

The Bluffs

Food & Wine

April 2013 *gazette*

Event Report:

Spanish Dinner & Tutored Sherry Tasting

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Chef Buthe**

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Tom & Mary Murnan June 2012

Wine Vacation Vol 6



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

President's Comments



Here is a find from Portugal, the 2009 Portal Douro Reserva from the Douro region. The wine is a blend of 50% Touriga Nacional, 40 % Tinta Roriz and 10% Touriga Franca which are grapes from the classic red Douro varietals. This wine is from their best vineyards in Pinhao Valley and aged in French Oak for 9 months.

The wine is aromatic, flavorful, complex, with a nice structure. Find flavors of white pepper, wild plum, dark cherry and mineral notes. Robert Parker recommends drinking this wine from 2013 to 2021, while the Wine Spectator suggests 2013 to 2016, this will be up to you. The wine scores well: Wine Enthusiast 93 pts., Wine Advocate 90 pts., and the Wine Spectator 90 pts. You can purchase this wine at Costco for only \$19.99. Steve and I paired this wine with an Herb Chicken Mediterranean Thin Crust de Lite pizza from Papa Murphy's and were well pleased.

Best of wine, food & friends,

Patti Hipple

President

Editor's Corner

March 8th found us back at the Council Bluffs Country Club and in the capable hands of Chef Jeremy Buthe. We had an unusual event for a couple of reasons: we had Sherry, which is currently out of fashion (most people know very little about it), and we had a sit down tasting. On top of that, we had a delicious Spanish dinner to boot. Read the Event Report for more details. Our Chef, Jeremy Buthe, provided us with two of the most popular recipes from our dinner. Thank you Chef! Now we can attempt to reproduce what we ate at the dinner. John Fischer discusses what to do with opened bottles of wine, and what the most effective preservation system is. Finally, we pick up with where we left off on the Murnan Portuguese vacation. Enjoy.



Tom Murnan



Photo courtesy of hugel.com

Event Report

March 8, 2013

Tutored Sherry Tasting & Spanish Dinner

story by Tom Murnan

Friday March 8th found our Branch gathered once again at The Council Bluffs Country Club. We had such a great meal there last April when we saluted the one hundredth anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic that we knew we would be in good hands with Chef Jeremy Buthe. Our theme was Spanish, and the Chef composed a great Spanish menu, while we concentrated on Sherry, which comes from southern Spain, as well as all Spanish wines with dinner. Since this is the off season, we were allowed to spread out into three rooms of the country club. Thirteen members and two guests attended.



We started quaffing in the small and comfy room near the front door. Ronnie, our server, brought out a tray of Creviche and Empanadas. I started with a very tasty Creviche. Creviche means raw seafood was marinated in citrus, and our fresh shrimp and scallops had a definite taste of lime to my palate. It was

light and refreshing, a perfect starter. A thinly sliced, baked plantain added decorative flair to the presentation.

Empanada means to wrap or stuff. We had little purses of dough filled with Manchego cheese. They were still warm, savory and filling.



We moved to our second location for the Sherry tasting. This will be described in another section, but all the wines were already poured. Mindful of Sherry's high alcohol content, pours were about one ounce per glass. Five different Sherry's from the Lustau bodega were featured.

Dinner found us in our third room, a large party room with just our group. It pays to come here in the off season! La Cina, or dinner, began with a seafood soup. **Cazuela Marinera** is a Spanish soup that featured clams and mussels. These were simmered in white wine, butter and cream, and flavored with saffron. Saffron is one of the most expensive spices if you go by weight. It is the stamen of the crocus and must be harvested by hand at a certain time of day, a very tedious and labor intensive



procedure. It's crimson stamen is dried, and it imparts a yellow orange hue when used in food. The soup was very creamy, with the clams being chopped in a blender. Mussel chunks were readily found. Delicious. Chef Buthe agreed to provide a recipe.

