



The International Wine & Food Society

Miami Branch



Champagne Reception
Mumm, Millésimé, 1990

Il Paté Duca d'Aosta
Goose liver paté in aspic and sweet and sour apricot
Chateau de St. Helene, Sauternes, 1990

Il Salmone Marinato Cinque Terre
Marinated salmon with green peppers, limoncello, fennel and sherry
Joseph Drouhin, Chablis, 1996

Tortellone Di Fonduta
Tortellone with fontina cheese, served with veal juice, truffle oil essence and
rosemary
Casisano-Colombaio, Brunello di Montalcino, 1995

Il Rombo al Forno a Legna Terre e Mari di Tufi
Turbot baked in the brick oven, served with wild mushroom sauce and julienne of
leaks,
pignoli, green onions, chives, over wild rice
Corino, Barolo, 1994

Il Venison Grande Veneur
Combination of venison served with potato dumplings
Chateau Calon-Segur, St. Estèphe, 1985

Crêpes Suzette with Julienne of Mango
Chateau Bellerive, Quarts de Chaume, 1986

The Miami Branch of the IW&FS opened its 2002-2003 season with their 228th Dinner, held September 16, 2002 at Fabio Rolandi Ristorante in Coral Gables. Our old friend, Fabio Rolandi, was eager and enthusiastic to bring us new and exciting dishes to complement a great selection of wines from our cellar. Fabio was further inspired, perhaps even challenged, by our new President, Suhel Skaf, who hosted the dinner along with Branch Secretary John Kuczanski. With only room for 60 persons, we were still able to introduce six guests to our organization. Suhel and John set an impressive start to the evening by serving Mumm Cordon Rouge Vintage 1990 at the cocktail hour, alongside light hors d'ouvres while we all caught up on the travels and events of the past summer. Quite an impressive aperitif.

The dining room glistened with silver and crystal as the guests took their seats at tables of 8 to 10, with an abundance of Reidle stemware at each place setting. As the mood grew more and more convivial, the dining turned serious. The first course was a unique and inspired preparation of goose liver pate set, as a "surprise inside", in multi-colored aspic, with sweet and sour apricot jam. The wonderful earthy tart components of the Foie Gras contrasted beautifully with the cool aspic and sweet/tart apricot. The delightfully rich Chateau De St. Helene Sauternes 1990 enhanced this contrast.

Between courses Suhel took the opportunity to welcome the members, introduce the guests, and then recognize our own Joe Garrigo who was recently installed as IW&FS Chairman of the Americas. Joe has contributed greatly to the furtherance of the Americas branches, most recently serving as publisher of the Americas Newsletter. Then Suhel and Joe invited past President Mitch Lundeen, and his wife Missy, to come forward for a presentation. We acknowledged their many years of service to the Branch, especially the past two years as our President, with a suitably framed declaration of our appreciation. We all agreed that Missy was equally deserving of our gratitude.

Suhel then shared with us what a fun challenge it was to pair the wines for the night with the

various courses, and he advised us of some last minute changes and recommended that we save some of the sauternes for the dessert course. He promised further edification on the wines.

Fabio has long been famous for one of Miami's best preparations of salmon carpaccio, but on this night he took it to a new level by shaping the salmon to look like shrimp and marinating them in Limoncello, the famous liquor of Sicily. Served with both sliced bulb and "beard" of fennel, this exquisite dish was tamed by a palate-cleansing Chablis from Joseph Drouhin, vintage 1996. The dry, almost tart wine was a perfect foil. At this point we had a chance to hear from Wine Committee member Scott Bailey with a little history and tasting notes on the white wines. Like all of us, he was especially impressed with the champagne.

As a pasta course (it wouldn't be Italian without one!) Fabio created a tortellone stuffed with fontina cheese to showcase his veal juice, truffle oil and rosemary sauce. A truly exotic dish, and one of Suhel's challenges. Fortunately our hosts found a Casisano-Colombaio Brunello di Montalcino, vintage 1995 that was up to the task. This little known product of Tuscany was surprisingly accessible and just tannic enough to stand up to the rich sauce without fighting the earthy taste. The Brunello was soft and friendly, with good fruit and balance.

For a fish course, we were treated to turbot, baked in the famous open brick oven (Fabio created the first one in Coral Gables back in 1989) and served with a wild mushroom sauce and julienne of leeks. The oven roasting gave the fish a nice crust around the moist tender flesh. Here the hosts decided to be creative and change to a wonderfully soft, delicate Bordeaux, instead of a richer, younger Barolo (more on this later). The wine of choice was a Chateau Calon-Segur 1985. We were fortunate to have this great wine in our cellar, and thanks to our President for bringing it out. There was a lot going on in this dish, with the sauce, the leeks, garnishes of pine nuts, green onions, chives and a bed of wild rice. Those of us who appreciate red wine with fish know how wonderful this lovely pairing could be, and it truly was! The St. Estephe was drinking beautifully, and probably has a few years left, but thanks to John and Suhel, we got to enjoy it at a great moment.

What about the Barolo, you ask? It was perfect with a combination of venison. Two different cuts of the game, perfectly cooked, and served in the classic Grande Veneur sauce, along with spaetsle (a.k.a. potato dumplings). This rich flavorful dish really needed the strength of the Barolo, a Corino 1994, made in the newer, earlier-drinking style. A great last minute switch, this wine showed the classic nebbiolo grape with plenty of fruit and tannic backbone. In a word, it was delicious. The venison was tender and subtle, not gamey and not overdone. A great course.

I for one was glad I saved a little of the sauternes for the dessert, a gorgeous Crepes Suzette with Julienne of Mango. It was paired with the classic French answer to Tart Tatin, Quarts de Chaume from Chateau Bellerive in 1986. With the mango crepes it was perfect. Lighter than a sauternes, richer than a Baumes de Venice, it had the ability to both cleanse the palate and marry the sweetness of the dish. No need for coffee.

The waitstaff was prepared for us, even though it took a little extra effort from our hosts. But it proves that we can get superb service with proper training and a little patience. The timing between courses, the pours of wine, the delivery of the dishes and the removal of plates were efficient and almost seamless.

This was a night to really celebrate. New style, new direction, great wines from our cellar, and fabulous dishes from classic chefs. Special thanks to Suhel and John. With this kind of direction, you will not want to miss the next IW&FS Miami Dinner.

