

# The Bluffs Food & Wine June 2013 *gazette*

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Steak House**

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Matching Wines to Salty Foods

**Miami Culinary Adventure:** Miami as  
seen by the Kossows

**Miami Culinary Adventure:** The Cruise  
as seen by the Hipple



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



## President's Comments



# Hi Everyone,

Here is a delicious white wine for the summer, a 2011 Yalumba Viognier Eden Valley from Australia, rated 91 pts by the Wine Spectator. Yalumba is internationally recognized as one of the world's most accomplished Viognier wine makers. This wine pairs well with salads or fish dishes. It is rich, silky and polished, has a long finish. Look for flavors of spicy pear, pineapple and floral notes. This wine is available at Costco for \$14.99. Drink this wine within the next couple of years.

Best Wine, Food and Friends,

*Patti Hipple*  
President

## Editor's Corner

Spring has finally sprung, and I don't think our area has seen a more beautiful, albeit late, blooming of trees and bushes. Our cover photo comes from a line of glorious flowering Bradley Seedless Pear trees that I could not resist photographing and sharing. We seem to be taking a tour of the Council Bluffs Casinos, and our Event Report this month covers Jack Binion's Steakhouse in the Horseshoe Casino. John Fischer and Alan Fisher teamed up to make this event possible. This is a quiet get away corner in a noisy and somewhat smoky casino that is definitely worth trying again. Ever picked out a wine with a salty dish only to be disappointed in the pairing? John Fischer writes this month about matching wines to salty foods. There definitely is a strategy that you will want to put in your wine pairing bag of tricks. Be sure to read about the strategy.

Have you ever been to an event put on by the IWFS Board of Governors? The Miami Culinary Adventure and Cruise was a two part event where you could choose to do just one, or both portions. We have reports on each section. Bob Kossow writes of the Miami, land portion, while President Patti Hipple describes the cruise portion of the week. Enjoy the articles of these two contributors. Don't forget to keep the Bluffs Gazette in mind when vacationing this summer at food or wine destinations. We would love to share your experiences with our branch.

Enjoy!

*Tom Murnan*



Photo courtesy of hugel.com

## Event Report

May 16, 2013

## Jack Binion's Steak House

story by Tom Murnan

May 16th found our branch going to an event organized by Fisher & Fischer: Jack Binion's Steak House located in the Horseshoe Casino in Council Bluffs. Just outside Benny's Back Room, where our table was set for seventeen,



we had a diverse charcuterie board featuring prosciutto, two kinds of sausage, at least three cheeses and other appetizers. Another station offered two kinds of beets, goat cheese and osetra caviar on blini. These were all washed down with quaffing wines from the branch cellar.



Moving into our private dining room, we had two waiters

dedicated to serving the group. Our **First Course** consisted of **Orange Scented Grilled Lobster**. Chef Diego Burgos set a pattern and came out from the kitchen to explain each course. A small lobster tail was marinated in orange peel and some bitters. It was grilled in the shell. Arugula garnish added bitter and peppery notes. This was paired with a **2010 Brewer Clifton Chardonnay**, a lightly oaked wine that proved to be a nice match. My only critique was that the dish was tepid, probably because the plate was not pre-warmed, and that the arugula garnish was a bit too strong for the delicate lobster flesh if you ate all the garnish.

The **Second Course** found us with **Tagliatelle Bolognese**. Bolognese in Italian indicates a traditional meat sauce, and in this case it consisted of pork, beef and veal. Two red Italian wines were presented. The **2006 Modus Chianti Reserva** by Rufina was contrasted to a **1997 Brunello di Montalcino** from **Casanuova della Cerbaie**. Chef Diego told us the meat sauce was made from rendered pancetta, mirepoix and tomatoes. In a separate pot, Berkshire pork, veal shanks and Wagyu beef shanks cooked. Gravy from this braising was put in the sauce, with porcini mushrooms and Parmigiano Reggiano placed on top. This was delicious and filling, with an earthy touch from the mushrooms. Again, the dish arrived



tepid. The group consensus was that the Brunello was the better wine, richer and deeper and more structured than the Chianti. Many thanks to Patti and Steve Hipple who donated the wine even though they could not attend.

