea Shiraz (rated by James Halliday above Grange in 2005).

Delegates will also visit the Margan Family Winery in the Brokenback Rang, at Broke in the Hunter Valley. This is a truly Australian Bush classic location. A fabulous lunch and a tasting of the wines of a less-known Hunter wine maker, who makes possibly some of the best wines from among the new generation of Hunter wine makers, await attendees.

A cruise of Sydney Harbour will feature a gastronomic Aussie BBQ end onboard wine tasting.



Finally, a tasting of over 40 Australian wines selected by our Wine Committee is scheduled.

Delegates will be given an opportunity to experience Sydney. Some may wish to indulge in Bridge Walk, or take in an opera or symphony at the Opera House. Others may opt for a show at the Sydney Theatre Company, with supper at the award winning Wharf Restaurant, or visit The NSW Art Gallery with its award winning Café. Naturally, attendees can simply just shop or relax.

Asia-Pacific Zone To Hold 2009 Annual General Membership Meeting in Cebu

Brief History

Cebu is a tourist destination, a historical site and a haven for scuba diving and other water sports. Cebu is richly endowed with some of the best white sand beaches and world-renowned diving and snorkeling spots around, blessed by year-round summer weather. The name Cebu generally refers to the city itself and other cities or islands surrounding it including Mactan island.



Cebu Province

Ferdinand Magellan, the Portuguese explorer who sailed for the Crown of Spain, was the first to have circumnavigated the world after reaching the Philippines via the Pacific Ocean on March 16, 1521. Magellan died in a battle against native forces led by a Mactan island chieftain, Lapu-Lapu, on April 27, 1521 after which the expedition fled without his body.

The Spaniards returned 44 years later in 1565 and razed the village of Cebu's then chieftain. They established their first settlement, originally named Zubu, or Sugbo, but renamed "Villa del Santissimo Nombre de Jesus" (Town of the most Holy Name of Jesus). They called their new settlement Felipe after their king and proceeded to colonize and proselytize the rest of the country. Spain was defeated in battle by America in 1898 and ceded the Philippines to the United States in the Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898.

As the seat of early Spanish colonial administration, Cebu has the oldest and smallest fort in the country, Fort San Pedro And as the center of early Filipino Christianization, it has the oldest church, Basilica de Santo Niño. It also has the oldest school, Universidad de San Carlos (formerly called Colegio de San Ildefonso), established by the Jesuits in 1595, and the oldest street, Calle Colon, the main street in the heart of downtown Cebu. Cebu antedates Manila by seven years as the Philippines' oldest city.

Before the Spaniards came, trade with the Chinese, Siamese and Arabs was already flourishing in Cebu. Cebu continues to prosper today as a center of commerce, second only to Manila, earning for itself the title, "Queen City of the South."



The Venue



Hilton Cebu Resort and Spa

Hilton Cebu Resort and Spa is nestled on a private beach in Mactan Island, Cebu. The resort comprises 246 guestrooms, most with ocean views including one and two bedroom spa suites, each with their own Jacuzzi. IWFS festival participants are offered an automatic upgrade to a spa suite.

The resort is located ten minutes from Mactan International Airport and thirty minutes from cosmopolitan Cebu City with its vibrant nightlife, extensive shopping and 24-hour casinos.

Schedule of Activities

Day 1 Friday, November 6, 2009

3:00pm - 7:00pm Arrival and registration. Lobby, Hilton Cebu Resort & Spa

6:00pm - 6:30pm Transfer to Mactan Shangri-la Island Resort

6:30pm - 7:30pm Champagne Reception Aqua, Mactan Shangri-La Island Resort

7:30pm - 10:30pm Welcome Dinner and "Barrio Fiesta" Mactan Shangri-La Island Resort

Within the Filipino cultural context, a "Barrio Fiesta" is an annual neighborhood party that brings family, friends and neighbors together in celebrating Filipino culture and tradition. Usually timed with the feast day of the community's patron saint, a "Barrio Fiesta" features a sumptuous array of Filipino dishes, including the roasted suckling pig, ("lechon"), as well as a performance of traditional Filipino dances.

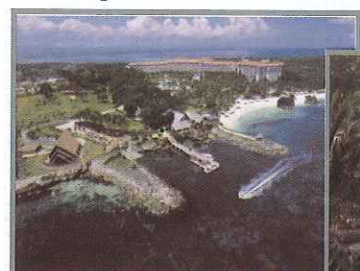
10:30pm - 12:00am Buses on standby to shuttle guests to Hilton Cebu

Day 2 Saturday, November 7, 2009

10:00am - 12:30pm Annual General Membership Meeting Ballroom 1, Hilton Cebu Resort & Spa.

Optional Tour (for non-participants in the AGM):

Visit two of Cebu's top fashion jewelry designers and manufacturers, and a celebrated furniture designer.



Mactan Shangri-la Island Resort

12:00pm - 12:30pm Post-meeting cocktails

12:30pm - 1:15pm Bus to downtown Cebu City

1:30pm - 3:00pm Typical Cebuano buffet lunch

3:00pm - 6:00pm Optional Tour (for participants and non participants):

Visit the showrooms of three of Cebu's most celebrated furniture designers and manufacturers, starting with a brief stop-over at Magellan's Cross. Drive by the 16th century Basilica of the Holy Infant Jesus.

A separate half-day tour can be arranged to focus on the following:

Magellan's Cross Planted on April 21, 1521 by Ferdinand Magellan where the first Christian Filipinos, Rajah Humabon and Queen Juana and about 400 followers were baptized.

Basilica Minore del Santo Niño The church was built in 1565 where the image of the Santo Niño was found unblemished after a fire ordered by the Spanish conquistador. Rebuilt in 1602, it was rehabilitated in 1740.

The Image of Santo Niño A gift given by Magellan to Raja Humabon's wife as a baptismal gift on April 21, 1521 The 488-year old image is considered as the oldest religious relic in the Philippines.



Sinulog Festival

A religious festival in honor of the image of the Santo Niño (“Sinulog”) is held every third Sunday of January. The festival also commemorates the arrival of Magellan and his friendship with Humabon, a symbol of the bond between Spain and the Cebuanos

Fort San Pedro The smallest, oldest tri-bastion fort in the country. Construction of the fort by the Spanish commenced on may 8, 1565. The fort was used later as an army barracks during the American occupation.

Chapel of the Last Supper This treasured relic, life sized carvings of Christ and his Twelve Apostles gathered at the Last Supper, is found in the church of Mandaue City which was built in 1601.

Magellan's Marker Erected in 1866 to mark the spot where the Magellan died.

Lapu-Lapu Monument The hero of the Battle of Mactan holds a bolo in one hand and a pestle on the other. The monument is built over the site where the battle took place.

4:00pm - 6:00pm For those who are at the hotel after lunch, coffee, “sikwate” (a local term for a chocolate drink made from 100% premium cacao beans), and Cebuano sweets are available at the open lobby of Hilton Cebu.