We paired the two wines with this course: 2010 Bodegas Shaya Old Vines Verdejo with the soup and since dry Sherry is supposed to go well with seafood, the Lustau Dry Amontillado Los Arcos. When polled, nearly everyone thought the Shaya was the best match since the Sherry seemed too strong. However, if you first drank the Los Acos and then tried the soup a bit later, it did enhance the soup flavor. The Shaya is made from the Verdejo grape variety. It was dry and mineral, a very fine white for about \$18.00.

The **Ensalada de Endibia con Naranja y Aguacate** salad was next. Nicely plated, three Belgian endive leaves formed a star and were filled with marinated calamari, avocado, and red onion. Spanish olives and burnt orange slices garnished the dish, which was topped with a yogurt creamy dressing. It was quite tasty.



Our entrée came with a choice of filet or salmon. Both had Romesco sauce, which is a Spanish based tomato sauce which utilizes onions, roasted red peppers, garlic, crushed tomatoes and almonds. The **Filet Romesco** featured a very tender filet topped with breadcrumbs and Manchego cheese. The accompanying **Potato Chorizo Towers** were a highly unusual plate fellow, made from cured smoke sausage with paprika, whipped potatoes, and filo dough. They rose above the steak, making for a wonderful presentation.



Filet Romesco



Salmon Romesco

Those who chose the **Salmon Romesco** had two sauces. The

yellow sauce was made from cauliflower purée. The salmon was topped with the same breadcrumb/Manchego as the steak. The salmon was flaky and nicely cooked.

Two wines competed here. The first hailed from Rioja, the **2011 Rio Madre Graciano**, while the second was the **2011 Bodegas Volver Tarima Monestrell**. The Madre used the Graciano, a Rioja grape usually used to add color and fruit to Rioja blends. It is unusual to have a 100% Graciano bottling. The Volver used the Monestrell grape. Both were soft and ready to go. An informal poll found the group split as to which red they preferred.

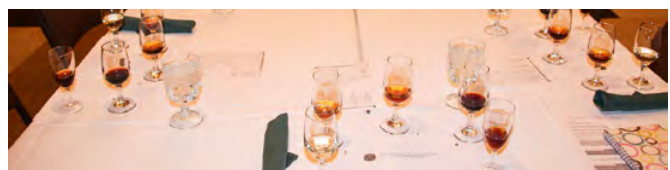
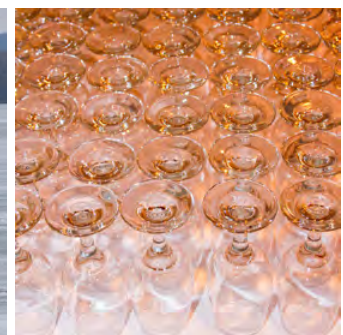
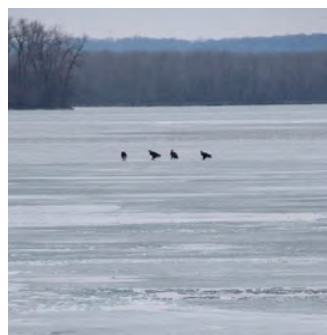


We finished with **Tarta de Santiago** for dessert. This was a traditional Spanish almond cake made with no flour. It consisted of crushed almonds, citrus, egg whites, egg yolks, and almond liqueur, and after baking was topped with powdered sugar. It was

accompanied by **Arbequina Olive Oil Ice Cream**. Special order Spanish arbequina olive oil was added to the custard before it was churned and frozen. I thought I detected vanilla in the tarta, but the Chef said there was no vanilla added. The dessert plate was not too sweet, but totally delicious. We asked for the recipe.

We paired dessert with a sweet Sherry, the **Lustau Solera Reserva ME Moscatel Emilin**. This was 50 years old and definitely sweeter than the dessert. It was my favorite Sherry of the evening.

