

January 2015

The Bluffs Food & Wine gazette

INSTITUT PAUL BOCUSE

Event Report:

President's Holiday Dinner

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A publication of the Council Bluffs Branch of the International Wine and Food Society



President's Comments

Dear Members,

Our real first experience with tasting wine was at a Pinot Noir Festival, Pinot on the River, in a small town called Guerneville in the Russian Valley in Sonoma County California. It was the first year for the event.

This event focused on 25 highly allocated, limited-production Pinot Noirs from the Russian River Valley. It was a very casual affair. Under 2 large Circus tents, winemakers stood behind 8ft tables talking about their wines, answering questions and pouring full glasses (their goal, I think, was that you would try fewer wines if you drank a full glass). We spent the day tasting Pinot and trying to learn what to look for in a wine. They recently held their 11th celebration with over 100 producers.

The Russian River Valley is named for the river that the Russian fur traders would come down from Alaska in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries.

The proximity of this cool river and the rolling fogs from the Pacific Ocean make the area amenable to cool-climate grapes like Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. In fact, the region is well known for these wines.

Since attending that festival, Pinot Noir has been a favorite wine for us. Rodney Strong in Healdsburg, Ca. was one of the wineries we visited on that trip, so when we came across one of their Pinot Noirs recently it was worth tasting. It is a 2012 Russian River Valley Estate Vineyard Pinot Noir. Rodney Strong is well known for their Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays. The vineyard was started in 1959 and planted its first Pinot Noir in the Russian River Valley in 1968.

This Pinot Noir is a food friendly wine with light body, dryness and crisp acidity. It should pair well with pork chops, steaks or salmon. It has flavors of ripe raspberries, cherries and pomegranates, with toasty, spicy oak accents. It is rated 90 points by Wine Enthusiast and is available at Costco.

I hope you will try it and share it with your friends.

Enjoy!

Bob Kossow

**"I have lived temperately....I double the
doctor's recommendation of a glass and a half
wine each day and even treble it with a friend."**

—Thomas Jefferson

Cover photo by Jill Panzer



Editor's Corner

If you were unable to attend the President's Holiday Dinner at the Omaha Press Club, you missed a good one. The Press Club was decked out in its Holiday best, with a nice Christmas tree where I took everyone's photo as they arrived. If anyone wants a copy of their photo, just email me at murnantom@gmail.com. For the past two years, we have had the club to ourselves because the event is being held on a Sunday. Pretty cozy! They even moved Todd Lemke's caricature Face on the Barroom Floor over to our dining room.

Our IWFS Rhône Cruise series continues, this time with a side trip taken by only one member of the Omaha Council Bluffs area: our own Jill Panzer. This was a fascinating visit to one of Paul Bocuse's many culinary ventures: a cooking school. Don't miss this story. It even has recipes the participants received from the school.

Has anyone tried any of the recipes I occasionally insert into the Gazette? Typically, there is no time to practice making one before the publication deadline. I rely on the chef to cut them down to size. I usually ask to serve eight persons. Well, Mary tried making the Wild Mushroom & Gorgonzola Bread Pudding from Happy Hollow's Chef Jason Hughes [May 2014 Bluffs Gazette]. It was heavenly, but even cutting it in half we had 16 ramekins of bread pudding! Way more than eight ramekins worth. It always pays to practice before you invite the guests!

After his absence, Professor John Fischer is back in the saddle again, teaching us about wine. John unravels the mystery of wine and food pairing by applying four easy to remember principles to wine and food matches. Temperature, tartness, sauces, and method of cooking all affect how your wine will match food. We mentioned one of these principles in the December event report, but John has filled out this theme nicely. This is a must read, educational piece. That's one reason why you belong to this branch, right? You want to learn more about food and wine.

Bon Appétit et bon vin!

Tom Murnan



**"Exercise is a dirty word. Every time I hear it,
I wash my mouth out with chocolate."**

—Charles Schulz



Event Report: President's Holiday Dinner

by Tom Murnan

It seems that the spectacular Omaha Press Club has become our default, go-to place for our President's Holiday Dinner. It is always a pleasure to be dining on top of the world! We had the top story to ourselves as Steve Villamonte graciously arranged the floor just for our Branch. Thirty one members reserved and twenty-nine attended.

