

JUNE 2021

# The Bluffs Food & Wine *gazette*

**CHRISTIE'S  
WINE DEPARTMENT**

*cheers!* *[Signature]*

QUINTA DO NOVAL 1931

**EVENT REPORT:** SPRING AT DIFFERENT  
LATITUDES, HEIRLOOM FINE FOODS

**CHRISTIE, MARSHON & WOODS**



## **ALSO INSIDE**

1931 Quinta Do Noval: How a Savvy Librarian  
and a Bit of Luck Won Us a Taste of History • Upcoming Events

*Shelley Elson-Roza  
and Tony Roza photographed  
by Bill Sitzmann for  
Omaha Magazine*



# EDITOR'S

## CORNER

**W**ell, we had an unusual event in our Spring at Different Latitudes event. This is the first time that Shelli and John Klemke have done an event, and a nice job it was too. There was a lot of leg work that went into this event, namely determining what latitudes would be compared, finding rated wines at those latitudes, and discussing the various terroirs. It was also exciting to be the first big group at Heirloom Fine Foods. Chef Shelly Elson-Rosa is a teenage friend of Shelli Klemke. Read about this unusual wine theme within.



Way back in 1997, I was privileged to taste a **1931 Quinta do Noval Vintage Port**. That year was a terrific year for vintage port. This was the winning prize being offered by a newly published wine book. Even though the port was wonderful, when you have not thought about something for nearly a quarter century, the details were beginning to slip away in my memory. I couldn't even place the exact date without some research. I thought I would write about such a memorable and unusual story and share it with all of you. Enjoy!

We learned recently from the wait staff that Cédric Fichpain is selling Le Voltaire to Wilson Calixte. I confirmed this with Cédric. "He has been working with me for now almost 12 years. He is very talented and I am very happy to leave my baby in his hands. Please continue to support him!" Wilson is an immigrant from Haiti and has been doing the cooking for a number of years now. Cédric's interests have turned towards his bakery, Le Petit Paris French Bakery.

Some members have had trouble reading the Gazette on [issuu.com](http://issuu.com), Or, they don't want to sign in, which means you can't even read the Gazette at all. They prefer a PDF since all you have to do is click it open. We have decided to offer it in both formats. In your email, a PDF will be sent along with the [issuu.com](http://issuu.com) link. The advantage of [issuu.com](http://issuu.com) is that you can see both right and left pages, like a paper magazine. Our PDF only lets you view one page at a time.

You can also access the Branch Recipe file by clicking: [https://issuu.com/omaha-publications/docs/iwfs\\_cb\\_council\\_bluffs\\_recipes](https://issuu.com/omaha-publications/docs/iwfs_cb_council_bluffs_recipes).

Cheers! 🍷

*Tom Murnan*



"I'M NOT YOUNG ENOUGH TO KNOW EVERYTHING."

— SIR JAMES MATHEW BARRIE, SCOTTISH DRAMATIST-AUTHOR (1860-1937)

---

**Cover photo:** The winning prize from Phillip Silverstone's book *Cheers! The World of a "Wine-osaur"*: 1931 Quinta do Noval Vintage Port regular bottling. Photo by Mary Griffin.

# EVENT REPORT

## SPRING AT DIFFERENT LATITUDES, HEIRLOOM FINE FOODS

*Story and Photos by Tom Murnan*

Well, we got to try a new theme for a wine dinner as well as a new restaurant: **Heirloom Fine Foods**. **Shelli Klemke** went to high school with owner **Shelley Elson-Roza**, and their parents were friends. Shelley went to Chicago to go to culinary school. She met her husband Tony there. When they returned to Omaha, she worked at Grey Plume, and helped open Saddle Creek Breakfast Club. Now they have opened Heirloom Fine Foods where they are doing catering for private events and lunches at private schools among other things. This was the first full dinner at their restaurant. In fact, they had a photographer taking pictures of our event to be used to promote Heirloom on their web site. When I arrived, Shelli and **John Klemke** were busy pouring all the dinner wines into our glasses. The event sold out at 32 members, with no guests. The restaurant has a nearby garden as well, which we would have used had it not been rainy and cold.

