



DECEMBER 2023

# The Omaha Metro Food & Wine gazette

Event Report and IWFS Chicago:  
Festival Burgundy Master Class  
Upcoming Events.

Event Report:  
The Chef Around the Block 10-8-2023  
Story & Photos by Tom Murnan

What a neat event! We tried a new-to-us pop-up chef, Dan Benigno, in the old Grey Plume Restaurant. You would not recognize its old appearance. A jack of many trades, Dan does private cooking classes, dinners & events, catering, and culinary pop-ups. We had the first sparkling wine blind tasting that I can remember for years, and wines from around the globe. There was no shortage of food with six courses plus hors d'oeuvres.

After quaffing and appetizers, we were given 5 flutes of sparkling wine, only one of which was a true Champagne. We had to match the glass to our printed list. The color of all the wines was surprisingly uniform. Which was the Mumms Napa Brut, Piper-Heidsieck Champagne Cuveé Brut, Nino Franco Rustia Prosecco, Keush Origins (Armenia) and Jansz (Australia)? When the dust settled, we had two women who got 3 correct: Rhonda Wilke and new member Gloria Kathurima. Way to go, ladies!

Chef Benigno's Saturday cooking class made the pasta for our Sunday dinner, a Fettuccini & Oyster Mushrooms with Tarragon Goat Cheese Sauce. My favorite part was the mushrooms. The wine was an outstanding Grand Cru Alsatian: Boeckel Pinot Gris Zotzenberg 2018. Second Course was Duck Breast with Blackberry Sauce on Mixed Greens. The duck was elegant and cooked expertly, but I thought the greens were a bit of a startle, so rustic, for such a refined dish. It was served in a bowl which made cutting the duck difficult. Otherwise, it tasted great. The Lachini Pinot Noir 2012 was a good match.

Indian Chicken Tikka Masala on Biryani Rice had Gara Masala (which contains cardamom, cumin curry, and cloves, and other spices ground into a powder). We had another Boeckel Grand Cru, a Riesling Wiebelsberg 2017, which was, like most Alsatian Rieslings, dry. If it were a bit sweeter, it would have cut down some heat from the spice. Maple Balsamic Trout was nice, as was the Beef Wellington stuffed with Prosciutto & Duxelles. The puff pastry shell was sitting on Roasted Garlic Mashed Potatoes. Very nice, but I was getting pretty full. Two reds here: an O'Shaughnessy Napa Cabernet 2018 and a Bodegas Salentein Malbec Fincas Tomillo 2015, both good matches. We finished with three Chocolate Bonbons by Nibbs Chocolates with Le Brun de Neuville Champagne Blanc des Blancs NV. Champagne goes with almost anything.

Many thanks to Susan Rauth and Brent Rasmussen, our dynamic event producer duo, and of course the staff of Chef Benigno, which included his two sons Kianu & Orilen, Rachael Hamilton his significant other, and Karly Delgado, sous-chef.



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"The The older I get, the better I used to be."  
- Lee Trevino

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# IWFS Chicago Festival A French Wine Experience September 6-9, 2023

## Vosne-Romanée Master Class conducted by Allen Meadows Part 2 of 4

Written by Tom Murnan, Photos by Tom Murnan

Our Allen Meadows (AM) Master Class where only Premier Crus were presented, focused solely on the year 2015 in Burgundy's Vosne-Romanée (VR) AOC, ( part of the Côte de Nuits) arguably the best appellation in Burgundy. Vosne was well known in the 7th century. Napoleon Bonaparte carried Chambertin (another Côte de Nuits) with him on his military campaigns. Modern Burgundy only started in 1985. VR makes the spiciest wine in Burgundy, that expresses itself in a sandalwood nose and taste.

2015 was hot and dry, similar to 2005. Many growers did not want to make the 2005 mistake of making the wines too tannic, so they did not punch down the cap (of skins and solids in the fermenting tank) very much, and instead used the gentler pumping-over method. 2015 also had very rapid, one week flowering, making the grapes uniform during harvest. Overall, 2015 is a great vintage, with a larger number of village level wines being quite good. We started with the least structured wine and went to the most powerful. 1. **VR 1er cru, Les Charmes, Dom. François Lamarche** was our first wine. Precocious and less expensive, it was easy to understand but somewhat simple. AM rating 89-92. Drinking window 2022+. 2. **VR 1er cru, Clos des Réas, Dom. Michael Gros**, is a monopole (single owner) in an enclosed vineyard with a stone wall (clos), which blocks the wind and holds in the heat during the day, enhancing the fruit to ripen more rapidly. The berries were small but with thick skins, but the wine had good acidity. AM rating 90-93 Drinking window 2026+. 3. **VR 1er cru, En Orveaux, Dom. Guyon**. When the AOC system was implemented in the mid 1930's, En Orveaux was divided between Échézeaux, where it is designated as a Grand Cru climat of 5.04 hectares, and VR, where it is designated as a 1er cru of just 1.79 hectares. It has high clay content in its soil. En Orveaux is a wine of delicacy, restrained, with a subtle mineral streak. I found it a bit more tannic than the previous two wines. AM says it needs another 5 years.









# UPCOMING OMAHA METRO EVENTS

DEC  
10

## HOLIDAY EVENT AT HAPPY HOLLOW CLUB

Joint event between the  
Omaha and Metro Omaha Branches  
Producers: Joe Goldstein and Mike Wilke

JAN  
21

## VENUE TBD

Theme TBD

Event producers: Dave & Tabitha Thrasher

### HOSTING AN EVENT?

Let us know when, where and a little bit about what's going on!

We would love to include YOUR event on the calendar!

Email details to: [iwfs.councilbluffs@yahoo.com](mailto:iwfs.councilbluffs@yahoo.com)