



The International Wine & Food Society

Miami Branch

In a town of tourist turnover and fickle foodies, it is the rare restaurant jewel that lasts more than ten years. Pioneer Chef/Owner Jonathan Eismann built and opened Pacific Time in 1993, and it is still packed for dinner seven nights a week with good reason. So it became a pioneering destination for co-hosts Olin McKenzie and John Sullivan to bring us there for Asian/Pacific cuisine and fun food and wine pairings. It was quickly sold out to 68 members and guests.

PACIFIC TIME

MAY 10, 2005

HOSTS: OLIN MCKENZIE
& JOHN SULLIVAN



Christopher Zoller
Reporter



The night was cool and dry as we sipped “R” de Ruinart NV Brut Champagne and nibbled our hors d’oeuvres amongst sidewalk diners and the endless stream of Lincoln Road Mall pedestrians of every shape, size and style in front of the restaurant.



The Tuna Tartare in Corn Cups was finely diced Ahi (sushi quality) tuna topped with fine grains of wasabi “caviar” that left a wonderful bite in the finish. Crisp Potato Pancakes, with Crème Fraiche and Caviar, were shredded potatoes fried in a light, free-form crisp with a dollop of crème and red large egg caviar. Miso Rubbed Chicken Satay came on a long bamboo skewer, with a cucumber herb dipping sauce. All three were delightful with the crisp apple/lemon flavors and clean acids of the champagne. As commentator Jim Cosmides later revealed, this wine is a blend of 60% pinot noir and 40% chardonnay, grown in limestone soils from a 276-year-old producer. Jim also affirmed, but not verified, that there are 49 million bubbles in every bottle of champagne!

The Tuna Tartare in Corn Cups was



miniature pompadons. This was a great combination of flavors and Olin was right-on with the pairing.

Next course was Foie Gras Sauté, a generous piece of the foie, neatly scored and nicely seared and served with two delicious sides: Sour Apple Tatin and Botrytis Gelee. The tiny slice of tart was pure apple

The wine for the next course continued the lovely light lemon/apple flavors and clean finish that goes so well with Pan-Asian seafood. It was a 2003 King Estate Pinot Gris from Oregon. As co-host Olin McKenzie explained, he found this wine locally and used it for this course because it complemented the Citrus Cured Wild Salmon, which had been “cooked” by the acids in the citrus juices. There was also a hint of fennel seed and a topping of finely chopped cucumber tartare and tobiko (flying fish eggs). It was accompanied by East Indian inspired curry flavored crisp





with only the thinnest of crusts and was a wonderful new take on fruit with foie. The Gelee was a delight: clear pure very light gelatin in a pale yellow color. It had a delicate sweet flavor and tremendous mouthfeel...very refreshing. For extra color and flavor, there was a drizzle of Port Syrup. For a classic pairing, our hosts chose a 1996 Chateau d'Arche Sauterne. At

first sip, it seemed to be very light with a sharp finish, but as commentator Jose Garrigo quickly pointed out, with the foie gras it was "a match made in heaven". The less cloying style went well with the delicate sides, and the sharp finish cleaned the palate for each bite of the liver. You can't argue with proven success. Jose was pressed into service just that evening, but his encyclopedic knowledge of this chateau, and sauterne in general, was very impressive.



Going back to Asian influences, we had Lump Crab Dumplings, served in a Sweet Corn Broth. The plump dumplings were soft and full and the broth had perfect fresh-off-the-ear corn flavor, with subtle hints of orange. Another inventive pairing came with this course: 1999 Trimbach Gewürztraminer, Cuvee des Seigneurs de Ribeaupierre. This rare treat is only made in exceptional years, and is the premier wine of Maison Trimbach, founded in 1629 and run by the 12th generation of the family. The grape is grown in a special soil of marl and limestone and is harvested as late as possible, but without botrytis, so that the flavors of rose petals, lychee

nuts and spices can be appreciated. When young, the roundness and viscosity can mask its typical dryness, and as enjoyable as it is now, it can mature for 10 more years and gain a soft complexity. Another winner with Asian cuisine.



