



The International Wine & Food Society

Miami Branch

Ship Lunch

The annual Ship Luncheon continues to be one of the hottest tickets of the year, thanks to the gracious generosity of our host, Bob Dickinson. This year we were welcomed aboard the Carnival Valor, the newest ship in the line. The high quality and cutting edge creativity of the Carnival staff just keeps getting better every year.

In spite of new security precautions the boarding process was smooth, and we made



our way to the Eagle's Lounge for our Champagne reception. We were greeted with flutes of Nicolas Feuillatte NV, a perfect aperitif for the stunning array of hors d'oeuvres. We feasted on iced Russian Sevruga Malossol Caviar with all the usual condiments. This lovely spread could be had at the buffet bar or by personal roving service, with two kinds of blinis or simple toasts. Something sumptuous for everyone. At another station we had freshly seared Foie Gras served on a Blackberry Coulis, a rich yet still balanced treat. The spectacular "Salad Vermeer with Truffled Langoustine and Snail Ragout" was a unique plated presentation with delicately curved thin toasts cut with holes for the lobster and snail. It was exquisite. Another passed treat was Crab Croquettes with Oysters in Leek cream. These were delicious and crisp crab cakes with sweet oyster topping. As if these were not enough we enjoyed passed canapés of duck, mussels, and lobster. A very bounteous reception.

January 16, 2005

Host: Bob Dickinson

**Assisted By: Scott Bailey &
Jim Russell**



**Christopher Zoller
Reporter**

We moved on to the lovely Washington Dining Room, set exclusively for our group of 95 persons. The two-storied room was light and lovely in the afternoon sun and the staff was at attention and waiting to serve us. The room was very spacious and there seemed to be three waiters per table. The service was impeccable.

Our first course was Pistachio and Cocoa Butter Glazed Fillet of Fresh Chilean Sea Bass, served on Lobster Fricassee with Bouillabaisse Broth. This delightful presentation of two kinds of seafood was served with a gorgeous broth poured individually at the table and accompanied by Kalamata Olive Tapenade and Tossed Kenya Beans and Micro Greens. The fish was perfectly cooked: the bass moist and flaky and the lobster soft and succulent. The broth had a delightful sweetness balancing the tapenade. All 95 dishes come out of the kitchen in perfect condition, no small feat. Bob chose an appropriate grape to match this complex dish: Chardonnay. In this case it was a 1999 Meursault from Louis Latour. The wine was great, with light, soft citrus notes and delicate, not too sharp acids to refresh the taste buds. It also helped to bring out the flavors of the broth. In the interest of education, Mitch Lundeen shared with us the research he did into Meursault in general and the large Latour operation.

Next we had a soup course, but so much more than soup! It was a Chestnut Veloute, garnished with Stuffed Squash Blossoms, Blue Trumpet Mushrooms and Morel Tempura. The classic cold weather presentation featured flavors of nuts and spice in rich liquid base. The earthy mushrooms, especially





the morels fried in tempura batter, added another autumnal dimension and the squash blossoms and green peas shoots gave a fresh clean feel to the plate and the palate. The perfect pairing for these mushrooms and chestnuts was a young Red Burgundy, a 2002 Cotes de Nuits Village from Gachot. The pinot noir grape is very suited to the rich earthy flavors, and this youthful wine had strong acids but soft tannins and an intriguing aroma of black fruits. As Joe Garrigo, wine writer and our commentator on this wine, pointed out, this small estate was founded in 1890 and is still owned by the fifth generation. They make only 2500 cases of four wines from the Nuits-St.-George appellation. The wine had a beautiful ruby red color, medium to full body with touches of



spices and a pleasant finish.



Our meat course was a wonderful combination of unique flavors. It was a pairing of Carmelized Bison Filet Mignon and Lacquered Supreme of Pigeon. Pigeon is very common on the menus of fine restaurants in France and buffalo meat is gaining popularity here in the States as a new alternative to more fatty beef, and this was a wonderful opportunity to sample these and compare back-to-back vintages of a

classic wine. The bison was perfectly cooked, still red and juicy on the inside with a lovely outside char. Clearly it was leaner than beef and with a subtly different, but not gamey, flavor, and very tender. The pigeon meat was darker than any turkey or chicken with sweet rich and distinctive natural flavors. Certainly more interesting and flavorful than other fowl, but leaner than duck. This course came with some fabulous accompaniments: Tomato Confit, Dried Beet and Parmesan chips, White Asparagus and a Pumpkin Cream Gratin. There were lots of lovely flavors to work with the two wines: the 1988 and 1989 vintages of Chateau Talbot. This classified Fourth Growth estate in Saint-Julien usually produces consistent classic blends of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc from a huge (252 acre) single vineyard. The 1988 was a delight, with a sweet fruity nose and a dark plum/ruby color. It was very approachable and showed a myriad of flavors, including smoked beef and hints of mocha and chocolate in the fruit. It has great structure and is balancing out beautifully. The 1989 had a nose of earth, weeds, and tobacco barn, almost like compost, on top of the sweet black fruit and currant notes. It was medium bodied, with low acidity and a shorter finish. Both wines were great choices with the dish and generated much discussion.