President Bob Kossow may have started another tradition: a slide show of the entire year's events. I nearly maxed out my Google Drive sending a sampling of the photos of all the events for the slide show. It was interesting to go back and review and recall. Bob organized them and gave them about 5 seconds for each shot. Great idea, Bob.

While we were watching the slide show (and a pro football game on the other screen), our quaffing wines were poured and the **Amuse-Bouche** served. We

enjoyed a few red quaffing wines from the Branch cellar, and a **2010 Argyle Vintage Brut** sparkling wine from Oregon. A blend of 55% Chardonnay and 45% Pinot Noir, it approximated a French Champagne in flavors and texture. The **Mediterranean & Stichelton Portabella Flat Breads**, while tasty, were messy and hard to eat with the napkins proffered by the servers. The "pizza" like flatbreads were not rigid enough to go unsupported, and I was getting the napkin in my mouth as I tried to eat them. Small plates would have worked better. The carpet was littered with small pieces of ingredients as we tried to gracefully eat these tasty morsels.

Dinner was in another room with four tables set with plates, flatware linens and glasses. Before eating, President Kossow thanked everyone who put on an event during 2014. He then presented our newest member, **Chris Toth**. Unfortunately,



Chris' wife **Cristina** was unable to attend. Bob assigned each table to discuss the wines after each course. The next three courses had two wines each.

We started with a **Shrimp Trio**. The trio consisted of **Shrimp Ceviche**, **Lemon Shrimp** and **Shrimp Beurre Blanc**. It was served cool. Nicely presented, the three shrimp preparations were stacked on each other, with a tomato sauce with thyme smear and a light puff pastry baton for garnish.

Our two wines were a **2013 St Clair Wairau Reserve Sauvignon Blanc** from Marlborough, New Zealand and

the **2013 Cambria Katherine's Vineyard Chardonnay** from Santa Maria Valley, CA. My immediate impression of the St Clair was GRASSY! Aggressively grassy to me, but, I admit I am not a fan of that flavor profile. With food, the grassiness leveled off. The Chardonnay was oaky, balanced and heavy, with a persistent long farewell. The vote of all tables was 2/3 SB and 1/3 favoring the Chard.

Villamonte's famous **Thunderbird Salad** in Parmesan Cup was next. Developed by Steve's father Luis at the Happy Hollow Club for a wedding, Steve decided to trade mark it himself. The process took three years! This

is always an interesting and delicious salad for me, with assertive flavors. Perhaps that's why Bob took the unusual step of pairing red wines with salad. It seemed to work, I thought. We compared a **2008 Bergstrom Cumberland Reserve Pinot Noir** from Oregon's Willamette Valley to the **2009 Naoussa Boutari** from, of all places, Greece!

The Bergstrom was balanced, earthy and a bit tannic and was a bit overwhelmed by the salad. The Boutari, coming from Greece was amazing, one of the country's finer efforts. It was a bit like a Pinot, but a bit rough and acidic. It uses the indigenous



grape named Xinomavro. It seemed to me to be a bit strong for the salad, but it was tamed by the Parmesan Cup. The vote was 4/5 in favor of the Greek wine and 1/5 for the Bergstrom.

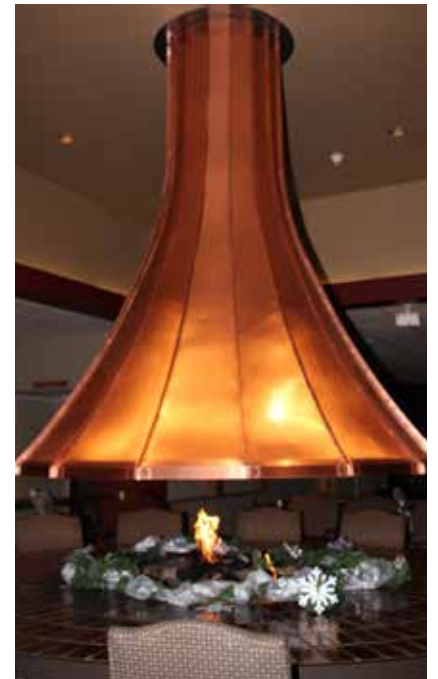
Our Entrée consisted of a **Pan Braised Beef Tenderloin with Blackberry Clos Du Val Gastrique, Roasted Fingerling Potatoes and Bundled Root Vegetables**. The beef was a bit tepid, but had deep beefy flavor. A gastrique is caramelized sugar deglazed with vinegar with just about anything else added to that base. In our case, it was blackberries and Clos du Val red wine. The result: a fine sauce. We had