Course number **Three** was **Yellow Edge Grouper with La Quercia Prosciutto** served with a **Truffle and Fennel Salad**. The wine pairing was a **2011 Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc** from New Zealand. Chef Diego told us that the truffle oil on the micro green salad added a aromatic note, and that the prosciutto around the fish came from Norwalk, IA just south of Des Moines. This course was warm and came with a pre-warmed plate. The truffle oil added a touch of elegance, the prosciutto enhanced the flavor of the Grouper, and the Sauvignon Blanc went well.

Onward we ate, moving now to the **Entrée: Jack's Beef Wellington**. Chef Diego explained that a traditional en crôte cover of puff pastry surrounded the beef and its mixture of wild mushrooms, foie gras, and silver sorrel, with its hint of Granny Smith apples. A Cabernet demi-glace was artistically applied to the top. The **2009 Freemark Abbey Cabernet Sauvignon** was a very nice match, with no noticeable tannins if drunk with the Wellington.

By this time, we were heartily stuffed, but all somehow had room for dessert: **Chocolate Soufflé**. This was a classical soufflé with a base of eggs, flour and heavy cream. A **Grand Marnier crème Anglaise** sauce was drizzled on top. This came out of the kitchen very hot. It is said that a soufflé waits for no one, and this is true in my case. While waiting for a photo of the Chef with our hosts, mine started to fall. Our Port, a **Fonseca Bin 27 Limited Edition** had the stuffing to stand up to the strong chocolate flavors of the dessert.



I would like to thank Chef Diego and his crew for a wonderful job and great service. I would also like to credit our hosts Doctors Alan Fisher and John Fischer for all their careful planning and expert wine pairing. Dealing with Corporate Casinos can be difficult, and indeed John had to make two trips to deliver the wine as they wouldn't allow him to bring alcohol into the casino on the first trip since no one in authority was in the restaurant to approve delivery. We may have to have another Fisher and Fischer event in the near future!

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*Photos of this event on the following pages »*





More photos of this event on the following page »





# Matching Wines to Salty Foods

by John Fischer



Photo courtesy of: [foodandbeverageunderground.com](http://foodandbeverageunderground.com)

Salt is not a taste sensation found in wine; rather, acidity (tartness) and to a lesser extent sweetness are the dominant taste sensations that are used to generate wine's flavors. Nevertheless, a wine's interaction with salty foods is a significant issue in wine-food pairings.

The vast majority of foods contain salt, but in this article, we are talking about foods that have relatively large amounts of salt, such as ham, corned beef, sauerkraut, or oriental dishes containing fish sauce or soy sauce. In these types of food, wine's interaction with salt is a significant issue.

Acids and tannins are the aggressive elements in a wine and each of these substances adds to the assertiveness of the whole. On the other hand, alcohol and sugars are the softening elements in a wine: they smooth out the wine and counter these aggressive substances. Salt, an aggressive substance in food, interacts with wine in a manner very similar to acidity. A salty taste in food will decrease the sensation of acidity in wine.

Both the perception of tannins and the bitterness of tannins are increased when paired to salty foods. Red wines lose their polish becoming rougher and less sophisticated. Consequently, most salty foods work best with white wines, rosé, or reds with lower levels of tannins such as Bardolino or Beaujolais. Salty foods also increase the perception of alcohol, so one should be careful not to use wines that are high in alcohol. Such a combination will likely result in the wine taking on a disconcerting hot alcoholic bite

Tart wines will appear less acidic when paired to salty food. This is the same effect that occurs when you pair an acid wine to an acidic food. When a sweet-tart wine, like a Riesling, is paired to a salty food the perception of sweetness in the wine increases, and the perception of the wine's tartness decreases.

