



*The International Wine & Food Society*  
Miami Branch

## **IW&FS 2006 Opening Coed**

October 18, 2006

### **Cacao** Coral Gables

Dear IW&FS Member:

You are invited to our 268<sup>th</sup> event.

**WHERE:**

Cacao  
141 Giralda Avenue  
Coral Gables, FL 33134  
(305) 445-1001

**WHEN:**

Wednesday, October 18, 2006  
Reception at 7:00 PM  
Dinner at 7:45 PM

**EVENT DESCRIPTION:**

Opened in October 2002, Cacao Restaurant is the carefully nourished creation of internationally acclaimed Executive Chef Edgar Leal.

Cacao translates from Spanish as chocolate, and when creating the restaurant, Leal envisioned a name that would be instantly recognizable as something pleasurable in many languages. The name evokes the overall concept of a dining experience that is divine to the senses – delectable on the palate and sensuous to the eyes. Each time I have visited Cacao, its promise has been fulfilled.

Chef/Owner Leal has planned our exquisite 6 course degustation:

- Arepa Chips with Roasted Chicken and Avocado Purée
- Foie Gras Glazed with Balsamic Vinegar
- Pan-seared Rare Tuna with Mixed Greens
- Braised Veal Cheeks
- Wild Boar Tenderloin
- “El Rey” Chocolate Trio Fantasy

Each will be paired with fine wines from our cellar.



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*Cacao*  
RESTAURANT

OCTOBER 18, 2006

**268<sup>th</sup> Branch Event**

**Report by Chris Zoller**

Our first co-ed event of the season brought us to the Peruvian pleasure palace on Giralda Avenue in Coral Gables: Cacao. Our host for this evening was Branch President John Kuczanski. John has enjoyed the Peruvian cuisine of Chef Edgar Leal in the past and found the restaurant agreeable to host our event. We gathered near the open bar to enjoy R de Ruinart Brut Champagne, NV. Crisp and clean, this nice wine has notes of toast and cream on top of the classic apple. With a nice tight *mousse*, and not too much residual sugar, it quenched the thirst and complemented the great passed treats. We had a Salmon Tartar with Aji Amarillo, a nice blend of raw salmon with a pepper sauce (more on that later); much better than sushi, with clean seafood and pepper flavors. A Mini Mushroom and Goat Cheese Empanada was plentifully stuffed with great earthy mushrooms and creamy, tart chevre and was particularly nice with the bubbly. Crispy Rocoto Shrimp rounded out the hors d'oeuvres with another classic. A lively conviviality ensued as couples got to catch up and converse.

We finally got herded into the tables, well arranged with lots of space and great views of each other. John opened the evening by describing the number of members who involved themselves in the tastings, pourings, and pairings. Hosting a dinner is a real pleasure and opportunity and we have a large support group for those interested. John welcomed new members Mike Farra, Fernando Retegui and Ariel Solorzano and some dozen guests. A brief announcement of upcoming event dates concluded the "business" portion of the meeting. Our first wine commentator was Bob Hudson, who thoroughly researches his subject and gave us a great report on the Ruinart while we still had time to enjoy it.

And so down to the real fun: we started with Foie Gras Glazed with Balsamic Vinegar with Roasted Apples and Guava. This was a lovely savory piece of foie, seared but tender in the center, with a painted orange glaze on the plate. Not too much vinegar, but hearty sweetness and delicious cooked fruits. The whole sat on a base of toasted brioche. John went with a Demi-Sec Vouvray from a little-known but highly respected Chateau in the Loire, Huet. It came from an aptly named top vineyard: Le Mont. With 100% botrytis inflicted Chenin Blanc grapes, it showed fine stone fruits and very high acidity along with the gentle sweetness. A finish of orange peel and other citrus was very refreshing. As commentator Steve Blythe pointed out in his excellent report, this vineyard is farmed "bio-dynamique", quite different than organic and a very up and coming trend in France. It was delicious and well-paired with the foie.

Reina Pepiada is a very fancy name for a very fancy version of chicken salad. This spicy treat was presented as a "Mille Fleur" tower of Arepa Chips, Roasted Chicken and Avocado Puree. Garnished with a fantastic basil-infused olive oil, it was unique and delicious. The shredded chicken was tasty and tender and the chips added crispness while the avocado added creamy richness. John found six magnums of the 1996 Meursault Blagny (a Premier Cru) by Louis Latour in the back of our cellar and brought them out to very good use with this dish. This vineyard is exclusive to Latour and is located on a high hillside overlooking Meursault and Puligny-Montrachet, not bad neighbors at all! It is an exemplary white Burgundy showing opulence of chardonnay grapes with the mineral freshness of the soils of the terroir. The nose of floral and citrus aromas proved out in the taste of a subtle complexity between steely acids and generous fruit concentration. It had a dense palate and an austere, elegant, long finish. What a treat!

Moving to a seafood course, we had Pan-Seared Rare Tuna with Mixed Greens, Diced Mango and Aji



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Panca Dressing. The tuna was very good, well prepared and tasty. The sauce was almost like a barbeque sauce and proved to be a real challenge for the wine. John chose a natural pairing for tuna, the pinot noir grape. We had the 1995 Chambolle Musigny Baudes (another Premier Cru) from the other big Burgundy powerhouse, Joseph Drouhin. The 8.45 acre Les Baudes vineyard lies immediately adjacent to the Grand Cru vineyard of Bonnes-Mares and shares the uniquely chalky soil and its inherent Chambolle-Musigny character and delicacy. Within Les Baudes, Andre Gagey purchased 7/10ths of an acre in 1992 and produces only 125 cases per vintage. This is the wine we drank that night. With good color and structure, the wine displayed earth, barnyard tobacco and melon on the nose. It was long on the palate with softened tannins, but a certain firmness and good black fruit flavors, even some licorice and spice on the finish.