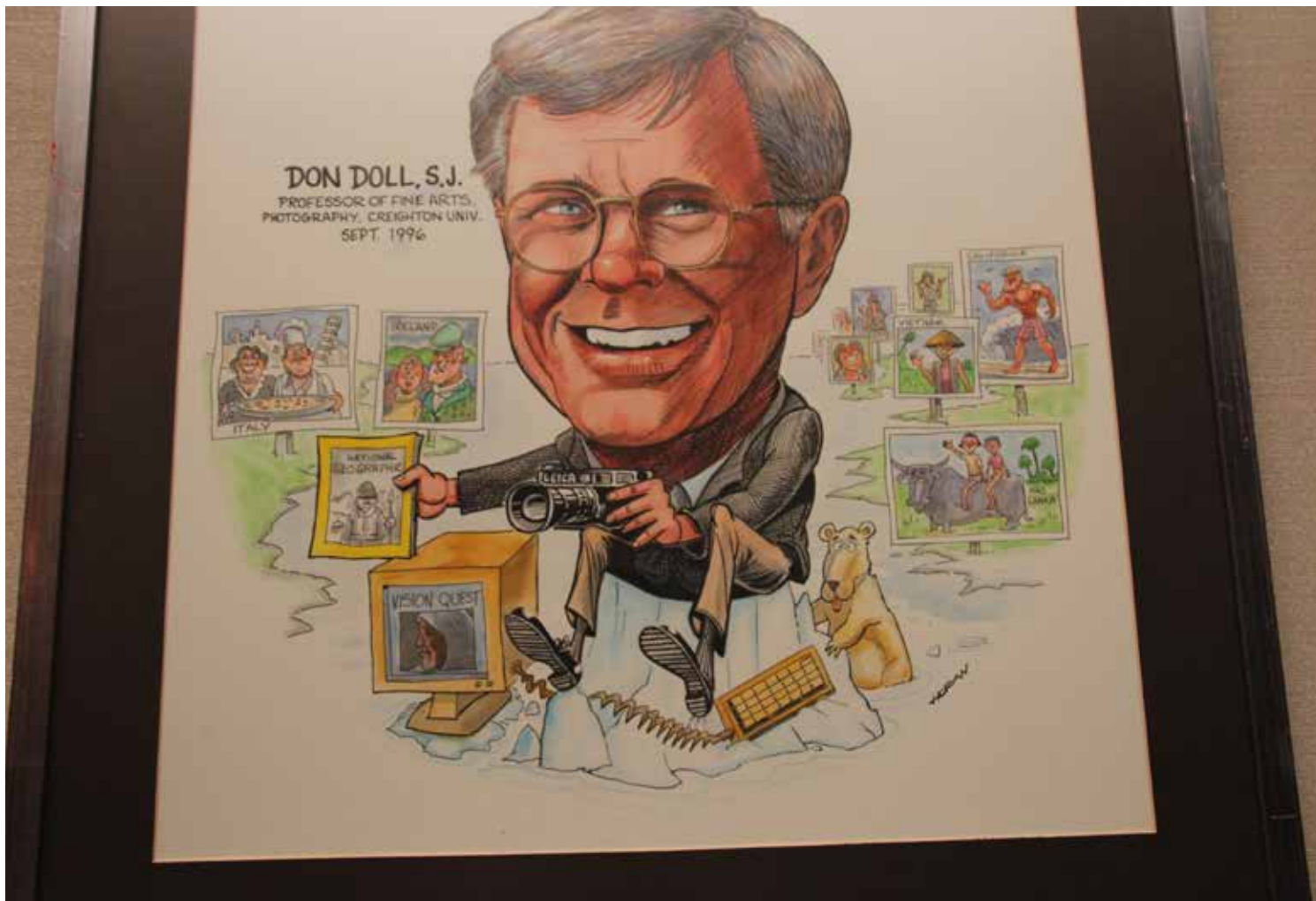
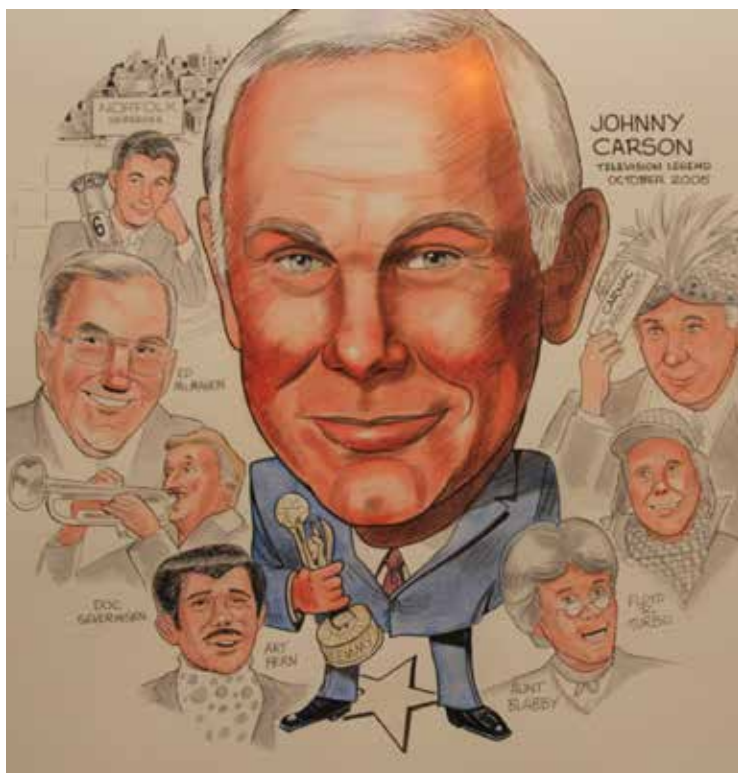
two cabernets to compare. The **2011 Black Stallion and a 2010 Volker Eisele Family Estate**. Bob Kossow got up and told us he and Suzanne went to Volker Eisele for a visit. Volker came from Germany and found the 400 acre estate in disarray. In 1974 he bought the old Lomita's Vineyard and became an expert in grape growing. The estate is certified organic as they feel it is the best way to raise grapes.