According to the Chef, the fish in our next dish were still in the waters off the Pacific Northwest the day before the dinner. It was moist and succulent Steamed Halibut in a broth of Crushed Tomato, Lemon Grass and Coriander. The lovely white filet was fleshy and flaky at the same time, and the sweet tomato and light touch of coriander produced great flavors. The wine for this course was a 2004 Goldwater "New Dog" Sauvignon Blanc from Marlborough, New Zealand. This region has become famous for its expertise with this grape and was a great choice. Very dry, crisp and vibrant to help cleanse the palate and with a big, fruit-driven style.

It had lemon and light grassy notes that married well with the food. As commentator Tory Jacobs indicated, Sauvignon Blanc is one of the most food-friendly grapes, it can complement a wide range of foods, and it can be served young or aged depending on the style.





Our meat course was Indochine Rack of Lamb, served with Field Greens and Green Herb Vinaigrette. The racks had been spice rubbed and roasted to pink perfection, and each chop came with a creamy sauce on the side. The nice spice in the dish went perfectly with John Sullivan's wine selection: 2000 San Vicente Rioja (100% Tempranillo).

As he mentioned, in translation this particular small-berried clone would be called "fuzzy" and the wine did in fact display a nice duskiness, almost a hint of truffle. It was fat and ripe with big flavors of black berry fruits and cherry and a slightly spicy finish. John also pointed out that Spain has the most acreage planted to vine of any country in the world, and is the third largest wine producer. He noted that the wine industry in Spain is rapidly changing and this Rioja represents a newer style with more sophisticated vinification techniques.



For our really big finish, we were treated to Warm Bittersweet Chocolate Bomb with Raspberries and a small ramekin of Dulce de Leche Ice Cream. Chef Jonathan and his Pastry Chef have perfected this classic dish after way too many pounds of chocolate and lots of different utensils. The cupcake-sized dark cake is dusted with a light sprinkle of powdered sugar and, when cut open, reveals a warm gush of liquid chocolate. Sensational! John Kuczanski found an excellent dessert wine for this dish on a trip to Oregon: 2000 Montinore Estate Late Harvest Pinot Noir, and he went through great pains to get it here. This delightful and different offering is actually a blend of Pinot Noir and Gewürztraminer, with sweet and rich flavors of raspberry and cherry followed by blue and blackberry and some orange spice. Unusual techniques, including freezing the juice for concentration and returning it to the crushed skins after fermentation,

give it great flavors and color and a residual sugar of 13.4% and 17.65% alcohol. It is a very different and fun wine.



This evening was a fantastic opportunity to try out-of-the-ordinary wines. The choice of restaurant and the dishes were perfectly suited to enhance our education and experience, and our lively crowd obviously enjoyed it. Olin and John did a magnificent job of organizing the dinner menu and pairing the wines, adding a new dimension to Wine, Food, and Friends.





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RECEPTION

TUNA TARTARE IN CORN CUPS
CRISP POTATO PANCAKES WITH CRÈME FRAICHE AND CAVIAR
MISO RUBBED CHICKEN SATAY
"R" DE RUINART BRUT CHAMPAGNE

MENU

CITRUS CURED WILD SALMON
CRISP CUCUMBER / TOBIKO
2003 KING ESTATE OREGON PINOT GRIS



FOIE GRAS SAUTÉ
SOUR APPLE TATIN / BOTRYTIS GELÉE / PORT SYRUP
1996 CHATEAU D'ARCHE SAUTERNE



LUMP CRAB DUMPLINGS
SWEET CORN BROTH
1999 TRIMBACH GEWURTZTRAMINER, CUVÉE DES SEIGNEURS DE RIBEAUPIERRE



STEAMED HALIBUT
CRUSHED TOMATO / LEMON GRASS / CORIANDER
2004 GOLDWATER NEW DOG MARLBOROUGH SAUVIGNON BLANC



INDOCHINE RACK OF LAMB
FIELD GREENS / GREEN HERB VINAIGRETTE
2000 SAN VICENTE TEMPRANILLO



WARM BITTERSWEET CHOCOLATE BOMB
RASPBERRIES / DULCE DE LECHE ICE CREAM
2000 MONTINORE ESTATE LATE HARVEST PINOT NOIR

HOSTS: OLIN MCKENZIE & JOHN SULLIVAN

CHEF / OWNER: JONATHAN EISMANN

253rd Branch Event