Salt gives food the vague impression that it has been acidified—a sort of pseudo acidity. If this perceived acidity (actually salt) is greater in the food than it is in the wine, the wine will taste flat, flabby, and out of balance. The food will corrupt the wine. Therefore, wine should have substantial levels of acidity when paired to salty foods.

Clear as mud? If so, let me simplify. Salty foods make wines more tannic and may bring out bitterness. Therefore, serve salty foods with tart, white wines whenever possible. As salt increases the perception of alcohol, avoid serving salty foods with wines relatively high in alcohol. This is why German Riesling and Champagne, both of which have high acidity and low alcohol, are such a great match with salty foods.

One of the memorable dishes that my mother used to make was a salt cured ham with a pineapple glaze. She scored the ham and decorated it with chunks of pineapple and cherries pinned at the scored cross marks—brings back wonderful memories! What a wonderful dish to pair with a Riesling Kabinett. The Bluffs Food & Wine gazette



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*.

## 2013 BGA Miami Cruise

# Miami Spice, the IWFS Miami Culinary Adventure

## Onshore Impressions

by Bob Kossow



Monday our adventure began when we arrived at the Biltmore Hotel. It is a place of old world elegance and beauty surrounded by 150 acres of lush and tropical landscapes in Corral Gales just outside Miami. The hotel has an interesting history and at one point was a recovery hospital after WWII (which explains the ghost sightings that have been reported).

As we learned Americans of Cuban origin or ancestry is less than 1 percent of the US population. Their success here in Miami has allowed them to sustain their culture and preserve "la cocina cubana." Our trip would focus on this: Cuban Cuisine.



The first culinary event was a dinner of Tapas at **Bulla Gastrobar**. Recently re-launched it was a lively place with lots of energy and we had the second floor along with the balcony for our event. Our hosts were **Mike Bittel** (Miami branch) and his wife **Linda**.

Among the many tapas offerings were Albondigos de Cordeo – Lamb meatballs, stracciatella, tomato frito; Pulpo A La Gallega- Grilled octopus with potato foam and paprika oil and Pinxto Moruno- Cumin marinated grilled pork loin, salsa verde, Greek yogurt. Each was well prepared and unique tasting. To accompany the tapas there was an assortment of Spanish cured meats and local organic cheeses with fresh berries.



**Chef Luis Quant at Bulla**

At the bar were 10 different wines offered, each one was better than the next. Some of the highlights were Clos Erasmus Laurel 2007 (Priorat), La Rioja Alta Vina Ardanza Reserva Especial 2001 (Rioja), and an El Nido Clio 2010 (Jumilla).

Tuesday started with a Cuban culinary adventure visiting restaurants and eateries along with points of interests around Miami. Our guides for the day were from the Miami Culinary adventure. The goal for the day - give us a taste of Cuban cuisine and culture.

We started at **Versailles Restaurant**, known for the best Cuban sandwich in Miami. It is the place where all Cubans, come to enjoy food. It is also a place where politicians are seen, as evidenced by a Miami TV station conducting an interview in the parking lot when we arrived. Our meal was a simple but tasty Cuban sandwich: sweet ham, roast pork, Swiss cheese, dill pickle and mustard. What makes this so unique is the Cuban bread. Not easily found outside of Miami. (A friend of mine who grew up in Cuba always stops here and takes a couple extra sandwiches to go when he is in town.)

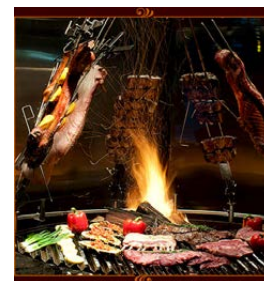


**Cuban Sandwich**

Our next stop down the road, **El Pub**, was to taste café Cubano, Cuban coffee- sweet and strong- served in a shot glass sized cup brimming with foam. Along with the coffee we had a little chocolate covered treats from of all places, Peru. Suzanne, who does not drink coffee, even fell in love with this drink.