Dessert was a **President's Medallion Crème Brûlée**. A traditional French styled custard finished with a cap of hardened caramelized sugar by a blow torch (brûlée), it was nicely garnished with sliced red

strawberries for color and flavor, and a dollop of whipped cream to the side. It is the classic accompaniment to a Sauternes or Barsac, the honeyed, sweet French dessert wine. The honey flavors come from the noble rot the grapes get affected with. Taken from the Branch cellar, the **2003 Château Coutet** from Barsac, France fulfilled its role nicely. Slightly sweeter than the custard, it was a great match.

Many thanks to Bob and Suzanne Kossow for all the planning and preparations, to Todd Lemke for securing the venue, and to Steve Villamonte and his staff who did a great job of serving us.









L'École de Cuisine de l'Institut Paul Bocuse

by Jill Panzer
& Tom Murnan

Continuing our mini-series on the IWFS Rhône Cruise, and going back to **June 10, 2014**, this was a side trip to one of Paul Bocuse's culinary ventures when the ship returned to Lyon on its way back down the river. Besides the renown Michelin three star Restaurant Paul Bocuse, the master also has four less formal restaurants named (in English) after the main points on the compass: North, South East or West Brasserie-Paul Bocuse. The School of Cuisine of the Institut Paul Bocuse is comparable to our Culinary Institute on the campus of the Metropolitan Community College in Omaha. It has regular, enrolled students as well as tourists and locals who just want to audit a class or two. The SS Catherine only offered this excursion to 15 members, and Jill was lucky enough to get the last two tickets for herself and Cathy Calous, a friend.