Many thanks to Steve Hipple, whose idea it was to buy the Sherry, and Tom Shierbrock for all his help in securing the venue and helping with the details of putting on this event. And of course, thanks to Chef Jeremy Buthe and his staff for a terrific dining experience. The Bluffs **Food & Wine** April 2013 gazette



More photos of this event on the following page »

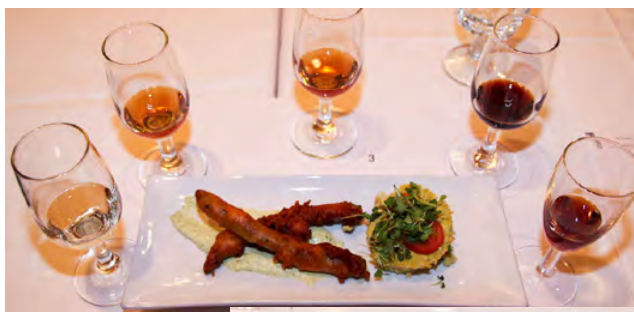


Tutored Sherry Tasting

by Tom Murnan

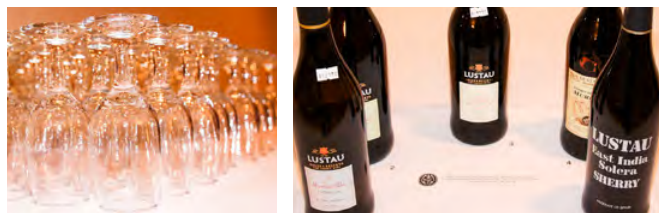
This may be the first event in the Council Bluffs Branch of the IWFS that there was a specific educational component added to raise awareness of a specific wine. Sherry is out of fashion now, which means you can get some terrific bargains. Sherry comes in a range of styles, from dry to sweet, so you can pair it to a wide range of foods, usually spicy and full bodied foodstuffs. All wines came from Lustau, one of the best bodegas in the Sherry appellation.

We had a tutored tasting and tasted the same Sherries for the Omaha Branch in January, and I learned that the drier examples could have benefitted from a little food to go along with the tasting. Especially the first dry wine we sampled, the Papisusa, it did poorly on its own. It was the least appreciated at the Omaha event. One of the most vexing matches in trying to pair food and wine is asparagus. Asparagus has a reputation of destroying red tannic wines, but can be tamed if you pair it properly. Off dry Rieslings, like a Spätlese or Kabinett from Germany, or a Muscat d'Alsace is wonderful. But dry and light Sherry, like from Manzanillo, is almost miraculous with asparagus, so I wanted to try it. Chef Buthe complied and came up with a brilliant dish: **Esparragus Tres Preparados**, or Asparagus Prepared Three Ways.



The tutored portion consisted essentially of information from the Gazette. Refer to the past three issues for history, grape varieties, styles, and the solera system almost exclusively used in the production of Sherry.

Each participant was poured five different Sherries. A long narrow plate with two tempura battered and deep fried spears, an asparagus custard, and an asparagus sauce for the spears arrived. **Wine #1** was the Emilio Lustau S A Xeres Light Manzanilla Papisusa Solera Reserva. This was the one which showed most poorly in Omaha, but with the food I thought both the wine and the asparagus



showed very well. Some of the sharp acidity was tamed by the food.

Wine #2, the NV Emilio Lustau S A Xeres Dry Amontillado Los Arcos Solera Reserva, showed a heavier body with woody flavors, since it had spent more time in the barrel than wine #1. It was dry but more substantial than the first wine.

Wine #3 was also an Amontillado. The NV Emilio Lustau S A Xeres Rare Amontillado Escuadrilla Solera Reserva was woody, suggesting long cask aging, and intensely dry.

Wine #4 was the NV Emilio Lustau S A Jerez Pedro Ximenez Murillo. At \$50.00 a bottle, it was the most expensive wine of the tasting. With this offering, we moved from dry to intensely sweet. This wine used the Pedro Ximenez (PX) grape instead of the more usual Palamino. About 30 to 40 years old, it was very dark brown in color. My critique of the Murillo is that it was cloying. In other words, it needed more acidity. Toffee, raisins, and prunes were the predominant flavors.