Our first meat course was Braised Veal Cheeks with Yuca Mofongo and Wild Mushrooms. This was a tender, fork-only presentation of this lovely cut of veal, slow-cooked to perfection. With a tangy sauce and great mushrooms, it was a wonderful set-up for the red wine choice. The obscure 1998 Elderton CSM from Barossa Valley is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz and Merlot is an exceptionally good value. It is inky purple in color, very full bodied and savory. Peter Benjamin gave us a nice, brief history of the Elderton wines and Nuriootpa, Barossa Valley, South Australia. The wine had a nose of graphite, chocolate, espresso roast coffee, black currants and blackberries. It was huge, what they call chewy, and very rich. It needed lots of air, as John could attest, having decanted it the morning of the dinner! Typical of the big Aussie wines, it was a fruit bomb with some tar and rocks thrown in.

Moving to a game dish, Edgar found some Wild Boar Tenderloin served "Anticucho", a native Peruvian cooking style resembling skewers on a grill. It was served with Huacatay Sauce and Aji Amarillo Mashed Potatoes. Aji Amarillo are special chilies (*Capsicum Annuum*) very common in Peruvian and other Latin cuisines. It has almost berry-like flavors akin to citrus zest. Often used in chutneys and salsas and can be very hot, but was nicely tamed by the mashed potatoes. Huacatay is a mint-like herb, very important in the Andean cuisines of Peru and Bolivia, is sometimes called Peruvian Black Mint and is a cousin to the marigold. Here it really showed up. The tender pieces of boar, with wild but mild game flavors were beautifully complemented by the very minty sauce with pepper on the back palate. This was very genuine Peruvian cooking. This course needed another big wine and John kept the theme up with the 2000 Shafer Relentless Syrah. Very young, this wine showed that it could age for many more years. It was tight, strong and spicy, but time and coaxing in the glass got it to match up with the food beautifully. Ariel Solorzano gave us an excellent history of Shafer Vineyards and the exciting young winemaker, Elias Fernandez, who was the true father of this wine, pushing for the land to be planted to Syrah from the very beginning and following through with his vision and commitment by making this wine from day one his own project. He was, and is, "Relentless". Those who had some of the CSM left had a chance to make a great comparison of Aussie and Napa styles of big bold wines. It was a lot of fun and, as always at these events, a great education.

For the finale, our dessert was "El Rey" Chocolate Trio Fantasy: Milk Chocolate Cone filled with White Chocolate Ice Cream standing on top of a Dark Chocolate Hazelnut and Rum Soup. I think that about says it all. This was a true indulgence, even for chocoholics. It had every style and type of chocolate imaginable, and some zingers. This luscious and decadent dessert allowed John to try something totally new but very appropriate, a red Italian sparkling wine! At the suggestion of new member Mike Bittel, we tried this unique combination and were pleasantly surprised. The 2005 Braida Brachetto d'Acqui was lightly sparkling, not like champagne, but a little spritzy, and had just the right sweetness to confound the usual theory that the dessert wine needs to be sweeter than the dessert. Not necessary in this case and a real treat. It was very a refreshing chaser to the rich chocolates.

This was a fantastic but subtle lesson in elegant Peruvian cuisine, with native and fresh ingredients put to great use in a wonderful six course meal. Chef Leal, who is a co-owner of the restaurant, did a magnificent job with his staff, and the service of the food and the wine were top notch. Many thanks to John for hosting another gathering featuring Wine Food and Friends.





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# *Cacao* RESTAURANT

OCTOBER 18, 2006

## **RECEPTION**

*SALMON TARTAR WITH AJI AMARILLO*  
*MINI MUSHROOM AND GOAT CHEESE EMPANADA*  
*CRISPY ROCOTO SHRIMP*  
**R DE RUINART - BRUT CHAMPAGNE NV**

## **MENU**

***FOIE GRAS GLAZED WITH BALSAMIC VINEGAR***  
***ROASTED APPLES AND GUAVA***  
**2002 HUET LE MONT DEMI-SEC VOUVRAY**



***REINA PEPIADA***  
***AREPA CHIPS WITH ROASTED CHICKEN AND AVOCADO PURÉE***  
**1996 MEURSAULT BLAGNY 1ER, LOUIS LATOUR, EN MAGNUN**



***PAN-SEARED RARE TUNA WITH MIXED GREENS,***  
***DICED MANGO AND AJI PANCA DRESSING***  
**1995 CHAMBOLLE MUSIGNY BAUDES 1ER, JOSEPH DROUHIN**



***BRAISED VEAL CHEEKS***  
***YUCA MOFONGO AND WILD MUSHROOMS***  
**1998 ELDETON CSM, BAROSSA VALLEY**



***WILD BOAR TENDERLOIN ANTICUCHO***  
***HUACATAY SAUCE AND AJI AMARILLO MASHED POTATOES***  
**2000 SHAFER 'RELENTLESS' SYRAH**



***“EL REY” CHOCOLATE TRIO FANTASY***  
***MILK CHOCOLATE CONE FILLED WITH WHITE CHOCOLATE ICE CREAM***  
***STANDING ON TOP OF A DARK CHOCOLATE HAZELNUT AND RUM SOUP***  
**2005 BRAIDA BRACHETTO D'ACQUI**

**HOST: JOHN KUCZWANSKI**

**CHEF: EDGAR LEAL**

**268<sup>th</sup> Branch Event**