The Institute is incredibly modern and stylish, a beautiful room with glass walls, immaculately clean and sleek kitchen, and cameras at different angles to watch what the chef is doing and increase audience participation. Surprisingly,







they had an electric stove, not a gas one. It featured a steam oven, which was used like a microwave to warm and heat things up, but more evenly than the microwave, which can leave cold spots. The cooking island seemed one large space as one walked in, but it opened up into two parts, one for the observers, then a free area for the Chef, then the glass top of the stove.

The instructor today was **Chef Phillippe Jousse**. All the ingredients had been prepared beforehand, so there was no cleaning, slicing or dicing. Everything was ready to be assembled. Three recipes were presented: Lyonnaise salad; Pike Quenelles (a kind of dumpling) in Crayfish Sauce; and Snow egg white in Vanilla Custard Cream. All the recipes were labor intensive, but participants got to taste the results. The **wow factor** was amazing!

Techniques were a focus of the class as well. For example, classic **Lyonnaise Salad** has a poached egg on top of the frisée lettuce. But, as anyone who has ever tried to

poach an egg knows, this is easier said than done. Typically, you have little stringers of egg falling away from the main body of the egg whites. You may even resort to using those little aluminum poaching cups so everything stays together. But Chef Jousse taught the technique of poaching perfect eggs. The secret is to add a small amount of white vinegar to the water.

Pike Quenelles are dumplings made from fish (the Pike) that has been made into a paste by rubbing it through a sieve. In the old days, before the invention of blenders or food processors, the way you puréed things was to force them through the small holes in a sieve. A lot of grunt work. The first time through, you rid the fish of its bones. Then you force it through again to get the purée consistency. The trick comes when you poach the quenelle. The batter always wants to stick to the spoon for the amateur, and they end up looking anything but like the beautiful spoon shaped dumpling you see in photographs. The technique is to

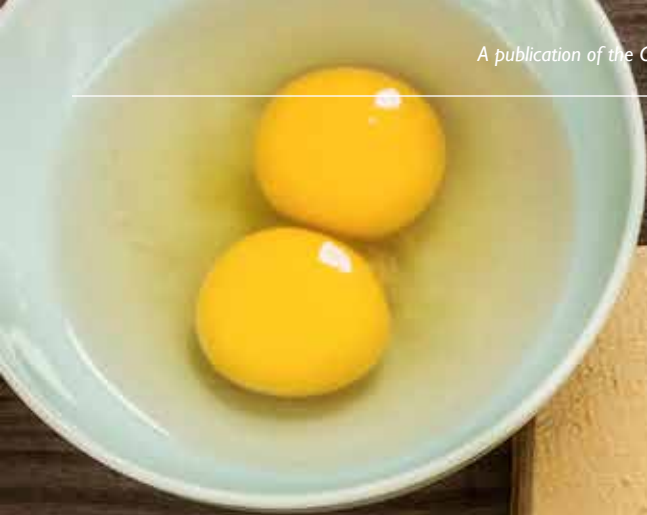
scoop the batter into a large spoon towards you, then go the opposite way, 360° all the way around for a nicely shaped scoop. To get the batter into the poaching liquid, gently agitate the spoon in the poaching liquid and the quenelle will fall off the spoon and into the liquid.

The third recipe, the **Snow Egg White in Vanilla Custard Cream** was nicknamed "The Cloud" for its white, ethereal consistency. Not in the printed recipe handout given to each participant was the bird's nest garnish. This is visually spectacular, but again, labor intensive. Caramelize about 4 cups of sugar until it is dark brown. Remember that the sugar is intensely hot, way hotter than boiling water. Take two wooden spoons and put them over the edge of your working surface, weighed down by something heavy like a cooking sheet. On the floor put a wide swatch of newspapers. You are going to take the hot sugar and drizzle it over the two spoons by sticking a two pronged

fork (like a meat carving fork), into the hot sugar, and flicking it over the spoon handles. You are working at about waist height. As the sugar cools and drips to the floor, it makes thin strands. When you have enough strands, take your hands and mold them, while still warm (but not hot) into a ball to make a kind of nest. You have to do this before the sugar cools so much that it won't adhere to each other. It makes for a dramatic presentation.