A Selection of Four Ripened Fine Cheeses came next. After some consultation with the servers, it was determined that we had St. Albay, a Brie,





Port Salut, and Roquefort to offer us varying flavors and consistencies. These came with Carmelized Walnuts and Crusted Pear Wedges. The cheeses were excellent and a fine backdrop for two more wonderful wines: 1988 Chateau Canon and the rare Clos des Jacobins, 1989. The Canon had a great ruby/garnet color with a terrific balance of moderate tannin and flavors of earth, plums and currants. The style was a little austere with some minerality. The Clos des Jacobins, from a vineyard of only 21 acres, used to be under the same ownership as Talbot, but was recently sold. The



1989 showed a dark, rich ruby red color, a sweet berry and black currant nose and luscious flavors of mineral, licorice, cherry and vanilla notes. This was a great opportunity for Bob to showcase two wines from St.-Emilion. Both estates feature 70-75% Merlot to 25-30% Cabernet Franc in their blends, with no Cabernet Sauvignon. They both showed the sweetness of the Merlot grape and the characteristics of the terroir.



Dessert was a wild indulgence, an orgy of chocolate. Billed as “Bitter Chocolate Melting Cake, Chocolate Pate, Blood Orange Curd Burnt Cream”, it was all of that and more! The pate was rich and fudge-like, the orange cream was a lovely crème brulee, and the molten cake interior oozed chocolate all over the plate. An accompaniment included a wild strawberry and chocolate salad, but the most unique item of all was the Warm Lemon Grass-Scented Chocolate Soup. This fine dessert platter was washed down with the delightful Chambers Non Vintage Muscat, a great wine for chocolate with some hints of orange and not too much cloying sugar.

As mentioned before, the service was fabulous. Each server worked to make our experience better. They paid attention to the tiniest details and went out of their way to accommodate every request. The food and wines were served promptly and professionally; napkins were folded or replaced. Every morsel of the food was delicious. Master Chef Sanjay Dahl graces every new ship



in the Carnival line, for the first few months, and it was his cuisine and his staff who prepared this fantastic menu. Although our groups have had the pleasure of his cooking before, like all of Carnival, it just keeps getting better.

We are very fortunate to have such a generous host as Bob Dickinson. His efforts really enhance our enjoyment of Wine, Food and Friends. We also give special thanks to his able assistants, Scott Bailey and Jim Russell for another exceptional Carnival Ship Luncheon.





The International Wine & Food Society

Miami Branch

Commanderie de Bordeaux

Annual Ship Lunch

Carnival Valor

January 16, 2005

Reception

*ICED RUSSIAN SEVRUGA MALOSSOL CAVIAR WITH CONDIMENTS
SEARED FOIE GRAS ON A BLACKBERRY COULIS
SALAD VERMEER WITH TRUFFLED LANGOUSTINE AND SNAIL RAGOUT
CRAB CROQUETTES AND OYSTER IN LEEK CREAM
Nicolas Feuillatte NV Rose Champagne*

Menu

*PISTACHIO AND COCOA BUTTER GLAZED FILLET OF FRESH CHILEAN SEA BASS
Served on Lobster Fricassee, Bouillabaisse Broth, Kalamata Olive Tapenade
Tossed Kenya Beans and Micro Greens
1999 Meursault, Louis Latour*



*CHESTNUT VELOUTÉ
Garnished with Stuffed Squash Blossoms, Blue Trumpet Mushrooms and Morel Tempura, Pea Shoots
2002 Cotes de Nuits Village, Gachet*



*CARAMELIZED BISON FILET MIGNON AND LACQUERED SUPREME OF PIGEON
Tomato Confit, White Asparagus and Pumpkin Cream Gratin
1988 Ch Talbot 1989 Ch Talbot*



*SELECTION OF RIPENED FINE CHEESE
Served with Caramelized Walnuts and Crusted Pear Wedges
1988 Ch Canon 1989 Clos des Jacobins*



*BITTER CHOCOLATE MELTING CAKE, CHOCOLATE PATÉ, BLOOD ORANGE CURD BURNT CREAM
Wild Strawberry and Chocolate Salad, Warm Lemon Grass Scented Chocolate Soup
Chambers NV Muscat*



DEMI TASSE



PETITS FOURS

Host: Bob Dickinson, assisted by Scott Bailey & Jim Russell

249th Branch Event