*Floribbean style* empanadas *Ropa Vieja* with cilantro aioli crafted by Chef Miguel Aguilar at **Wynwood Kitchen and Bar** was our next taste. A bit spicy but wonderful. We ended the day with a dessert. Our group had *tres leches* with chocolate ice cream by Chef Carlos Torreos, winner of the **Iron Fork Competition 2010**. The other group enjoyed crême brûlée at **Barock Restaurant** on South Beach. From the reviews both were excellent.

Back to the hotel to rest up and prepare for our evening, Dinner at **Graziano's an Argentinean Steakhouse**, located in Coral Gables. Dinner consisted of five courses with nine wines featuring grilled foods. The courses included Patagonia shrimp paired with a Zuccardi 'Series A' Torrontes'





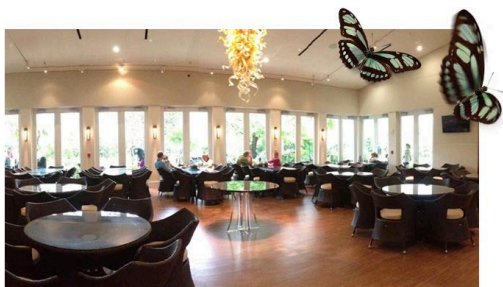
2011. Iowa Lamb Empanadas, Grilled Veal Sweet Bread with Watercress. The Grilled Iowa Chops were paired with Lurton Araucano 'Clos De Lolol' 2009. A choice between Beef short ribs or 10 oz tenderloin served with a Zuccardi ZETA 2009.

These were cooked on an asador, a huge iron wheel with pyramidal spokes upon which meat is impaled over a wood fire. For dessert a glass of Santa Julia 'Tardio, a late harvests Torrontes, was served. All the wines served were from Chile and Argentina.



Our Miami host at  
Graziano's

Wednesday began with a tour of the **Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden**. The gardens were founded in 1936 as an institution of science, education and culture for Miami. Featured at the gardens this year were 80 stone sculptures some reaching 11 feet in height and weighing up to three tons, crafted by artists of the Shona tribe of Zimbabwe, with an artist in residence to watch and learn about their craft. Works from artists John Chamberlain, Yoko Ono and Dale Chihuly, among others, were also exhibited.



Lunch was in the **Glass House Cafe** with a view of the *Wings of the Tropics* Butterfly Exhibit. It featured Penne Pasta with Braised Beef Short Ribs along with Red Bliss Potato salad. Among the desserts were mini Key Lime Tarts with toasted marshmallows. Four different wines: Lucian Albrecht Cremant d'Alsace Brut Rose, Alsace, France; Licoc Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 2010, Sonoma, California; Pali 'Riviera' Pinot Noir 2010 in Magnum, Sonoma Coast California; Girardin Moulin à Vent 'Clos De Latour' 2009 were served. After lunch we took a walk through the adjoining butterfly enclosure and enjoyed a private butterfly release.

Our afternoon was open to relax by pool or shop in town. With a busy evening ahead we chose to relax.

**An Evening under the Stars** was at the home of **Edith & Bob Hudson**. We walked past the gates and through a covered patio leading to the backyard. Located on the water the back patio looks out on the Miami Harbor.

The home was definitely designed for a large party. All the food was served in portions that allowed for a wide variety of tastes on one plate. Food was available on tables under the covered patio and wines were served from a bar on the lawn.

Eight Hors d'Oeuvres were served on four tables located in the covered patio area. Floribbean chicken skewers with Mango and red pepper, cilantro aiolo and avocado croquettes with passion fruit dipping sauce were just two of the highlights.

A Ceviche Bar was also available. One could choose from a duo of delightful Ceviches served in shot glasses- Shrimp, red onion and green pepper along with Mahi and red onion with peppers. Cuban fried rice with various meats such as Chicharrones De Pollo and Fried Chorizo were on the menu as well.

The desert table included such delights as Lemon Coconut bars and Mini Dulce de Leche Cheesecake with Oreo cookie crust.