Our room was long and narrow, with a lengthy table set for 32. An open kitchen with a large counter top let guests observe the culinary prep and kept the room feeling larger than it was. When you put 32 diners and the staff to serve them in the room, I understood why the event was capped at 32. It got pretty noisy as well. A candidate for wall carpet as a sound deadener? We started

quaffing with **Moroccan Spiced Lamb Meatballs with Cucumbers and Yogurt Herb Sauce**. Nicely presented meatballs were kept from rolling all over the platter by being anchored with the yogurt sauce. A slice of cucumber crowned the meaty sphere and was held in place by a skewer. The flavors were definitely Arabic with notes of cumin, coriander and mint. The white wines might have paired a bit better with the appetizer: Jayson Pahlmeyer 2018 and Duckhorn 2017 Chardonnays. But the Coudoulet de Beaucastel 2015 (Rhône) and Norton Privata Family Blend 2014 (Argentina) were no slouches either. Everyone seemed jovial and in a good mood, enjoying the new venue.

The theme was the different latitudes. Shelli wanted to try wines that share the same latitude but were from different parts of the world. So, for example, our first set of wines were from **42 degrees south**, one in Argentina and one New Zealand. Let me say right off the bat that the food was all quite tasty. However, there were a few glitches in the beginning. The Salad was supposed to be the first course and the wines were set out for that. However, the second course shrimp was served first, leaving the salad to go with the second course wines. In effect, the wines got reversed. Also, the table menu card omitted the salad all together. These were just minor omissions. Other than that, everything went

quite well. The mix up of the white wines proved to be non-critical.

The **First Course** was **Jumbo Shrimp with Lemon Garlic Tarragon Sauce and Homemade Cocktail Sauce**. The shrimp were poached in their own house made court bouillon stock. There were two different kinds of sauce, one tarragon and olive oil based and one a traditional cocktail sauce. This was meant to be an interactive event with the pairs of wine at every course. Since we had the salad wines, there was a starker difference between the wines poured than intended. We compared the **Spy Valley Sauvignon Blanc New Zealand 2019** to the Zolo Torrontes Mendoza, Argentina 2019. The Sauvignon Blanc was quite noticeably grassy, both in nose and on the palate. Sharp acidity was apparent, and flavors of grapefruit and lesser amounts of pineapple were noted, all a bit rowdy. The Torrontes in contrast was more sedate and civilized with no sharp edges to elbow your palate. Moderate acidity with nose notes of pear and rose, and palate flavors of peach and lychee. I dutifully tried the two sauces with the two wines. The tarragon sauce went much better with the Torrontes, while the bossy Cocktail Sauce was best with the assertive Sauvignon Blanc. ▶

















◀ For the **Second Course**, we moved up to the **48th Degrees North latitude** for the 5,000 miles apart wines. We were served the **Citrus, Avocado, Fennel, Radicchio and Radish Salad on Bibb Lettuce**. Each plate had a slice of radicchio, which, with its colorful purple and white profile, added color to the presentation. The radish didn't seem to have too much heat or flavor. Highlights were the grapefruit, which provided refreshment and lightness, the avocado, which was umami rich and filling, and the fennel with its licorice flavors. The wines, intended originally for the shrimp, were the **Ostertag Les Jardin Riesling Alsace 2018** and the **Columbia Valley Disruption Riesling Washington 2018**. Shelli and John visited Alsace two years ago and went to the Ostertag winery and loved their wines. The Ostertag winery hails from one of the best Riesling areas in the world, and are definitely among the higher end producers of Alsace. I found it to be well balanced, complex, pleasing and elegant with apple, melon and lemon flavors. The Disruption had sharper acidity but a lighter body. It sported flavors of lemon and a touch of lime. It seemed rougher and less elegant. My nod was for the Ostertag Riesling as the better match, but both did well.