7:30pm - 10:30pm **Gala Dinner at the Ballroom of Hilton Cebu Resort & Spa**

Day 3 Sunday, November 8, 2009

7:00am - 11:00am Breakfast at leisure.
Enjoy beach or spa, or an early round of golf.

11:00am - 2:00pm Lunch at a nearby island, hosted by Manny Osmeña, Chairman of Hilton Cebu, or in the hotel depending on the weather.

2:30pm - 7:00pm Departures / Optional tours

7:00pm - 11:00pm Dinner for guests staying overnight.

Post-Festival Optional Tours

Boracay Island, Aklan (check out Shangri-la's Boracay Resort and Spa); Bohol Island; El Nido, Palawan; Carcar City; Kawasan Falls, Panglao Island, Bohol; Bantayan Island; City of Manila.

Please check our website (www.iwfs.ph) for more details including form for Confirmation of Participation.



Shangri-la Boracay Resort and Spa

Posthumous Silver Andre Simon Medal Awarded to Dr. Max Lake

Stephen, Max and Joy Lake's youngest son, and the last Lake family owner/winemaker of Lake's Folly Hunter Valley Winery, was given the André Simon Award, posthumously awarded to his father Dr Max Lake, inaugural Chairman of the IWFS Asian Pacific Zone Committee.

The Andre Simon Award was presented at a private luncheon at Restaurant “Pilu at Freshwater” on 11 June 2009. Stephen Lake received the award for his late father.

The photo shown here was taken in the gardens of Pilu, with Freshwater Beach in the background. The Beach is a short distance north of where Max and Joy lived for a number of years and where Max used to take his morning exercise, swimming considerable distances in the harbour, which adjoined the front gardens of their residence.



(Left to right) Warren Mason, Stephen Lake, (wearing the Andre Simon Silver Medal, awarded to his father, the late Dr. Max Lake, first Chair of the Asia Pacific Zone of the IWFS), Andrew Fegent.



From the International Secretariat

Now in my second year at the International Secretariat I have become more involved in one of the major aspects of the work of the office producing the Vintage Card. This year's

card is now being worked on and will be your 2010 Membership Card. I thought I would give you a brief insight into who and what is involved in the production of this valuable resource.

As the IWFS relies on the assistance of some 20 plus consultants around the world and also the Wines Committee whose members are also internationally based timing is the key and therefore we need to get started in January each year.

The IWFS is very fortunate to have a team of willing consultants who are acknowledged specialists in a particular wine producing country or region and some are also Masters of Wine as too are a number of the Wines Committee Members.

Our consultants this year are: Sarah Ahmed, Tony Aspler, Nicolas Belfrage MW, Peter Bell, Bob Campbell MW, David Furer, James Halliday, Julia Harding MW, Samuel Harrop MW, Ben Howkins, Dave Hughes, John Livingstone-Learmonth, Jane Masters MW, Richard Mayson, Greg Melick, Angela Muir MW, Andy Perdue, John Radford, Michael Schmidt, John Schreiner, Lisa Shara Hall and David Swingler.

Some consultants are not able to provide meaningful assessments until the beginning of May just before the Wines Committee meeting is held.

The timing of the vintage itself plays a key part in this, as the "new world" and also some regions in Europe do not hold their first vintage tastings until April. Final ratings for the new and past vintages are agreed based on the submissions and recommendations from the consultants. An improvement to the Vintage Card this year is to indicate wines that should be "drunk up", shown by an upturned triangle.

The Wines Committee comprises both members and non-members of the IWFS which brings a balance of expert views and opinions from different sectors of the wine world. The members are: Sid Cross OMA, Chairman, with in-depth knowledge of North American wines; Prof Nils-H Sternby, Vice-Chairman; John Avery MW whose particular areas of expertise are Burgundy and Champagne; Chris Bonsall, Secretary; and Gregory Bowden whose specialist area is Alsace. Non-members include Liz Robertson MW, who is a wine buyer for a major supermarket chain consultant for several prestigious trade accounts; Beverley Blanning MW, a member of the Circle of Wine Writers, independent journalist and author; and Harriet Lembeck, an eminent wine and spirits educator based in New York.

The agreed assessments for new and previous vintages form the new Card, in time for Christmas orders, and ready for the membership in the New Year.

*Andrea Warren
International Secretariat (IS), London*

Editor's Note

As we write, we are a little more than two (2) months from our Annual General Membership meeting this November. Last year, the AGM was held at Penang, Malaysia. This year, our AGM *cum* min-festival, pursuant to the decision of the Executive Committee, will be held at Cebu, Philippines.

Further, AGMs, we hope, will be held at other cities in the Asia-Pacific Zone such as Tokyo, Saigon, Mumbai, to name a few possible venues. That way, your Executive Committee hopes we will be able to savor the richness of each other's culture, not to mention food and wines. In the Asia-Pacific Zone, we have many different cultures and cuisine, one reason for our confidence in the strength of our Zone.

At the same time, next year, in October 2010 to be exact, we will hold a regional festival in Sydney, Australia. Already, there are many indications of interest from other Zones. And that is hardly surprising since Sydney has always attracted most of the world. Next year, we expect great things from our IWFS members based in Sydney.

Since the regional and mini-festivals are the most exciting events that will happen in this part of the IWFS world, and both are fast approaching (swine flu or not!) we thought it appropriate to feature these two great cities, Sydney and Cebu City, in this issue of the Newsletter.

Is this an unabashed marketing effort? Of course, it is. And we don't apologize for it. But hopefully, as you realize the possibilities of both venues, you will be encouraged to attend. We look forward to seeing you in Cebu, to start with, and then Sydney next year, to share with you all the events and little pleasures we have enjoyed, as we in the IWFS community staunchly pursue our own interests in a world that with time gets progressively more complicated.

You may also have noticed the new look of your Newsletter. That is because we have changed our printer. Please let me have your comments on our new format.

*RICARDO V. PUNO, JR.
Senior Vice Chairman
Executive Committee
Asia-Pacific Zone*



BOMBAY

Bombay Honorary Secretary Sanjay Menon on Decanter Magazine's "Power List".

Bombay President Nihal Kaviratne, his pride barely disguised, sent a self-explanatory letter to his members. The text of Mr. Kaviratne's letter follows:

"Decanter is arguably the world's best wine magazine. Once in two years they compile a 'Power List' of the wine world's most important movers & shakers.

"Each entrant on the list must have a direct influence over the style of wine we are drinking today, and are likely to be drinking tomorrow. It is a list of the 50 top names from around the world, including Robert Parker, Jancis Robinson, Hugh Johnson, Eric de Rothschild, Bernard Arnault, etc.

"The Power List contains 50 names, and the third version has just appeared in the July 2009 edition Decanter.

"You will be delighted to hear that your Honorary Secretary, Sanjay Menon, is number 43 on the list, ahead of Angelo Gaja and Allen Meadows."