The Institut was a great learning experience for all present. Everyone was given a booklet with the three recipes, and we will feature them here. Jill left the class feeling inspired. "The food was fancy but easy to make." You can also go to **Philippe.jousse@institutpaulbocuse.com** for more recipes and information. Later in the year, in November, Jousse was named Chef of the Year at the Food and Flavor Awards in France's Ain department.





Pike Quenelles in Crayfish Sauce

Chef Philippe Jousse

Ingredients:

Pike

½lb Pike Fillet
5 Egg Yolks
5 Egg Whites
2½ oz butter
Salt & Cayenne Pepper to taste

Panade

1 cup milk
2 ounces butter
3 ounces flour

Crayfish Sauce

⅓ lb live Crayfish
2 cups olive oil
2 ounces butter
3½ ounces carrot
3½ ounces onion
1½ ounces shallot
1lb tomatoes
1½ ounces tomato paste
¾ ounce garlic
1 bunch Bouquet Garni
1 Tablespoon Chervil
1 Tablespoon Tarragon
2 ounces Cognac
1 cup white wine
6 cups water or fish stock

To Thicken the Sauce

2 ounces butter
2 Tablespoons flour

Seasoning of the Sauce

1½ Tablespoons Tarragon
1½ Tablespoons Chervil
2 ounces butter
Salt to taste
Cayenne Pepper to taste

Panade

Heat the milk with the butter. Add in the flour while mixing with a spatula. Dry the dough over low heat while continuously mixing. Remove. Allow slight cooling and incorporate 5 egg yolks progressively.

Pike Quenelles or Dumplings

Mince the pike fillet and pour through a fine sieve. The first time through, you rid the fish of its bones. Then you force it through again to get the purée consistency.

Place in a mixer and incorporate the egg whites progressively. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Incorporate the panade and the soft butter. Place in the refrigerator to harden. Shape the dumplings with a spoon and poach 10 minutes in simmering water. The technique is to scoop the batter into a large spoon towards you, then go the opposite way, 360° all the way around for a nicely shaped scoop. To get the batter into the poaching liquid, gently agitate the spoon in the poaching liquid and the quenelle will fall off the spoon and into the liquid. Remove and chill in ice water bath and drain.

Crayfish Sauce

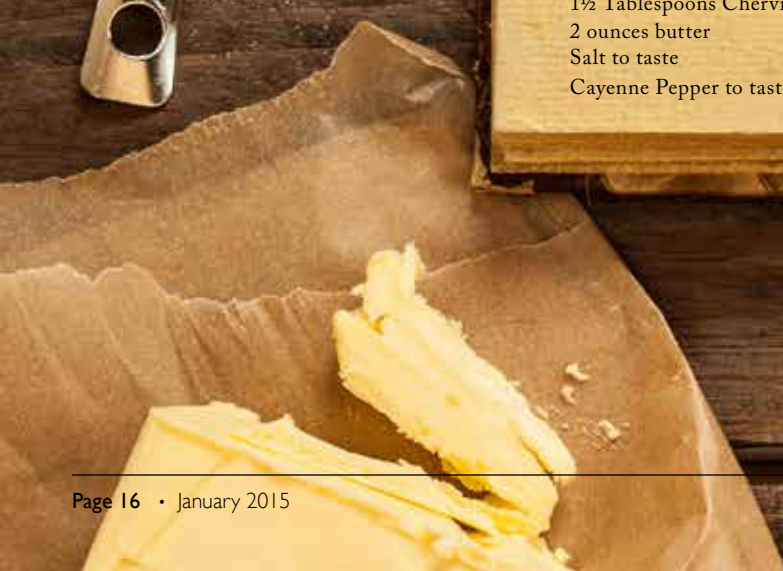
Cook the live crayfish in boiling salted water. Remove the shells and reserve the tails. Peel and cut the vegetable garnish into small dice. Prepare the bouquet garni and tie with butcher string.