We then had an intermission of sorts with **A Tasting** of two different wines from the 33rd Latitude. That was an unusual and delightful menu item I have not seen done before at our events. We were comparing the **Fess Parker Pommard Clone Pinot Noir 2011 Santa Ynez Valley** to the **La Rioja Alta Ardana Special Selection Reserve 2010**. This time we are at the **33 Degrees North latitude**. Again, about 5000 miles apart, Santa Ynez Valley is in Southern California not far from Santa Barbara, and the Rioja is from Spain. Those of us of "a certain age" instantly connect Fess Parker with the Walt Disney Davy Crockett 5 part mini series that ran in 1954-55. He went on to own a winery. The Pommard Clone is the most Burgundian of the Pinot Noir clones. I found it very youthful for an almost 10 year old wine, but still sporting a touch of tannin, with deep earthy flavors. The Rioja uses the Tempranillo grape and is sold as a **Crianza** in Spain, which means it has to be aged 2 years, with at least 6 months in oak. Outside of Spain it is labeled as special selection. Again, a youthful 10 year old but with somewhat biting tannins and flavors of earth, tobacco, and forest floor. These were two good wines to taste without food and both user friendly. During this course, we discovered that today was the **50th anniversary of Karen and Wayne Markus**. We all raised our glasses in salute to this joyous event. Not many couples make it 50 years nowadays.

Our **Third Course** was the entrée. **Petit Beef Tenderloin with Grilled Spring Vegetables and Horseradish Crème sauce**. The beef was tender

with a medium-rare center, and an Imperial Wagyu beef tenderloin sourced locally. This sat on a bed of pommes purée. The vegetables were basically a caramelized fennel jam with spring peas. There were actually two sauces, a beef brown sauce and a horseradish sauce with a bit of homemade marmalade.

We moved to the **39th Degree North Latitude** for our last pair of wines, both using grapes long established as the best for Bordeaux. The **Inglenook Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley 2015** was primarily Cabernet, but also some Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Merlot and Malbec. In other words, all the allowed main Bordeaux varieties. To contrast this, we had a **Château Siran Margaux 2015**. The Margaux appellation typically has less Cabernet Sauvignon in its mix than neighboring Pauillac. This wine has 46% Merlot, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Petit Verdot and 1% Cabernet Franc. It is a relative bargain in today's overheated Bordeaux market. The Inglenook was powerful, with the essence of Cabernet Sauvignon, with nice balance of acid, fruit and tannin. The Siran was structured, tannic and taut, but wonderful with the beef. It was perhaps a bit more elegant than its competitor.

Dessert was a **Rhubarb Tart with Vanilla Gelato and Pistachio Cream**, which was a nice finish, rhubarb being a spring plant. With this we enjoyed a **Bodegas Muga Rioja Rosado 2019**. The rosé was a nice match to the rhubarb flavors.

So, our experiment in wines from different latitudes was an interesting exercise. Growing temperature was fairly close, despite being 5000 miles apart, which provided that degree of similarity. I would say that each microclimate was still individualistic and provided the finishing touches on each wine. Plus there is the year that is a factor as well. For example, Alsace has the perfect microclimate for Riesling, which seemed to be borne out by our comparison to Washington. Napa and Bordeaux were pretty similar, with ripeness being given the nod to Napa, and elegance to Bordeaux. The other two zones, the 42 degrees South and the 33 degrees North, were not able to be compared directly since they had widely different grape varieties in the wines.

Thanks goes out to **Shelli and John Klenke**, who organized the event, chose the wine and a new venue. Thanks as well to **Shelley Elson-Roza** and **Tony Roza** for providing a tasty meal to inaugurate their new enterprise, Heirloom Fine Foods. Basically, they may be the only place in Omaha with an all female culinary staff. **Kristin** is an engineer who helps out, and **Katie** left the insurance industry to get a culinary degree at Metro, where she works full time. Servers **Dillon** and **Misty** also help out when needed. Their service was attentive and timely. Except for the afore mention snafu, things turned out well. Nice job everyone. 🍷