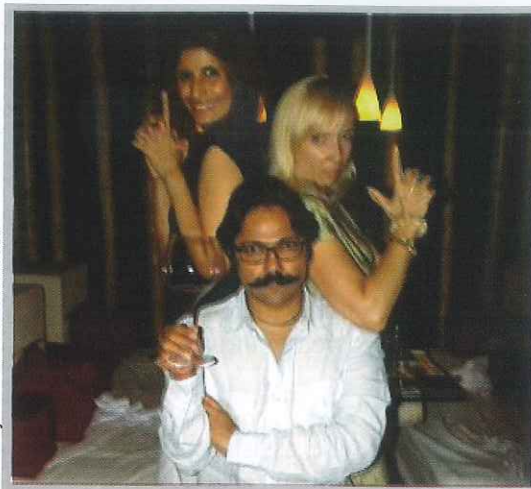


Photo by: Mr. Darshan Muidasa

Mr. Sanjay Menon (not James Bond) and friends

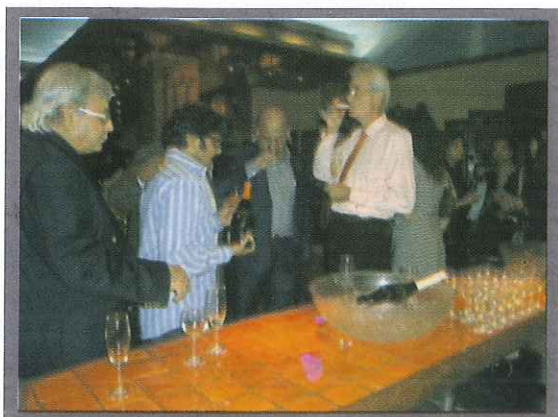
ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Konkan Café

1 August 2009

The IWFS celebrated its third anniversary dinner at the Taj President Hotel in Bombay. The Konkan Café offers a winning blend of coastal cuisine served in an inviting setting. The IWFS had the entire restaurant at its disposal for the evening to seat the rather large turnout of over 60 epicures who had gathered to sample the delicious food and drink on service.

In keeping with IWFS tradition, the third Anniversary was the occasion to empty out the best of the best wine bottles



L to R: Ajit Singh, Sanjay Menon, Rahul Akerkar and David Banford

from the year that had passed by. A carefully crafted menu of a variety of servings comprising coastal, Thai and Italian cuisine all cleverly

fused together in wine-matched harmony and made the evening simply perfect. The wines, a motley crew which included some outstanding examples of Great Barolos, jewels from the Chateau Palmer stable, gems from Argentina, South Africa and California, all lined up after a superlative service of Champagne and light starters.

THE INTERNATIONAL WINE & FOOD SOCIETY

Bombay Branch

Vegetarian Menu

- Appam with Tapioca Gassi
- Crispy Fried Malwani Yam
- Potato and Spinach Bhassale
- Winged Beans with Pad Thai
- Stemed Broccoli, Baby corn and Silky Tofu with Yellow Bean Sauce
- Zuccanloni with Basil Pesto
- Cheese Platter
- (Fonte or Talejo, comte or aged cheddar and Brie)

Non Vegetarian Menu

- Appam with Goan Fish Curry
- Deep Fried Prawns with Malwani Masala
- Baby Lobster with Coconut Cream
- Diced Chicken Chili Basil with Pad Thai
- Pe Pad Prik with Jasmin Rice
- Bacon Crusted Smoked Lamb Rissols with Porcini Rissoto
- Cheese Platter
- (Fonte or Talejo, comte or aged Cheddar and Brie)

Accompanying wines were the following.

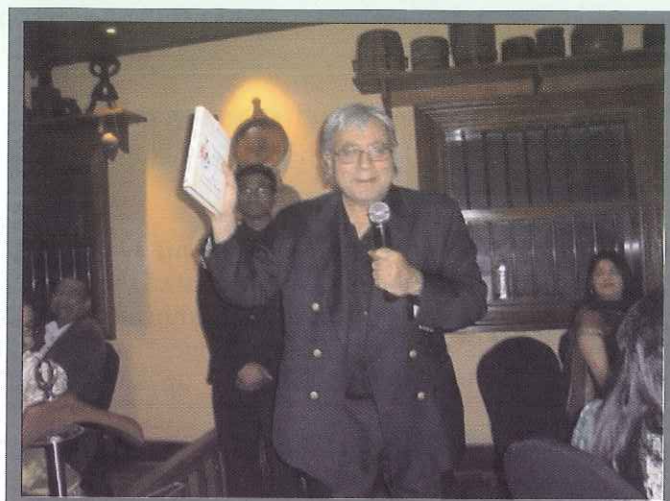
- Ayala Cuvee Perle d'Ayala 2002
- Ayala Cuvee Rose Nature NV
- Ca'del Bosco Cuvee Anamaria Clementi 2001
- Cuvee No. 732 NV
- Gosset Brut Excellence NV
- Gosset Grand Millesime Brut 1999
- Chablis 1993
- Eroica Riesling 2005
- Highfield Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2007
- Meursault Cote-d-or 1998
- Mount Nelson Sauvignon Blanc 2007
- Nautilus Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2007
- Pascal Jolivet Sancerre 2007
- Trapiche Cabernet Sauvignon 1997
- Trapiche Medalia Cosecha 1995
- Weinert Merlot Mendoza 1990
- Chateau Bousaut Pessac Leognan GCC 1990



Ajit Singh takes over as the new IWFS Bombay Branch President



Changing of the Guard: Ajit Singh and Nihal Kaviratne share a moment amongst friends



Ajit Singh presents his vision for the IWFS as the incoming President

IPOH



L to R: Chan Nam (President), Dato Chan Yew Mun (Past President), CK Cheah (Vice President) Doreen Kam (Secretary), Datuk Foong Weng Sum (Past President) and Carina Watt (Advisor).

The Ipoh Branch held its quarterly dinner at the Kizuna Japanese restaurant recently. The Society was started in 1996 and currently has a total of 24 members. The committee meets about eight times a year to plan dinners and events for the society.



Some lady members of the society.

KL Branch Elects New President

On 19 May 2009, we held our Annual General Meeting once again at the Bankers Club. It is an ideal location as there is a suitable meeting room and the dining room can comfortably accommodate and cater for a large gathering. Just as well, as 73 members and guests signed up. In order to attract a good turnout for the AGM, a special price of Ringgit Malaysia 50 (US\$14) was set for those who attended the meeting.

At the AGM, Tony Narisawa was elected as the President, taking over from Jeremy Diamond who had completed his three-year term.

KUALA LUMPUR

The meeting was short but lively, as everyone was eager to head off for the buffet dinner. As usual, the club did us proud with an extensive selection of dishes. Long established tradition demands that freshly shucked oysters be served and ten pieces per person were provided. As for the wines, Laurent Perrier champagne was enjoyed prior to dinner. During dinner, there was a self service wine system. This was necessary as there were many different wines on offer. A total of 52 bottles were consumed which resulted in a very relaxed but quite noisy evening!

The following month, on 18 June 2009, a Wine Pairing Kaiseki Dinner was arranged at a newly opened Japanese



Branch Reports

restaurant called Xenri. We were promised a memorable gastronomic journey featuring delectable medleys of textures, flavours and styles. It is pleasing to record that they lived up to their promise.