In a Dutch oven, heat the olive oil and butter, add the crayfish shells and bodies and sauté on high heat. Add the diced vegetables and sweat for a few minutes. Pour the Cognac, then the white wine and reduce two minutes. Add the water or the fish stock, then the tomatoes, tomato paste, garlic, bouquet garni, tarragon and chervil. Season with salt, pepper and Cayenne pepper. Cook on low heat for 30 to 40 minutes. Pour through a fine sieve and thicken the liquid with the butter flour mixture. Simmer for approximately 10 minutes. Rectify the seasoning, pour the sauce again through a fine sieve. Add in the chopped chervil, chopped tarragon and the fresh butter.

Serving

Place the quenelles into a buttered gratin dish. Pour the sauce over, add the crayfish tails and bake approximately 10 minutes in a preheated oven at 400°F oven. Serve immediately.

Serves 10.





*Snow-Egg White & Vanilla
Custard Cream
"The Cloud"
with Bird's Nest Garnish*
Chef Philippe Jousse

Ingredients:

9 eggs whites only
14 Tablespoons sugar
1 pinch salt

Vanilla Custard Cream

4¼ cups milk
3 egg yolks
7 Tablespoons sugar
½ vanilla bean

Bird's Nest

4 cups sugar

Meringue

Whip the egg whites with the salt. Add the sugar progressively and whip until a firm consistency is reached.

Shape the mixture with a spoon and poach 1 minute in simmering water. Flip over and cook 1 more minute on the other side. Remove and place on a kitchen cloth.

Vanilla Custard Cream

Bring to a boil the milk with the vanilla bean cut in half lengthwise and ¼ of the sugar. Mix well the remaining sugar with the egg yolks. Pour over half of the hot milk, mix well with a whisk and transfer the mixture back to the pan with the remaining milk. Cook on low heat while continuously stirring with a spatula. When the cream is coating the spatula, remove from the heat and pour through a fine sieve. Chill and serve with the snow egg whites. Garnish with the Bird's Nest sugar.

Bird's Nest

Caramelize the 4 cups of sugar until it is dark brown. Remember that the sugar is intensely hot, way hotter than boiling water. Take two wooden spoons and put them over the edge of your working surface, weighed down by something heavy like a cooking sheet. On the floor put a wide swatch of newspapers. You are going to take the hot sugar and drizzle it over the two spoons by sticking a two pronged fork (like a meat carving fork), into the hot sugar, and flicking it over the spoon handles. You are working at about waist height. As the sugar cools and drips to the floor, it makes thin strands. When you have enough strands, take your hands and mold them, while still warm (but not hot) into a ball to make a kind of nest. You have to do this before the sugar cools so much that it won't adhere to each other. It makes for a dramatic presentation. Place on top of the "cloud."

Serves 10



Ingredients:

- 4 heads Frisée lettuce or dandelion
- 1.5 ounces smoked pork belly
(or bacon)
- 10 eggs
- ¼ lb bread
- 4 ounces garlic cloves
- ½ gallon water
- 3 ½ Tablespoons white vinegar

Vinaigrette

- 2 ounces Dijon mustard
- 3 Tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 7 Tablespoons sunflower oil
- Salt & pepper

Salade Lyonnaise

Chef Philippe Jousse

Clean, wash and dry the lettuce

Cut the pork belly into regular pieces. Place in a pan and cover with cold water. Bring to a boil, rinse and drain.

Prepare the vinaigrette dressing by mixing all the ingredients together. Rectify the seasoning.

Cut the bread in regular slices and toast until golden. Rub each slice with garlic. Cut into crouton size.

Brown the belly in hot oil and place on absorbent paper.

Poach the eggs in water-vinegar mixture approximately 2 ½ minutes. Remove and place on absorbent paper.

Toss the salad with the vinaigrette and divide equally into the serving dishes. Add the hot pork belly, the poached eggs, and the croutons.

Serve immediately.

Serves 10.