# 1931 QUINTA DO NOVAL:

How a Savvy Librarian  
and a Bit of Luck Won  
Us a Taste of History

BY TOM MURNAN

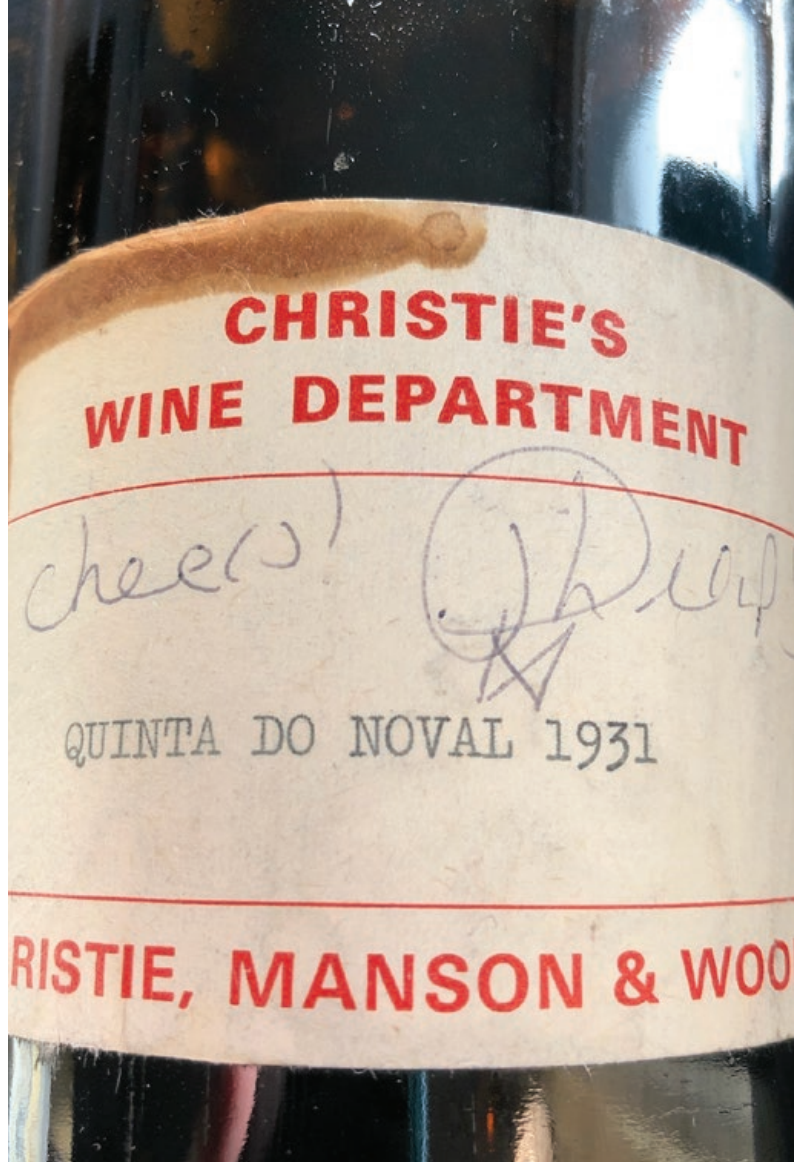
I haven't thought of the 1931 Quinta do Noval for most of a quarter century. But my memory was jarred when I received some photographs taken in 1997 when I had the occasion to actually drink a great Vintage Port and not just read about it. Unfortunately, the occasion of receiving the photos was due to the death of one of the participants of my story, Jane Diesen.

Back in about 1990, I had joined a small group of wine lovers who styled themselves as the **Private Reserve Wine Group**. We were a motley crew of various vocations, but two of our roster of 13 were librarians, one of which was **Mary Griffin**. One day in late 1995 or early 1996, Mary spotted a flyer promoting a new book printed in 1995 called *Cheers! The World of a "Wine-osaur"* by **Phillip Silverstone**. She had discovered that within this book, there was a contest. Way back on page 109 of this 147 page



Mary Griffin

book was chapter called "A Puzzling Word from the Author." Basically, we had until May 31st, 1996 to find the hidden name of a USA landmark that was not a church. The prize? A bottle of **Quinta do Noval Vintage Port 1931**. James Suckling in his 1990 Vintage Port book had estimated its price as \$1,000, and Silverstone said it was valued in excess of \$1000. That got Mary's attention. Being the librarian that she was, she ordered 8 copies of the book for the PR club. But Mary



also had a plan. The Private Reserve would pool our sleuthing skills & literary resources and all 13 members would enter the contest, improving our chances of winning. But first, we had to find the answer to the name of the historical landmark.