The restaurant said they could only accommodate 60 persons for the dinner – and that was exactly the number who attended.

Prior to dinner, free flowing Morita Owari Otokoyama Sake was served. This set the tone for the rest of the evening as the sake did its job of encouraging friendship and talk. As can be seen from the attached menu, we were spoilt with truly tasty cuisine matched expertly with an appropriate selection of wine.

A decision had been taken to arrange three special dinners so that fine cuisine and wine can be enjoyed. Accordingly, 34 of us met up at the Third Floor



L to R: Standing - Ms See FooKoppen, Ms Ginla Chew, Mr. Tony Narisawa (KL Branch President), Mr. JeremyDiamond, Mr Chan Nam (Ipoh Branch, President) and, seated, Georgie & Soren Beck.

restaurant located in the J. W. Marriott hotel on 7 July 2009. This venue is a real favourite with many of us as Ken Hoh is a star chef of world class standing. He didn't disappoint us.

We opened with Philliponnat champagne which was a delight. The Chef had thoughtfully prepared some beautiful canapes to accompany the champagne and we were then in the mood for the excellent dinner to follow.

The Third Floor is not an easy act to follow. Thankfully, something completely different was organised in August. This entailed a "Weekend Away to Ipoh" on August 15th to 16th. At the APZ AGM in Penang last year, good rapport was established with many of the IWFS Ipoh branch members. Some of them had travelled up to Kuala Lumpur to our event in March 2009 and this was our way of returning the favor.

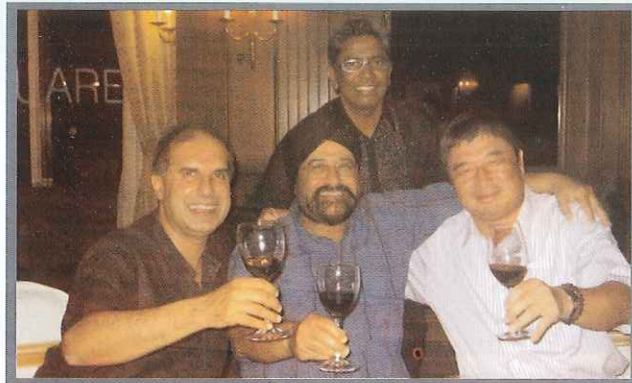
Twelve of us signed up for this away trip. Some chose to travel by car but nine of us decided it would be better to go by minivan as we could enjoy "refreshments" (champagne and wine) on the way and because we knew that at the Sunday brunch champagne and other wines would be served. Also, it was a three-hour drive back.

Ipoh Branch did us proud by organizing a splendid opening dinner on 15th August at the well-regarded Mun

Kuala Lumpur....

Chong restaurant. Ipoh residents are famous in Malaysia as being true "foodies" with very demanding standards. And this was evident as soon as we commenced the meal.

The Mun Chong's cuisine was excellent and the wine was free-flowing. This combination encouraged greater friendship and comradeship.



Standing: Mr M. Jayabalan and seated L to R: Mr Jagjit Singh, Dr. Hardeep Singh and Mr. Tony Narisawa (KL Branch President)

At the Sunday brunch at Lucky Restaurant the next day, we were met with a selection of different champagnes on arrival. What followed was a delicious Chinese style seafood spread. Sharksfin and Abalone porridge was the opener, with quite amazing flavours. Sri Lankan crabs with homemade fish paste noodles were next. A real delight! The next two dishes were fried Prawn Wanton and seasonal vegetables.

Jeff Walmsley
Vice President, Kuala Lumpur

Xenri

18 June 2009

Chilled Silk Bean Curd with Seared Scallop in Bonito Ginger Sauce

Sashimi – Fresh Oyster with Japanese Citrus Dressing,
Salmon Trout Tartar & Butterfish Carpaccio

Saint Clair Block 5

Pinot Gris 2007

Grilled Wagyu with Hoba Leaf served with Mountain Vege Rice and Miso Soup

Or

Fried Sea Catch Tiger Prawn rolled with Gan Nori paste and Camembert Cheese
served with Mountain Vege Rice and Miso Soup

Bodegas Pintia 2003

Sesame Mochi with Macha Ice Cream

Third Floor

7 July 2009

Philliponnat Champagne NV

Poele of Lobster & Foie Gras Ravioli

Jean & Sebastian Dauvissat 1er Cru Chablis Vaillons 2005

*Mollaway Fish Fillet & Spencer Gulf Prawns
With a Saffron & Olive Butter Sauce*

Zind Humbrecht Alsace Riesling 2006

Spiced Roasted French Duck Breast Port & Ginger Reduction

Or

Roasted Lamb With Herbs & Juniperberry Red Wine Sauce

*E. Guigal Chateaufeuf du Pape 2001
Chateau Rouget 1998*

Chatreuse Crème Brulee



New South Wales Chair Fegent Relates Highlights of Past Year.

The New South Wales Chair Andrew Fegent told his members the details of his travels during the last year.

Excerpts of the letter of the chair to his members:

“I was overseas from 18th to 27th of October and attended the IWFS APZ Regional Mini Festival at that time in Penang together with a special black tie event staged by the Kuala Lumpur Branch as a precursor to the Penang Mini Festival.

“From the 31st of October to 12th December, 2008 I was in Europe and while there attended the IWFS 75th Anniversary events on the 14th and 15th of November to celebrate our Society's 75 year of existence, including the Black Tie Event at Claridges where the first meeting of the current organisation took place in 1933.

“I was then away from 3rd February 2009 to the 16th of March in Africa and while there attended the Cape Town Branch IWFS International Convention between the 24th and the 28th of February, a Johannesburg Branch event at the famous Johannesburg restaurant known as the Linger Longer followed by their post convention Safari at Phinda, a private game reserve near Kruger National Park close to Mozambique.

“I would add to the above that I had dinner and drinks with members of our Hong Kong Branch while there on the way to Europe and received emails of top places to eat from our friends around the world in Vietnam in Ho Chi Ming City, Dalat and Hanoi. They were spot on. While all of this was going on our eldest daughter's marriage on the 18th of this month was being organised and just to keep life interesting she decided to have it in the Berry District to help make life complicated.

“So the above is my excuse, noting I do also have to fit in my business and professional life while now getting back with our International Festival Committees i.e Event Committee and Wine Committee to stage our Festival in October 2010 next year.”

MRS TOP RESTAURANT

9 May 2009

Champagne Jacquard, Brut Tradition, Reims

ENTREES

Choice of:

- Fleurs de courgettes au chevre au beurre de citrouille
- or
- Zucchini flower stuffed with goat cheese, butter pumpkin sauce
- or
- Mousse de Foie Gras

NEW SOUTH WALES

Country style duck liver pate, onions, cornichons
Coquilles St. Jacques

Panfried scallops, red onion confit, salmon roe

Pau Mas, Marsanne, 2007

Howard Park, Reisling, 2008, Great Southern, Western Australia.