Little Thought of Factors in Matching Wine with Food

by John Fischer



One of the hallmark factors in pairing wine with food is to match the weight of the wine to that of the food. Too often people concentrate on one side of this equation: the weight of the wine. We all agree that a big ripe California Cabernet Sauvignon is weighty indeed. Can we make the same assumption when we consider food? Is beef always big and hearty, Not so! Let us consider those situations that affect the weight of foods. The most important are **temperature, tartness, sauces, and method of cooking.**

Temperature is an important consideration. A significant amount of the weight and flavor of food is found in the fat. Cold temperature solidifies the fat and in great part locks out its weight; the fat is swallowed whole and is not fully appreciated by the palate. Consider cold roast beef roll-ups; it might abound with dabbles of fat, yet it matches perfectly with lighter white wines. The same case can be made for salami or other cold cuts. Cold temperature significantly lightens the weight of all food products. Nevertheless, if you melt the fat by cooking (letting it smear over the food), richness, flavor, and weight markedly increase, and the food becomes more suitable for a big red. What's more, cold temperature all by itself decreases perceived weight, dampens flavor, and accentuates acidity—we all know that wines served too cold are lighter, tarter, and less flavorful.

Acidity can dramatically alter the weight of food. When you squeeze lemon over fish, you have lightened the body of the fish. Sauerbraten is pickled pot roast. Beef is marinated in a vinegary broth and then braised in the same liquid. The gravy, (usually made with the cooked marinade) is thickened with crushed gingersnaps, which adds a little sweetness. The acidity of the marinade decreases the weight of the beef and the ginger snaps add sweetness and an exotic spot of flavor which makes German Riesling a great match. In spite of the fact that the meat is braised and served with a moderately heavy, but somewhat tart gravy, the dish works well with a light, tart wine. What's more, the wine contrasts the dish and lightens it.

This same effect applies to wine—**acidity decreases the weight of a wine.** A tart wine will have less body than wines with restrained acidity. If you have a typical California Chardonnay (less acidity) and compare it to a California Sauvignon Blanc (more acidity), both of which have the same alcohol content (Remember that alcohol is the prime ingredient in giving wine its weight.) you will find the Sauvignon Blanc to have less body than the Chardonnay.

Sauces have a dramatic effect on the weight of a food. For example, if you top a portion of fish with a rich, creamy, buttery sauce, the fish will increase in its weight. Take the same fish and serve it with a vinaigrette sauce and the weight of the fish

will significantly decrease. Sauces can add or decrease the weight of a dish.

The method of cooking can significantly affect the body of a dish. There is a spectrum of cooking methods that can alter the weight of a dish. Raw foods (lightest) are at one end of the spectrum and braising (heaviest) is at the opposite end. The sequence from lightest to heaviest goes something like this: raw < steaming and poaching < frying < roasting < broiling < grilling < braising. Beef Carpaccio (raw, paper thin sliced beef), for example, is going to be drastically lighter than beef stew (braising).




Sometimes several of these elements apply to a single dish. Take **ceviche** (raw, cold seafood marinated in citrus juice); it is **cold, raw, tart and obviously very light bodied** and will work quite well with a light, tart, white wine (try it with a dry Riesling).

Remember, a good wine-food pairing will significantly increase the enjoyment of both wine and the accompanying food. The wine will bump up the food and the food will enhance the wine.



Upcoming Council Bluffs Branch Events

Mark Your Calendars!

-  February 6, 2015
Rendezvous in the Rhône. French dinner with Rhône wines from several Appellations celebrating the IWFS Rhône Cruise.
Le Voltaire
Producers: Phyllis Hegstrom and Tom Murnan
-  March 1, 2015
Omaha Country Club
Irish theme replete with Irish dancers
More details to follow.
Producers: Jill Panzer and Bill Clark
-  April 12, 2015
Cheese & wine pairing.
V. Mertz
Producers: Diane Hayes and Patti Hipple

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:

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in hosting an IWFS event.

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The International Wine & Food Society in the Americas.*

To access past Gazettes and other features about our Branch, go to the international
website following this link: www.iwfs.org/americas/council-bluffs

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