Now before you start thinking that prize was perhaps the most famous Vintage Port (VP) in history, I must tell you that no, it was not the **1931 Quinta do Noval Nacional**. That story is legendary for Port lovers. The Nacional vineyard had to be replanted in 1925. 1931 was a great year for Port, but the market was dead, with cellars full of the fabulous 1927. Besides, the Great Depression had suppressed the world economy. Only a few Port house declared a VP. Noval was one that did, and the results were legendary, especially coming from 6 year old vines. The vines were planted on their own rootstock and even to this day there has never been a phylloxera infestation. The yields were miniscule: only 200 cases were made, and the berries are only half the size of other vineyards. This was the holy grail of all Port grails and virtually impossible to find, even in 1995. But this was NOT our potential prize. Ours was the regular bottling of Noval VP, from an adjacent vineyard, which still got very high marks. Suckling for example gives the Nacional 100 points, whereas the regular Noval VP earned a 99. Besides, there was not that much 1931 around in 1995, so this was one of the best wine prizes I had ever seen. One could only dream of winning.

Silverstone was a Brit who had moved to the United States around 1994 because he married an American woman, and moved to Philadelphia, PA. He was a wine importer for a while, but he always wanted his own radio program. He had a show on classical radio WFNL where he “purported to talk about wine.” *Cheers!* seems to be the only book he wrote. Today, he has moved on to **Exposed by Silverstone**, where he has a radio show and takes pictures of a wide variety of subjects. See [thesilverstonecollection.com](http://thesilverstonecollection.com). But back to our story.

We all got our books in due order and had plenty of time to read it from cover to cover. Silverstone, I discovered, was actually quite funny and irreverent in his approach to wine. He was not a regular wine critic, heck he didn't even believe in wine ratings let alone the 100 point scale. His forte was as a wine “anecdotalist.” He strayed decidedly off the beaten path in his assessment of wine and its pleasures.▶



◀ One of the first things we learned about him on page 3 was that he was British and had lived in Wales, spending summer holidays motoring through that enchanting and beautiful area in the west of England. Welsh is a difficult language for someone raised with the Queen's English. As he put it, the Welsh "got a bit frugal when it came time to dispense the vowels," and you would see towns named "Cwm, Idwal, Rhyl and Tywyn."

So here we all were, reading this short paperback, with a mission of finding out what American landscape was hidden in the text. I have to admit, I was a miserable failure, as were all the other PR members...except Mary. When she spotted the Welsh wording she got suspicious. Then she found it! "Yllihpni Llebyt Rebil Rews Nacht Se Ilni Ereh" to which Silverstone added, just to throw you off, ("The Ll is pronounced as if you are clearing your throat of a chicken bone; a few vowels here and there help relieve the condition.")

Since no one could decipher Welsh anyway, Silverstone put the clue in backwards, to look like one of these Welsh phrases, hoping no one would notice. I certainly didn't. But when read backwards, the clue said "The aNswER libeRty bell in Philly."

Armed with the correct answer, all 13 of our group dutifully wrote the answer on the required postcard and mailed it to the publisher, Camino Books. Just because you got the correct answer, didn't mean you won. That was just the first step to get into the contest. One winner was randomly drawn out of all the correct entrants in the country. I got my Dear Tom letter shortly after January 30, 1997. The consolation prize was being invited, at my own travel expense, to a wine tasting in the region that produced the most winning entrants, hosted by Silverstone. He hoped the mystery would remain unsolved for years. Evidently a good number of people discovered the answer. Luckily, one of our number, **Jane Diesen**, was the glorious winner, which meant we all won. Incredible! I never win anything, even if it is a drawing of 4 people (true story), and that track record is true to the present time. Her UPS winners packet was mailed the same day as our sad denial letters.

When the box was opened, the bottle bore a generic label from Christie's Wine Department with *Quinta Do Noval 1931* written in typewriter in the open center, and the words *Christie, Manson & Woods* on the bottom. So the bottle was an auction item that Silverstone acquired. Our author signed it "Cheers! Phil."

Jane and her husband planned a gourmet dinner for the PR group on May 9, 1997. There was no point in waiting too long. The main attraction was fully ready, not needing more age except to let it rest from its travel from Philadelphia. Unfortunately, the menu no longer exist. A few other Ports were thrown in to lead up to the *pièce de résistance*. I contributed a 1970 Taylor VP. A 1966 Dow VP and a *Quinta do Noval Colheita 1971 Tawny Port* showed up as well. The photographer caught me using my new showpiece decanting cradle and slowly pouring out our red booty, dutifully filtered by cheesecloth. Unfortunately, I did not take notes of the Ports, but I have fond memories of a fully mature VP, showing no signs of aging, that was just magnificent and one of the best VP, and certainly the most historic, of my life. We definitely cheered our librarian heroine Mary for planning our winning scheme and deciphering the answer. Mary, for her efforts, got to keep the empty bottle, the remains of the day.