MAIN COURSE

Choice of:

Lapin Fermier

Rabbit in grain mustard white wine sauce
Roasted duck in Grand Marnier & citrus sauce

or

Paupiette de poisson du jour

Perch Paupiette stuffed with Baby Spinach, Pine Nuts,
Prawns, Mornay Sauce

Clos Floridene, Graves, 2005, France

Peter Lehmann, Shiraz, 1998, Barossa Valley

Pommes aux lardons (Potatoes with bacon, onions
and garlic gratin)

Salade Verte et Noix (Green salad, walnuts, Roquefort
dressing)

Haricots verts (French Green Beans, bacon, sauteed in
garlic butter)

Carottes de Vichy (Vichy carrots, onion, bouillon)

Du Pain (Garlic or herb bread or plain bread & butter)

DESSERT

Cognac Ganache

Cognac & Grand Marnier infused Belgian chocolate
cream in French chocolate shell, wild berry bowl,
berry coulis & ice-cream

Glace au Grand Marnier et ses copeaux de chocolat

Grand Marnier Truffle Ice Cream with Belgian
chocolate chips

Tarte Tatin

After a recipe of the Tartin sisters restaurant in Sologne
at the beginning of the 20th Century. Upside down
caramelized fruit tart, vanilla bean ice cream.

Pavillon de la Brie 2006

Monzaillac 2006

STEKI TAVERNA

9 June 2009

Skinos Liqueur

ENTREES

Tarama caviar dip Tzatziki yoghurt, cucumber and
garlic dip; Gigantes Plaki, white beans baked with



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carrot, celery, tomato paste and herbs; Htaphothi Xythato octopus marinated in olive oil, vinegar and oregano; Kalamata olives warmed, marinated with lemon zest, sliced garlic and rosemary

Dolmades, vine leaves stuffed with rice, onions and herbs

Zucchini patties (vegetarian) with herbs and spices.

2007 Gaia Thallassitis Santorini (white).

2007 Kir Yianni Akakies Rose.

SALAD

Greek salad: mixed lettuce, capsicum, onion, cucumber, tomato, olives, feta, topped with Stekis special dressing

MAIN COURSE

SEAFOOD MAIN

Calamari, lightly floured and deep fried

CAV Restaurant

12 May 2009

At CAV, which I was visiting for the first time, I was bowled over by the dispensing system, and the reasonableness of the wine pricing. I was impressed by the best restaurant wine cellar in the country.



L to R: Edwin Ong, David Ong, John Lim, Bernardo Sim, Miguel Aguas and Jorge Araneta

The Blanquette de Limoux Aimery NV was being poured. Initially unimpressive, it grew on me. Much simpler than a champagne or even a Cremant de Alsace, its bubbles were not as fine but refreshing nevertheless. I can recall some tart green apple notes, pale color, lightness on the tongue, thirst quenching, and low in alcohol. This was partnered with assorted canapes such as smoked milkfish, corn spring rolls, frogs' legs tempura, mushroom soup shooter, and foie gras lollipops. All seemed to go well with the Blanquette.

Blanquette (which means white in Occitan) de Limoux would naturally sparkle after secondary fermentation in bottle in the spring. The main grape is the Mauzac with healthy dollops of Chardonnay and, to a lesser extent, Chenin Blanc. The credit for the discovery of this wine belongs to Bernie Sim, who other than being Branch President, is also our Winemaster.

The 28 members and guests were then served King Crab "Escabeche." The crab came with honeydew melon, mirin

New South Wales...

2005 Gaia Notios (White)

NON SEAFOOD

Lamb, slow baked, with onions and bay leaves, basted with lemon and olive oil and lightly barbequed.

Keftedes, beef and pork meat balls topped with tomato sauce and feta cheese

Souvlaki, grilled lamb skewers

Moussaka, baked with sliced potato and eggplant

2005 Kir Yianni Estate (red).

2005 Gaia estate.(red)

DIGESTIF

Samos Nectar 2001

PHILIPPINES

jelly and herb salad. I was beginning to note some fusion here starting with the frogs and smoked bangus.

Both the first course and the Sea Urchin bisque with squid noodles, steelhead roe, and watercress ice cream were excellently partnered with the Gustave Lorentz Pinot Gris Reserve 2006 Alsace. The wine, yellow in color, exhibited spicy and flowery notes, some mineral undertone. Its medium body stood up to the escabeche and the bisque.

Then came the smokey black bass with roasted barley, onion and clam broth. While the Clos Floridene 2004 Graves made a good partner with the fish dish, I had to taste three bottles to get to a satisfactory one that lived up to the name of Clos Floridene and to its distinguished wine maker. The first two bottles were corked. But after that disagreement, the dish and the wine were thoroughly enjoyed. Yellow in color, almost 5 years in bottle (can age up to 10 years), fuller in body compared to the Alsace, a worthy white. Very nice flowery nose, medium dry, long lingering finish. What a wine!

The meat dishes---the Bobby Veal Loin with white asparagus, morels and madeira and the Glazed Lamb Belly "Parmentier" on aubergine, saffron, Zucchini, and mint---



L to R: Bernd Koehling, Lawrence Martin, Sunny Garcia, Cleo Gressly, Brendan Egan and William Stone



Branch Reports

went extremely well with the Chateau La Tour de Mons 2002, Margaux, a cru bourgeois superieur: lively red color, deep and dark, earth and dusty notes, very long finish, impressive on the nose and palate.

A warm Red Wine Pear and the Chocolate Surprise rounded out the evening.

Angels' Kitchen

18 June 2009

Perhaps it was that stellar take on *pinakbet* that started the buzz about Angels' Kitchen. Or that curious but otherwise delectable chocolate-infused *bagoong*. Or that sublime key lime pie with the crushed Oreo-nut crust. But what's certain is that for just over two years now, the little restaurant is holding its own, shining even amidst the frenetic competition in a neighborhood known for good eating.

Home cooking is what we do here, avers Marnie Ong, a passionate cook who runs Angels' Kitchen.

The cooking at Angels' Kitchen is fresh and flavorful, honest and unpretentious; the kind of cooking that turns out soul-satisfying dishes and is therefore in a league of its own.

That evening, Ms. Ong's menu reflected that ideal. Great platters of food were laid out buffet style. The *tapas* table held button mushrooms sautéed in olive oil and garlic, tortilla española, *callos à la madrileña* and a vegetable salad tinted pink by cubes of sugar beets. Main courses were set on a long table running down the length of the room. Two huge paelleras flanked chafing dishes that held garlic-studded Iberian chicken, lengua with green olives and fillets of pez de San Pedro baked in a rich cream and lemon sauce.

The selection of wines took into account the pairing with hearty, straightforward flavors. IWFS Philippines Branch President and cellar master Bernard Sim had, as usual, chosen well, going for white wines that were bright with acidity and for medium-bodied reds with earthy, bright fruit flavors and moderate tannins.

Dinner had to begin with bubbly, an IWFS practice that dates back to its founding in 1933 by André I. Simon, historian, gourmet and wine connoisseur. Mr. Sim's champagne alternative was the Charles de Fère Brut Chardonnay elegant, crisp and citrusy with a fine persistent mousse. With the *tapas*, the sparkling wine was terrific; with the pre-dinner conversation, it was pure pleasure.