The wine bar had three champagnes, six whites and eight reds, creating a challenge to taste all that was available and determine a favorite. Some of our favorites: Starting with a Champagne: Barons De Rothschild Brut, Brut Blanc De Blanc and a Brut Rose.

**Whites:** Remoissenet Puligny Montrachet Folatieres 2005, Magnum (Burgundy) and a Zind Humbrecht Clos St Urbain Rangen Pinot Gris 2005(Alsace).

**Reds:** Felsina Fontallaro, 1995, 6 Liter Bottle (Tuscany), Chateau de Beaucastel Châteauneuf du Pape, 2006, Magnum (Rhône).

Despite a little rain it was a beautiful evening and a wonderful end to our Miami experience.

To see complete menus and wine lists visit our website.

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# International Wine & Food Society

## 2013 Miami Caribbean Cruise

by Patti Hipple



On February 28, 2013 Steve and I packed our bags to continue on with part two of the 2013 Miami Culinary Adventure. Twenty three members from the USA as well as Australia, Ireland and South Africa departed by bus from the Biltmore Hotel to the Miami cruise port where we boarded the Celebrity Constellation for more fun with wine, food and friends.

The cruise was designed to be laid-back and relaxing. During the day we were on our own. The evenings started with a champagne reception and hors d'oeuvre (each night different) at **Michaels Pub** which was reserved each night for only IW&FS members. **Mike Bittel**, our well known wine connoisseur, from the Miami Branch, talked about the wine and food pairings. He told interesting stories relating to wine, the regions and wine maker's personalities. Mike was also great at his jokes but his wife **Linda** delivered the punch line first so he was challenged to come up with new jokes and stories. We would then go to dinner where we dined as a family. The dinners and wines were of four different themes: American, French, Italian and International.

Our first was American. The pairings married well but my favorite was the Apple Tart Tatin with a Dolce 2006 from California. Other wines were from Oregon and Washington State. After dinner Steve and I went dancing till 1:00am and more cocktails with others from the group.

Steve and I had to slow down the pace on Friday. We docked in **Key West** walked around with Mike and Linda Bittel with a cup of coffee. Friday evening was French. Wines were from Languedoc, Loire, Haut Medoc, Rhone and Sauterne. The duck was superb with a Sabon Châteauneuf du Pape 'Cuvee Prestige' 2009.



Saturday we docked in **Cozumel**. Steve and I went off to a dune buggy adventure in the jungle. Steve broke our dune buggy; he should have let me drive. The tour did bring us another one. We stopped for a swim in the emerald mineral pool, which smelled a little. Tonight was an International theme. Steve's favorite pairing was Roasted Milk-Fed Veal Chop with Mvemve Raats 'Compostela' 2009 from South Africa. Other countries were Germany, Australia and Spain.



Sunday was at sea and a rock'n. Mike did a wonderful wine tasting paired with cheese followed with a lunch. One tid bit, don't eat apples with wine, it makes the wine bitter per Mike. The rest of the day was spent napping with my foot on the floor. The last night was Italian. The Shellfish & Saffron Risotto paired nice with a Jankara Vermentino 2010 from Sardinia. Other regions were Tuscany, Fruli, and Piedmont. We ended the night with hugs and kisses to old and new friends.

The Miami Culinary and Cruise Adventure toured us with 27 wines on the cruise and 34 wines by land for a total of 71 different wines. The cruises and land festivals are great wine adventures, making new friends and meeting up with old friends.

Your, President

Patti Hipple





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## Upcoming Council Bluffs Branch Events! Mark Your Calendars!

**June 5** • The Tritschs & Hipple host winemaker Danny Gordon from Tamarack Cellars of Walla Walla, WA who will discuss and pour his wines.

**December 8** • President's Event at the Omaha Press Club

### 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](mailto:stephenhipple@hotmail.com)

### *The International Wine & Food Society of London, England Council Bluffs, Iowa Branch - Executive Committee*

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### **KEEPING In Touch!**

Please notify Club Membership Chairman Diane Forristall at [Diane@Forristall.us](mailto: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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