Unfortunately, Jane never shared the photos of the evening and it faded from my memory. If it hadn't been for Jane's daughter disposing of her mother's estate and sharing, in 2021, the event would be just a vague memory. The photographs were placed in the original shipping box and tucked away, only to be discovered after she died. Funny thing about memory, it can play tricks on you. Once reminded of the 1931 event, I mis-remembered the name of the book, looking all over my library for the wrong book. I definitely recalled the Welsh phrases, however. Then, no one could recall the date we drank our celebrity bottle. I finally tracked it down from my old calendars once I was informed, and then found the correct book. But once reminded, I had a mission in me to preserve this unique story and share it with others. Moral: if you have a memorable event, document it right away, before memory fades and moths invade.

Cheers! to your memorable wine moments still to come. 🍷



# UPCOMING COUNCIL BLUFFS



## BRANCH EVENTS

*Mark Your Calendars!*

**JUN  
5**

### **MARTIN CABIN**

Martin's at the Lake theme  
Catered by Pasta Amore  
Producers: Connie & Gary Martin

---

**LATE  
JULY  
TBD**

### **BRUSHI EUROPEAN AMERICAN CUISINE**

Producers: Mike Wilke, Joe Goldstein &  
David Hayes

---

**AUG  
TBD**

### **TO BE DETERMINED**

Amanda Harrington & John Matthews

---

**SEP  
19**

### **HAPPY HOLLOW CLUB**

Riesling vs. Red  
Producers: Patti & Steve Hipple

---

**OCT  
TBD**

### **402 EAT + DRINK**

Producers: Thrashers

---

**NOV  
13**

### **CHAMPIONS RUN**

Pinot Noir Theme  
Producers: Murnan & Klemkes

---

**DEC  
5**

### **PRESIDENT'S HOLIDAY CELEBRATION**

Producers: Martins

#### **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)**



When you hire Omaha Door & Window for your home remodeling needs you can expect exceptional service and quality products.

With having served more than 130,000 customers for over 50 years we are a company that you can trust to be there after the sale.

**Our products include Garage Doors, Windows, Siding, Entry Doors, Attic Insulation, Sunrooms and much more.**

**OMAHADOOR.COM**  
**402-733-6440**

*The mission of the Council Bluffs Branch of the International Wine and Food Society is to develop a profound understanding and appreciation of both wine and the culinary arts and to enjoy this experience in the camaraderie of friends. Our task is to educate our membership about wine and to develop the skill of matching wine with food. We strive to drink high quality wines and to experience an eclectic array of foods prepared by the area's top chefs.*

## *The International Wine & Food Society of London, England*

### **COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA BRANCH - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**President:** Connie Martin

**Vice President:** Dave Thrasher

**Treasurer/Membership:** Diane Forristall

**Secretary:** Tabitha Thrasher

**Cellar Master:** John Fischer & Patti Hipple

**Gazette & Photos:** Tom Murnan

**happygardener1988@yahoo.com**

**dave@supportworks.com**

**diane@forristall.us**

**tabithathrasher@hotmail.com**

**jrudyf@cox.net | stephenhipple@hotmail.com**

**murnantom@gmail.com**

## *The Bluffs* **Food & Wine** *June 2021 gazette*

Publisher: **Todd Lemke**  
Editor: **Tom Murnan**  
Graphic Design: **Omaha Magazine, LTD.**

### **KEEP 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.

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

*All versions of Wine & Food Gazette are published monthly by Omaha Magazine, LTD, P.O. Box 461208, Omaha, NE 68046-1208. Telephone: (402) 884-2000. No whole or part of the contents herein may be reproduced without prior written permission of Omaha Magazine, excepting individually copyrighted articles and photographs. Unsolicited manuscripts are accepted however no responsibility will be assumed for such solicitations. The opinions expressed in this publication, except as specifically stated to the contrary, are solely the opinion of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the Board of Governors of the Americas. The International Wine & Food Society, LTD., the publisher and any officer, director, member or agent thereof. The international Wine & Food Society does not endorse advertisers' products and is not responsible for damages incurred from the use of such products nor does it guarantee such products.*