Two reds and two whites complemented the main courses. The Verdejo should go with the *bacalao* in the *paella*, said Mr. Sim of the zesty, juicy, gently perfumed Montespina Rueda 2007. It did well too with the creamy, baked fish. The Gustave Lorentz Pinot Gris Réserve was golden-hued and satiny, dry and smoky. My seat mate thought the Côtes du Rhone, with its spice and savory notes was great with the *paella*; another one preferred the Château St-Jacques, bright and minerally with firm tannins.

White House--Residence of Member Jorge Araneta

16 July 2009

Jorge (Nene) Araneta, a founding member of the Society, and a fine *gourmet*, quickly agreed to our suggestion that we hold a dinner

Philippines...

Chef Markus Gfeller outdid himself. The wait itself and kitchen brigades received our thanks for an evening filled with excellent wine and food.

Rene Fuentes
Philippines Branch



L to R: Oscar and Marnie Ong,
Bernie Sim and Dong Puno

Another guest at my table nursed her Verdejo through most of the main courses. Such was the flexibility of the wines, showing off flavors or underlining them so that the pairing of food and wine was an effortless, enjoyable exercise.

And then Mr. Sim stood up to say: this is proof that very good wines can be had under P1,000. Which ones? All of them, even the bubbly. By this time, the *tapas* table was cleared for dessert and replenished as quickly as the platters and bowls were emptied of the silky *crema catalana*, a salad of dark-skinned grapes and chunks of fresh fruit and an incredible chocolate cake that had to be eaten with dollops of caramel sauce and chocolate syrup. Dinner was officially over, but wine glasses continued to be refilled.

Ms. Ong beamed behind the counter to resounding applause. There was much teasing about who swiped the last of the *crema catalana*. A new bottle of wine materialized from someone's wine bag.

Will you stay for just another glass? Or more dessert? More than the celebration of good food and wine, the objective of the International Wine and Food Society is to "encourage those who share the same interests to get together to taste the pleasures of the table in a spirit of camaraderie and conviviality." It was in that spirit that I was persuaded to take home the last, forlorn wedge of chocolate cake. With extra caramel sauce, please. One does not refuse an invitation from angels.

Cecil Mauricio
(With permission from the Business Mirror)

at the Araneta family home, the elegant White House, or *Bahay na Puti*, built by his father in the 1950s on a five-hectare wooded lot in Cubao.

We also asked his niece, Margarita "Gaita" Fores, of the famed Cibo, Pepato, and Café Bola restaurant chain and one of the



Branch Reports

Philippines' finest cooks to create a menu to match our chosen wines. Also working with Gaita that evening was Chef Godfrey Laforteza, with seven years experience at Nobu in New York.

Early arrivals were rewarded with glasses of Billecart Salmon Brut Reserve NV which had been aged for two years, displaying a complex nose of pear, honey and a slight hint of sherry, very pleasant and drinking beautifully now. The champagne was accompanied with exquisitely prepared Ricci Di Mare, Perella Ponzu and Chinese-farmed superior Ossetra caviar with Japanese butter and Crème Fraîche on Buckwheat Blini.



L to R: The host Jorge Araneta, with Fil Juntreal, Dong Puno, Bernie Sim and Oscar Ong

For dinner, our first wine was a Sancerre, the Vincent Pinard Cuvee Flores 2007, a very good value Sancerre from Sommelier Selection. It was indeed a great match for the Squilla Mantis Duets. The first course was a Carpaccio with lemon-salt, Bottarga Di Muggine, and Italian fennel. The tingly lemony acidity of the Sancerre cut nicely through the richness and delicacy of the Squilla Mantis and the fennel was not overpowering.

Fresh farmed *diwal*, simply broiled in its juices, was another delicacy not to be missed. Then came the second part of the Squilla Mantis Duetto, served with Spaghettini in Blanco with Italian Pomodorini and Japanese cherry tomato. This also went well with the Sancerre.

The next course, homemade Garganelli, Culatello and Edamame with black truffle sauce, went very well with a Château Cap de Faugères, Côtes-de-Castillon 2001, a blend of 30% cabernet franc and 70% merlot. Here again, there was great finesse in the execution of the dish, the flavor of the truffle just right, without being overpowering, and allowing the flavors of the other ingredients to express themselves.

This was followed by a delicious Lechon Croquette. The Cap de Faugères 2001 also went well with the next course of roasted goat carcass. In blind tasting, it is easy to mistake this for a very good Saint-Emilion: very rich and well rounded, it coats the palate and has a long finish.

We then paused for a while. People stood up and mingled sociably. Yes, the food was copious, served at an enjoyable leisurely pace, and we did not feel in the least bloated. Great food, very good wine and fantastic ambience.

Philippines ...



Chef Margarita Gaita Araneta- Fores and William Stone

After the break, the next course was a superbly flavorful grilled US Prime Bone-in Tenderloin with pan-seared foie gras, Barolo reduction and a trio of mushrooms (Porcini, Shimeji, and Inoki). The steak was served perfectly cooked, pink inside and nicely roasted outside. The Barolo reduction sauce added a touch of burnt sweetness which complemented very well the accompanying wine. Château Sociando Mallet's second wine, La Demoiselle, though not always consistent, was sumptuous and elegant in 2003, with the breeding of a good *rive gauche*, soft tannins and a very long finish. It was a perfect match for the steak.

Once more, the ingenuity of Gaita and Godfrey would appear in the preparation of the cheese course, a visually delightful presentation of tasting portions of three cheeses, each with a matching condiment to lift the flavors to a new dimension: 24 months aged Parmegiano Reggiano with guava jelly, Spanish Murcha al vino with candied santol, and Gorgonzolla Dop-Atok Marca, honey infused with lavender seeds.

A dessert wine, Château Clos Lapeyre Moelleux 2006, was served with a trio of desserts, a trifle of jackfruit, marang and black sesame seeds, the fruits deliciously sweet and exotic. The desserts paired perfectly with the Jurancon, as did the Batangas cacao Pots-De-Crème and the mini Bicol pili & pecan tarts with Cerveza Negra Gelato.

Our evening at the White House must rank as one of the most successful dinners in the history of the IWFS, Philippines Branch. The evening captured the essence of what the Philippines branch of the IWFS is all about: the quest for understanding what is good wine and good food and how they complement and enhance each other. In the process, we fostered real camaraderie among the members.



L to R: Noel Laman, Jorge Araneta, Ernesto Fajardo, Eddie Yap, Jerome Philippon Bernie Sim, Oscar Ong, Isagani Ferrer, Edwin Ong and Lawrence Martin

Bernardo Sim
President, Philippines Branch



Branch Reports

SAIGON

La Hosteria Ethnic Italian Cuisine Restaurant

12 May 2009

The Saigon Branch, having only begun in December 2008, continued its tradition of changing each function to a different style of cuisine. Thus, we held our fifth dinner at the La Hosteria Ethnic Italian Cuisine Restaurant in May. Chef Marco Cortesi prepared a number of special old family dishes that are not on the normal menu. We started with an aperitif of Prosecco (NV). The first dish was a traditional avocado and shrimp salad matched perfectly with a Nautilus Sauvignon Blanc 2007.

