

THE INTERNATIONAL WINE AND FOOD SOCIETY
MIAMI CHAPTER

SEVENTY-FOURTH DINNER

The Bath Club
Miami Beach, Florida

February 9, 1977

Saint-Véran 1974
Moillard

Hors-d'Oeuvre

Sylvaner "Hugel" 1973
Estate Bottled

Mousse de Foie Gras
en Aspic

de Ladoucette 1974

Coquilles Saint-Jacques

Côte-Rôtie 1970
Domaine Gerin

Caneton à la Bigarade
Riz Sauvage
Fond d'Artichauts
aux Marron Farcis

Ch. Léoville Poyferré 1966

Fromages de France Assortis

Moët et Chandon, N.V.
Demi-Sec

Oeufs à la Neige

Demi-tasse

Petits Macarons

Hosts: Alvin E. Duryea, Jr.
J. Lockett Yawn, Jr.

Chef de Cuisine: Ralph Wood
Directeur: Frank G. Cibula

WINE NOTES

Saint Véran

Burgandy white wine.

District: Maconnais, France.

Not far in fact or intent from the more famous Appellation Contrôlée of Pouilly-Fuissé, this region also makes white wine from the Chardonnay grape. Some 15,000 hectoliters (397,500 U.S. gallons, 330,000 imp.) are produced annually.

Sylvaner

A productive white grape grown in Alsace, Austria, Switzerland, and Germany. The wines it gives are light and pleasant. It is also called Österreicher or Franken in German-speaking countries.

Intermediate in quality between the more common wines such as the Chasselas and the finer wines. A pleasant light luncheon wine, sometimes refreshingly prickling (with a pointe de fraîcheur) and comparable with Sylvaners of the same class from across the Rhine in the German Palatinate. The wine has a pale green-gold color, fruitiness, and a discreet bouquet. It should be drunk young. Under certain conditions it may qualify as a Grand Vin.

Pouilly-Fumé

Loire Valley white wines.

District: Loire Valley, France.

Excellent dry, white, Loire Valley wine. At Pouilly, below Nevers in the Loire Valley, the land rises gently, almost imperceptibly, from the often sluggish river, but sufficiently for vines to grow—they are always happier on hillsides than on plains. Two types of grapevines are grown and two types of wine made, both white, both dry, but otherwise entirely different.

Pouilly-Fumé is the better wine. It comes from Sauvignon grapes and is light yet round, crisp, and eminently pleasing and refreshing. Similarities both in style and name cause it to be confused with Pouilly-Fuissé from the Mâcon district, but in truth the two are entirely different. The Loire's slightly lesser offering is marked by what is usually called a "gunflint" dryness and an indescribable flavor often compared to truffles. But although the flavor can be delightful, the wines usually lack breed.

The lesser wine is Pouilly-sur-Loire from Chasselas grapes, which are mostly grown in clay soil. The wine is almost as dry as its more impressive neighbor but has far less staying power and tends toward commonness; a respectable carafe wine in its native habitat, but of little interest elsewhere.

Some 800 hectares (2,000 acres) are devoted to Pouilly's vineyards, on which there is more Chasselas planted than Sauvignon. The yearly output is close to 15,000 hectoliters (397,500 U.S. gallons, 330,000 imp.) of Pouilly-Fumé, and only about one-third that much of Pouilly-sur-Loire.

Côte Rôtie

Red wine.

District: Rhône Valley, France.

The second most celebrated of the Rhône wines, coming after Châteauneuf-du-Pape, is the red Côte Rôtie, generous, rich in color and tasting of truffles or raspberries. The "roasted slope" is on a hillside, barely two miles long and terraced steeply with old stone walls. Here, in the exiguous parcels of vineyard, the grapes sun themselves on the vines all the summer long. The Côte lies on the right bank of the River Rhône at the northern end of the Côtes du Rhône region. The vineyards are split between the communes of Ampuis and Tupin-et-Semons and face south-southeast. The wines are high in alcohol and have a concentrated astringent characteristic.

The slope is in two parts: the Côte Brune and the Côte Blonde. The difference can be seen in the soil and tasted in the wines. In the Côte Brune, the land is brownish, rich in clay, containing large amounts of iron oxide; the Côte Blonde's soil, lighter in color, is dominated by chalk and clay. The wines of the Côte Brune are the milder at the outset but become strong and vigorous with age, while their blond counterparts are sprightly and gay when young but fade considerably faster. Legend has it that the real reason for the difference between the two is that Maugiron--an early lord of Ampuis--presented these vineyards to his two daughters, one blond, the other brunette, and the slopes assumed the characteristics of their respective mistresses and have retained them ever since.

The wines of both slopes are red. Full to a point of concentrated warmth and long-lived, they have an assertive bouquet, and a suave satiny finish. To avoid an excess of vigor, the vigneron adds to his fermenting wine a small amount--never more than 20% of the total--of white grapes. This addition rounds it out and adds a measure of finesse. Syrah is the red grape used, Viognier the white, and the two grow side by side on the plunging cliffs.

In recent years the vineyards have been shrinking because of the steepness of the slopes where they are set out. Mechanization is impossible, and all the labor must be done by hand. Paradoxically enough, the wines have been gaining in reputation as the vineyards have been shrinking, and the obvious temptation to "stretch" the wines has not, unfortunately, always been resisted. Present official figures reveal about 60 hectares (150 acres) of vines in the Cote Rotie, and about 2,000 hectoliters (53,000 U.S. gallons, 44,000 imp.) of wine annually.

Château Léoville-Poyferré

Bordeaux red wine.

District: Haut-Médoc, France.

Commune: St.-Julien.

A Second Growth (Deuxième Cru) of the Médoc as classified in 1855, Poyferré once formed a single vineyard with the two other Léoville Growths, Barton and Las-Cases. Started in the seventeenth century, it was bought and renamed by a president of the parliament of Bordeaux, a M. Léoville, who died in 1769. During the Revolution the entire Léoville property was sequestered, but eventually, in 1830, one-fourth of the vineyard was purchased by Baron Poyferré. The Cuvelier family now owns the estate. The wine can be the best of the Léovilles, and the 1929 in particular was considered one of the finest bottles of this century in the Médoc, though it is now little more than a memory.