Finally, **Wine #5**, the NV Emilio Lustau S A Jerez East India Solera closed our tasting. East India is a style where the Sherry was aged in hot conditions. It is an old Oloroso which had some PX blended in, but its big advantage was that it had better acid balance than #4. Flavors of spices, maple syrup, and raisins were detected.

In summary, the tasting was a great way to learn about wine. There were enough samples from differing styles to give an idea of what good Sherry was like. I propose that we do more tastings at event in the future. The Bluffs Food & Wine Gazette



Chef Jeremy Buthe's Tarta de Santiago

Spanish Almond Cake



Ingredients

1¾ cups blanched whole almonds
 6 large eggs, separated
 1¼ cups sugar
 zest of 1 orange
 zest of 1 lemon
 ¼ cup almond liqueur or a few drops almond extract
 confectioners sugar for dusting

Preparation

Finely grind the almonds in a food processor.

In a mixer, beat the egg yolks with sugar to a pale cream. Beat in the zest and almond liqueur. Add the almonds and mix well.

With clean beaters, beat the egg whites to stiff peaks. Fold them gently into the egg and almond mixture

Grease an 11 inch spring form pan, with butter and dust with sugar. Pour in the cake batter and bake 350 for 40 minutes or firm to touch. Let cool before turning out.

Just before serving, dust the cake with confectioners' sugar.

Chef Jeremy Buthe's Cazuella Marinara Soup



Ingredients

¼ cup unsalted butter	2 pinch Spanish saffron
¼ cup Spanish olive oil	½ cup flour
1 cup diced shallots or onion	2 qts clam or seafood broth
½ cup chopped celery	2 cups chopped clams
½ cup diced red bell pepper	2 cups chopped mussels
2 cups diced potato	splash of white wine and lemon juice
salt, white pepper, garlic, Spanish thyme	1qt heavy cream

Preparation

Sauté shallots, celery, bell pepper and potatoes in butter and olive oil for 5 min or until tender.

Add 1 tsp each of salt, pepper, garlic and Spanish thyme.

Add 2 pinch of saffron and splash of white wine and lemon juice, reduce.

Add the 1/2 cup of flour to form a roux cook on low heat for 3/4 minutes.

Slowly stir in the broth with wire whisk and bring to light boil.

Add mussels, clams and heavy cream and simmer for 30 minutes.

Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper to taste.

Garnish with chopped fresh parsley or chives and toasted baguette or any crusty bread.

Storing Leftover Opened Bottles of Wines

by John Fischer

What do you do with leftover opened bottles of wine? How long will they last? Can some opened wines last longer than others? What is the best way to store partially consumed wine? These are all legitimate questions, and I will supply you with answers.

Wine starts to change as soon as the bottle is opened. Initially, as it sits and “breaths,” the wine improves, but after this initial bump-up, the wine gradually starts to decline (time varies depending on the wine).

The number one enemy of wine is oxidation. Oxygen in the air can react with wine to speed up its maturation, and after it hits its peak, it begins to decline; what’s more, the flavorful extracts in a wine are volatile and continue to escape into the open space above the wine’s surface—the more open space, the greater the loss of flavors. For example, a re-corked wine $\frac{3}{4}$ full will preserve better than one that is $\frac{1}{2}$ full—less space and less oxygen.

It is quite apparent that if we can enclose the wine, i.e. remove it from contact with oxygen, we have moved in the right direction. There are several devices in the market that claim to assuage the effects of oxygen on wine in a partially consumed bottle; none of them affect a profound solution to the problem.

The pumps that create a partial vacuum (removes oxygen) in the space above the wine helps to keep it from oxidizing but do nothing to prevent the flavorful extracts in the wine from escaping into the space above the wine’s surface. The commercial devices that fill the open space in the bottle with an inert gas (such as nitrogen) have the same problem. These devices are commonly found in wine bars and fancy restaurants. They help preserve the integrity of the wine a little—but only a little.

The type of wine you are attempting to store makes a big difference in regard to its longevity. Young, immature,



Photo courtesy of: designcognition.com

tannic wines will store the best. Older wines are sometimes impossible to store as the wine gives all that it has within minutes after it is opened. Red wines store better than white wines, as tannins protect the wine from oxidation. Robust, masculine styled wines (like Chambertin) store better than delicate, highly perfumed, feminine styled wines (like Volnay).