The second dish was a very special Beef Tenderloin Carpaccio in orange and brandy sauce. This dish had been marinating for two days and was exceptionally matched with the Tommasi Valpolicella Classico Superior 2006. This was followed by a Fish Ravioli with butter sauce, chopped tomatoes and fresh thyme and a lovely Antinori Conte de la Vipera Umbria 2006.

The fourth dish was Chef Marco's grandmother's Risotto with Italian Sausage and red wine, served in a small portion because of its heavy texture. A real meal in itself, enjoyed with an Antinori Badia Passignano Chianti Classico, 2006.

Our main course was Roasted New Zealand Lamb rack with fresh mint sauce with a superb Yalamba Octavius Shiraz 2004. The dessert was a traditional Italian Apple Cake, again an old family recipe, accompanied by a Stolzerhof, Eiswein Gruner Veltliner 2003, which was donated from the cellar of our host for the evening James Echle, Branch President.

Square One Restaurant

9 June 2009

The June function was held at the Square One Restaurant at the Park Hyatt Saigon, hosted by Committee Member Shuichi Sato. This occasion was the last time the Chef and Committee Member Mr. Satoru Takeuchi cooked for us before relocating to the Park Hyatt Macao. Mr. Takeuchi used some Japanese ingredients in his French cuisine for fun. It was an exceptional and a very fine dinner.

The evening began with an aperitif of Champagne Billecart Salmon Brut Reserve. Billecart Salmon was recently imported to Vietnam for the first time by Mr. Jean-Bernard Baudron, our Committee Member.

A Seafood Cocktail was served as an appetizer. This cocktail looked like a jewelry box. Smoky Bonito Jeleo added the special flavor, which matched with the Champagne Billecart Salmon, Blanc de Blanc beautifully. The second dish was Charcoal Grilled Barramundi. Salted Cherry Blossom, was traditionally used as Japanese tea for happy occasions such as wedding ceremonies.

The main course, Parmesan Crusted Pork Trotter stuffed with sausage meat, and foie gras with truffle and Madeira sauce was memorable. This dish went very well with the Chateau Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande 2004. We would love to go to Macao just to eat this lovely dish prepared by Mr. Takeuchi!

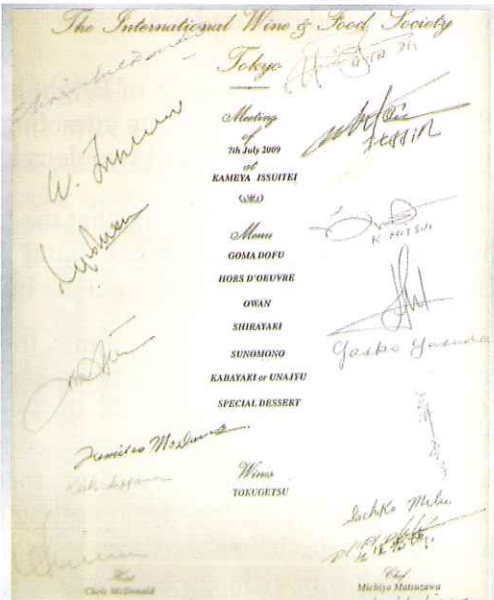
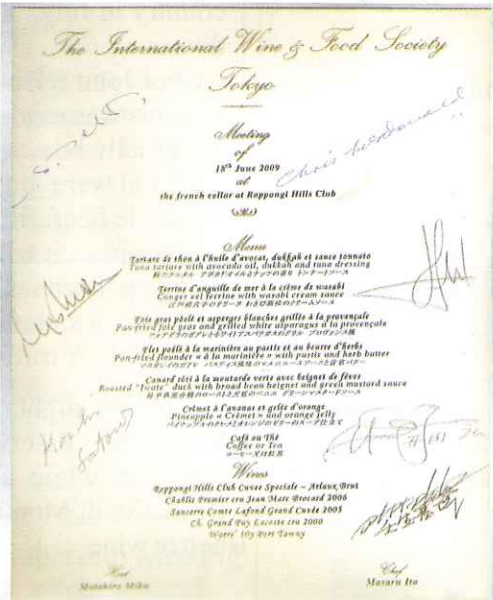
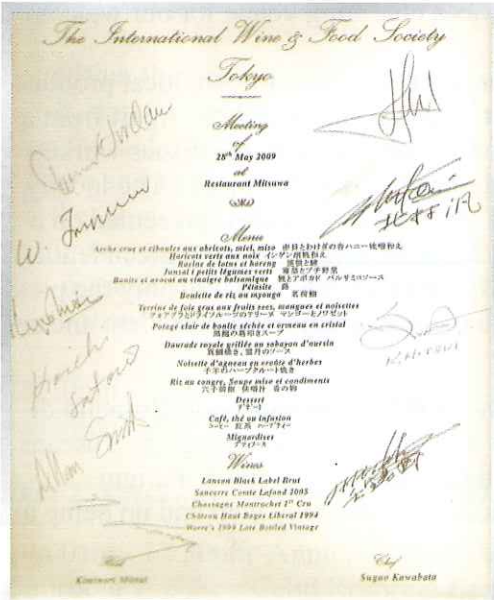


JB Baudron and Takeuchi Satoru

Jim Echle
Saigon Branch

TOKYO

The Tokyo Branch, through Former President Mr. Chris McDonald, sent to the Newsletter the Menu Cards for dinners held from May to July, 2009. We reproduce them hereunder:





Branch Reports

Ezard

19 May 2009

The Victoria Branch visited one of Melbourne's most exciting restaurants, Ezard. For ten years Ezard has thrilled diners with its unique and flamboyant approach to cooking, presenting Asian-inspired contemporary food with a bold but clever use of spices, a playful use of textures and exceptional, highly creative presentation.

Among our guests was Tony Levien, Chair of the Asia Pacific Zone, who flew in from Auckland with his wife Di.

Tony had a surprise for the members. Having noted the significant role that Presidents play in maintaining a branch, he picked up a box containing a Bronze André Simon medal.

For 25 years, until January 2008, Geoff Butt took on the role of President of the Victoria Branch and the responsibility of managing its day-to-day operations. Tony presented Geoff with the André Simon medal for his long-term service to the Victoria Branch, ably assisted by his wife Lois.

The food was every bit as outstanding as we had hoped. Given the use of spice in most of Ezard's dishes, there had been some nervousness about the wine and food matching. However, the choice of wines seemed to work and the Chef also used his skill to ensure that the dishes were exciting without being overpowering for the wines.

The Alsatian white wines, including a Riesling, Gewürztraminer and Pinot Gris, all from Grand Cru vineyards and the classic vintage of 2004, suited the dishes and performed well. The Pinot Gris from the Marckrain vineyard was also good. Its maker, Fabien Stirn is a rising star in Alsace.

