



## The International Wine & Food Society

Miami Branch

# FIESTA de PESCADO

November 16, 2004

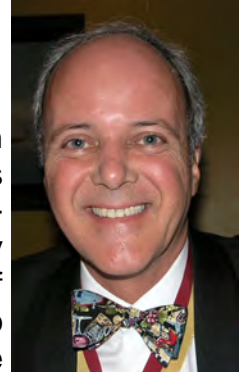
Host: Carl Young

For our 247<sup>th</sup> Branch event, host Carl Young chose to mix innovation with tradition in a fantastic setting of Old World ethnicity and elegance.

The venue was the classy and upscale Spanish restaurant specializing in seafood, La Dorada, and the event was formal attire, gents only. La Dorada flies fresh fish into Miami daily from Spain, as they also provide for their sister restaurants in Madrid, Seville and Casablanca, and they have become a standout in a city awash in seafood. Twenty-two members and guests gathered in a private section of



the large dining room for a refreshing glass of Pacific Echo Cremant from Mendocino County, California. This estate was originally Scharffenberger, located near Roederer Estate, but was sold to Veuve Clicquot, who changed the name to Pacific Echo during their brief tenure. It is now owned by Roederer and will re-appear in the market as Scharffenberger. The wine is delicious, with crisp acidity and light lemony hints and a clean finish. We carried it to the tables as we enjoyed several light canapés of garlic tomato crispy baguette, crabmeat toasts, and light potato gnocchi.



Christopher Zoller  
Reporter

The first course was a classic from many Spanish tapas menus: Delicate Flash Fried Seafood. There were five different varieties, each very quickly and lightly fried: classic calamari, both rings and tentacles; chanquetes (baby whitefish); bocarones (very nice fresh anchovies); baby shark, in a lovely cumin-flavored puff with a molten center, and calamaritos (baby squid). Carl found a wonderful Amontillado Sherry by Osborne that was rich with a nutty flavor and a very long finish. Amontillado is essentially an older, rarer fino sherry, with more spicy and nutty aromas. As Carl explained, this is the typical pairing one would experience throughout Spain. There was no sense of deep fried oiliness, only distinctly different fresh fish flavors in a lightly crisp texture and washed down with the refreshing yet unique sherry.

The next course was Grilled Crustaceans, the like of which we rarely see here. Cold water Langoustinos with a rich, shellfish flavor; carabinero, which was succulent and tender; and cigalas, with a smoky and sweet flavor. They were familiar yet foreign and perfectly grilled. To accompany these, we had the delightful Robert Mondavi Fume Blanc, 2002. Mondavi has been making this wonderful wine for many years, but in relatively small quantities. It has excellent sauvignon blanc characteristics, with an herbal, almost grassy nose and a clean lemony citrus finish. It went wonderfully with the course, keeping the palate clean so we could differentiate the subtle flavors of each fish.





Dorada is the Spanish name for sea bream, and it is naturally the establishment's signature dish: Royal Sea Bream Baked in Salt in a Wooden Box. This is prepared in a thick crust of "sal de mer", genuine sea salt, which is cracked open and filleted tableside, resulting in beautiful soft moist, delicate fresh white meat that needs no more

that an authentic touch of aioli. For the wine, we returned to Spain and the classic Albarino

grape. Ours was from Lagar de Cervera, the 2003 vintage. Albarino has a deeper, richer depth of flavors than sauvignon blanc, but still not as distinctive (or potentially distracting) as chardonnay, which in this case was a good thing. While still crisp with good acids, it had a rich and luscious mouthfeel and was an excellent match for the sea bream. This fish has an unusual and distinctive yellow crest at the top of its head, hence the name "Royal".



Despite the seafood venue, Carl wanted to keep some tradition and have a meat course, and the restaurant gladly obliged with Small Lamb Chops with Demi-Glace and a Hint of Mint. These were lovely small chops, perfectly cooked and served over a rich, ruby-red reduction sauce. A pile of thinly sliced sweet potato fries accompanied. Reaching out to the Ribera Del Duero, Carl found the 1995 Condado de Haza. This region is most famous for the world class Vega Sicilia, but recently many producers have been upgrading their techniques and thinning their crops to make wonderful blends of Temperanillo with more well known grapes such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Malbec. This wine had a rich dark color and flavors of dark red fruits, cassis and blackberry, with very good acid and surprisingly light tannins. It went very well with the dish.



Our cheese course was Queso Manchego, served with honey and light, crisp cookies. A "new" style Rioja, the 1994 Remeilluri, went beautifully with this dish. Rioja is made with long aging, either in cask or tank, and produces a medium-ruby color with a huge, fragrant bouquet of tobacco, oak and sweet, ripe fruit. The newer or international style has a little more body and richness, as displayed in this wine. It was excellent.

For dessert we had Spanish Flan. This was a tall, light presentation of classic texture and flavor. The real treat was the Pedro Ximenez "PX" Gran Reserva 1975. This thick, sweet sherry makes a fantastic dessert wine. It had a deep, dark chocolate color and a rich flavor, with full body and heady alcohol.

Carl pulled a real rarity out of his cellar to finish the evening, Cardenal Mendoza/Carlos 1 Brandy. This was a unique treat and another great way to experience the flavors wines, and customs of Spain. The only thing missing was a good cigar. Carl's Spanish experience was a huge success.







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***FIESTA de PESCADO***  
*del MEDITERRANEO ESPANOL*

***La Dorada***

*November 16, 2004*

***Canapés***

***Pacific Echo Cremant Mendocino***

***Delicate Flash Fried Seafood***

***Osborne Amontillado Spanish Sherry (NV)***

***Grilled Crustaceans***

***Mondavi Fume' Blanc '02***

***Royal Sea Bream Baked in Salt in a Wooden Box***

***Albarino Lagar de Cervera '03***

***Small Lamb Chops with Demi-Glace and a Hint of Mint***

***Condado de Haza Ribera del Duero '95***

***Queso Manchego***

***Remeilluri, Rioja '94***

***Spanish Flan***

***Pedro Ximinez "PX" Gran Reserva '75 Sweet Sherry***

***Cardenal Mendoza / Carlos 1 / Coffee***