The best way to preserve left over wines is to pour the unused portion of the wine, as soon as possible after opening, into a smaller container, leaving space only for the cork, and close it up as fast as possible. For example, if you plan on drinking a half bottle of wine, pour half the bottle into a split (375ml) immediately on opening the bottle, cork it, and place it in the refrigerator. Most wines treated in this manner will hold up well for a week or two and often longer. Make sure to bring the wine up to temperature before drinking.

Wine & Food
April 2013



John Fischer is a member and two-time president of the Omaha Branch of the IW&FS, past director of the Nebraska Chapter of LADV, and founding member of the Council Bluffs Branch of the IWFS. He teaches a course on wine and matching wine with food at the Institute for the Culinary Arts in Omaha, NE and is author of two books: *The Evaluation of Wine* and *Wine and Food – 101*.

Tom and Mary Murnan's Wine Vacation

Quinta do Crasto

June 2012: Vol 6

by Tom Murnan



In the last installment, we had just left the fabulous DOC Restaurante. There would be more surprises on this 4th day of June. Docked at the side of the restaurant was a pontoon boat, which was to be the method of conveyance to our next destination, the Port Lodge of Quinta do Crasto (QdC). What a wonderful idea, to view the rugged countryside from the waters of the Douro River. Mary also liked the handsome young captain!



Everything looks different from the water. It was amazing to see how steep, rocky and arid the landscape was. We spotted a number of **moratorios**, or dead vineyards, which were abandoned and left to deteriorate. About 45 minutes later, we spotted do Crasto. The earliest references to Crasto was in 1615. It was purchased by Constantino de Almeida in 1910. In 1981 the current owners, Almeida's granddaughter and her husband Jorge Roquette assumed control. They currently have three LBV and four Vintage ports, but they are also becoming known for their red and white wines. I have seen QdC table wines for sale in Omaha.



We disembarked from our pontoon and took a waiting bus up to the Quinta. It was incredibly steep in this area. Jorge took us on a tour of the vineyards. Besides the vines, and some fruit trees (figs, quince, apricot, almond and olive), they also

have a garden where potatoes, artichokes, loquat, bull heart tomatoes and lettuce to name but a few. Two weeks before there was a heavy hail storm where it hailed so hard you could see only 200 feet. This punctured quite a few leaves, but luckily the fruit was so young, small, and tight that it was not damaged.



In 1758 the government delimited the vineyards. Crasto had the first Vina Alta in the Douro. The Douro is the oldest viticulture area in the world. There are three granite markers left over from the original mapping which carry the name Feitoria. The soil comprises of a lot of schist, and in the old days vineyard poles were made locally from the schist since it would not rot out like wood. Schist is a vertical rock, so if it is horizontal, it was moved by man. Their best vineyard, the Maria Teresa, was started in 1903 and consists of 4.7 hectares.



We took a winery tour. Both the ports and table wines are made here, and the winery is very modern. Before dinner, we enjoyed relaxing around the pool, which seems to blend into the skyline, making the water look like it is the edge of infinity.

Next time: Wine Tasting and Dinner at QdC.





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Upcoming Council Bluffs Branch Events! Mark Your Calendars!

April 14 • President Patti Hipple and David Hays have a Spring Fling planned for one of Omaha's best restaurants: V. Mertz in the Old Market. Pencil this one in on your calendar now!

May 16 • Fischer and Fisher host this event at another Council Bluffs Casino, Jack Binion's Steak House in the Horseshoe Casino, a beautiful setting of tapestries and leather.

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: stephenhipple@hotmail.com

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KEEPING In Touch!

Please notify Club Membership Chairman Diane Forristall at Diane@Forristall.us to let her know if you are interested in hosting an IWFS event.

PURPOSE: To meet communication and service needs, to broaden participation and understand and to be an information exchange for the membership of The International Wine & Food Society in the Americas.

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