VICTORIA

We had great fun with the reds, including a French Burgundy and three Pinots from Central Otago. The 07 Rockford was typically preferred to the 06 Wild Earth Pinot (winner of Best International Pinot at the London Show), but both showed well. The Wild Earth needs a little more time, but the Rockford certainly has immediate appeal.

In the next group, the 2002 Olssen's Slapjack Creek offered serious competition to the glorious 1999 Chevillon Les St. Georges. Tasted blind, it was tricky identifying these two wines. The Slapjack Creek was very complex with lovely fruit. Chevillon's 99 Les St. Georges was clearly a fabulous wine, but it still has to reach its apogee.



L to R: Barb Joyce, Peter Joyce, Lois Butt, Geoff Butt, Yvonne Wallis

Victoria Alpine Country: An Italian Extravaganza

Regional Victoria offers some lovely destinations for the gourmand who is prepared to venture outside Melbourne. Sixteen members of the Victoria Branch decided to head off in early July for the three-and-a-half hour drive to the town of Bright, in Victoria's Alpine country, for a weekend of fine wine, food and camaraderie.

We chose the small town of Bright because it is here that Simone's Restaurant has been attracting serious diners with its Italian cuisine for almost two decades.

Coincidentally, we decided that the loveliest accommodation nearby was at a boutique hotel in Buckland, 'Villa Gusto', which also offers fabulous Italian food.

With two great Italian restaurants to visit, the wine had to be Italian and had to be special. We chose Tuscany (Chianti Classico and Brunello di Montalcino) for our first dinner, and Piedmont (Barbaresco and Barolo) for our second. To further the theme, we focused on wines that had been awarded the top rating of '3 glasses' ('trebicchieri') by reviewer Gambero Rosso.

Champagne to start and Sauternes to finish was just a little too difficult to forego for some of our members.

Villa Gusto

3 July 2009

After making the three and a half-hour journey from Melbourne, we were grateful for the open fire in the dining room at Villa Gusto. It can be very cool in Victoria's high country in July. It was a charming venue for our welcome dinner.

Chef John Spencer is a keen user of fresh, local produce, and this was evident in many of his dishes. Apart from a marginally heavy hand with the salt, the dishes worked well and were good matches for the wines. The locally available beef fillet from Ovens Valley, presented on a bed of spinach with beetroot relish, braised green lentils, crispy pancetta and marsala sugo, was probably the pick of the dishes, though the barrumundi was excellent and so too the black truffle risotto.

On this night, the 1997 Castegiocondo Brunello di Montalcino Riserva was the top wine among the Tuscans. However, while a little closed, the 2001 Fuligni Brunello di Montalcino Riserva may well end up being a better wine.



At Villa Gusto L to R: Paul Rosen, Leona Edwards, Ian Westcott, Sean Rogan, Yvonne Wallis, Tim Sutton, Neil Harrison, Kaye Sutton, Annie Rogan, Janet Barton, Peter Millington, Graeme Edwards, Gay Rosen

I had expected the 1997 Cepparello to provide some serious competition, but it just didn't seem to be singing. The wine of the night happened to be a non-Tuscan. The 1995 Speri Amarone was divine. The 1983 Chateau Suduiraut also made a serious claim for the wine of the night.

Day Two started at Villa Gusto with a rather large breakfast of lovely local produce, cooked again by John Spencer. Then we boarded our minibus for sightseeing and lunch.

First stop was the most highly regarded winery in Victoria's Alpine Region, Gapsted Wines. We tasted a selection of some 30 wines, many of them Italian varietals. We also topped up on walnuts. Some of the very best walnuts are grown in this area.

Next stop was the town of Beechworth which is a very pretty, historical town with a picturesque main street, strewn with handicraft stores, gourmet food larders and some fabulous restaurants. Provenance and Warden's are "must visit" restaurants.

Saving ourselves for the evening, we decided to head to a very charming local micro brewery, Bridge Road Brewers, that not only produces some fascinating beers--- their Celtic red ale was our favourite--- but also some serious gourmet pizzas. This was definitely a special pizza experience: super thin and crispy bases, toppings like roasted duck with bocconcini, fresh orange, red onion, herbs and a drizzle of Peking sauce.

Back at our hotel, a walk before dinner in the beautiful countryside was a sensible thing to do. Most of us, however resolved that a snooze would revive us far more effectively for the big night ahead.

Simone's
4 July 2009

Setting out for Simone's in our minibus, there was a

great sense of anticipation at the prospect of finally getting to eat in this highly reputed restaurant, and of matching the dishes with some of Piedmont's finest wines. From the moment we walked in, owners George and Patrizia Simone made it clear that they were going to make this a memorable night. George took charge of our wines with great competence while Patrizia, who had designed a special menu to match our wines, spent her time either in the kitchen or at our table explaining the origins and nuances of the various dishes.

Our pre-diner aperitif was a 1996 Pierre Peters Cuvee Speciale Champagne in magnum which certainly set the tone for the evening. This is a magnificent champagne and the extra depth and freshness one typically expects from magnum was vividly demonstrated.

The meal began with a dish of local trout and yabbies. Yabbies are an Australian freshwater crustacean, like a crayfish. We matched it with a 2006 Tamellini Le Bine Soave which provided a really delicious and refreshing



At Simone's: Members of Victoria Branch with Chef Patrizia Simone

start, probably one of the best Soaves the group had tasted. The reason it had earned its "3 Glass" rating was clear. By contrast, the 97 Jermann Tunina was very sad. This remarkable white wine was dreadfully corked.

Not to worry, the wines of Piedmont were calling. Matched with an Umbrian pumpkin ravioli with Taleggio and walnuts (a brilliant dish), we started with a Barbera and a Nebbiolo, both from Prunotto and both from the great 1997 vintage. The Barbera appeared to have lost some of its fruit, but the Nebbiolo was excellent.

We moved on to a bracket of Barbarescos, matched with a dish of local rabbit in porchetta. While the tannins were perhaps a little too evident in the 99 Ca'Rome, the 1998 Moccagatta 'Bric Balin' was a standout, showing excellent, sweet fruit, a velvety finish and with lots of time ahead.

Still, it was the final bracket that epitomized why we had been so excited about this evening, and indeed, the



entire weekend. We had in front of us three beautiful Barolos, all rated "3 glasses" and all from fabulous Vintages. Matched appropriately with a dish of local braised venison and truffle polenta, the lighter but extremely pretty 2000 Pira, the massive, fruit forward 1999 Sandrone Le Vigne and the intense, powerful, but elegant 2001 Conterno Sori Ginestra demonstrated why Barolo evokes such a committed following.

In terms of scores, the Conterno scored highest, followed by the Sandrone, and then the Pira. How marvellous that these wines have plenty of time ahead of them, not just to last, but to reach their apogee.

You know it's been an excellent night when you finish with a 1983 Climens but can't stop thinking about the previous bracket. You know it's been a great weekend when debate focuses on where we must go for our next weekend getaway.



At the entrance of Gapsted Winery

Yvonne Wallis
Victoria Branch



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