

The Bluffs Food & Wine

July 2014 gazette

Event Report

Wine on a
Sunday Afternoon

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from Vine + Branch and
Jackson Street Tavern

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Vol. 12, June 2012.
Lunch at Quinta do Noval



VINE + BRANCH
“a tasting room”



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

President's Comments



Dear Members,

If you did not attend our recent event at the **Vine and Branch** you missed a great afternoon of wine, food and friends. One of the wines served was a zinfandel and worth talking about since we are in the barbecue season. Zinfandel pairs well with the robust, smoky flavors of grilled meat, and spicy-sweet barbecue sauces. Both the flavors and the texture make it a classic partner for outdoor cooking.

Zinfandel is a red grape variety best known in the United States. It is the descendant of the Croatian variety, **Crljenak Kastelanski**, and is also related to the Italian, **Primitivo**. Zinfandel produces a typically rich style of wine with deep color, high alcohol and lush texture. The wine is rich with moderate tannins and acidity.

The wine was an **Easton 2012 Amador County Zinfandel**. The winery is located in California on the West Slope of the Sierra Nevada in Amador County's Shenandoah Valley. Easton has been offering the Amador County Zinfandel for many years and it has become a popular wine at an affordable price. It is rated 90 points by Wine Enthusiast -

"Exhibits mushroomy earth tones around a core of baked plum and leathery spice. Soft and round, very accessible and ready to drink, the finish underlines those leathery jolts—the wine would be perfect with barbecue."

The group at our table felt it paired best with the barbecue pork, given its stronger flavor and texture. It is a wine that would work well with most any barbecue. It is available at HyVee for less than \$20 a bottle.

So next time you are grilling consider a Zinfandel.

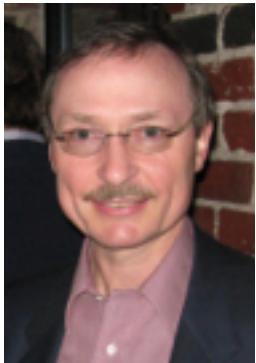
Enjoy,

Bob Kossow

President

“Wine is sunlight, held together by water.” – Galileo

Editor's Corner



Dear Members,

I'm sure you are aware of it if you are a long time member, but our Branch of the International Wine and Food Society has to be one of the most active and energetic branches in the USA. We have a wide range of events with a wide range of pricing. We never forget that good wine and good food is our primary focus. But we also have educators who promote food and wine right here in our membership. To me, the educational focus is crucial. Isn't that why you joined, to learn more about wine and food?

Besides our **Bluffs Gazette**, we have a resource that is being under-utilized, and that is the **international web site**. This is a great resource for learning, one that is overlooked many times due to the fast paced nature of many of our lives. You should all be getting the **President's Blog** from international on your email. **Honorary President Sid Cross** comes up with an amazing number of interesting topics, such as **10 Tips for Cleaning Wine Glasses and Decanters** [in the dishwasher, without soap!], and **What's the Best Way to Cleanse Your Palate**. On www.iwfs.org, you can graze on a number of interesting reading. **Log in**, click on **Americas**, then **Publications**, then **Wine Food & Friends** in the box that drops down, then click on **Articles** in the side box that appears. You will be treated to a number of short articles, such as **An Evening with Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson-a Summary**; **A Delicious History-Gelato Past and Present**; and **Ten Tips for Dining Out**. Recall that I said our Branch was well represented by educators? Well, in this same series are three articles by our own **John Fischer: Malbec the Summer Grilling Wine; Sauvignon Blanc-Better than Chardonnay; and Matching Wine With Food**. Also, in a different section, called **Wine Food & Friends Extended Articles**, is our entire series of six articles on Escoffier by your humble editor. Keep on rockin', CB Branch! We made it into the international web site!

This month we have our Event Report on **Vine + Branch** in Omaha's Old Market. This was a value event that kept on giving. The venue was fun as well, with a wealth of flavored olive oils and Balsamic vinegars available for purchase. I was so impressed with the coleslaw, which used products from Vine + Branch, that I asked for, and was given, the recipe. Read about the event and the recipe within.

On **Sunday July 13th** we are having a special event at a high end Peruvian restaurant: **Taita**. Be sure to sign up early for this limited seating restaurant. Jill Panzer and Patti Hippie have spent hours researching south of the border wines to pair with the food. When is the last time you had Peruvian cuisine? I would have to say never for me. But that is what our society is all about: trying new and unusual foods and wines.

Finally, I write about our wonderful lunch at the **Quinta do Noval** during Mary and my Portuguese Wine vacation in 2012, where we were served a very expensive bottle of their **1997 Nacional Vintage Port**, from one of the most famous vineyards in Portdom. This was the end of our visit to Portugal proper, but not to worry, the second half of the trip begins soon with flying to the exotic island of **Madeira**.

Enjoy!

Tom Murnan



Photo courtesy of hugel.com

Event Report

Wine on a Sunday Afternoon

by Tom Murnan



The last Sunday of June found our Branch gathering in the Old Market at **Vine + Branch**, an upscale shop that sells gourmet olive oils and various flavored Balsamic Vinegars. Samples are available on many of the products sold, and shelf tags inform about the vinegars and oils being sold. It was great fun just to wander the store and see all the variations on olive oil and balsamics. Besides regular olive oil and Balsamics, other gourmet items such as sea salt (Bolivian Rose Salt anyone?), White Balsamic Vinegars, Infused Balsamic Vinegars, other vinegars (red wine or Champagne), spices, and flavored oils (Bacon, Blood Orange, Avocado to name just a few).

This was a value event with, at \$55.00, our lowest cost in quite awhile. Twenty-four members attended. Casual dress on a warm Sunday early afternoon completed our summer theme. Just because the price was low didn't mean that we didn't have highly rated wines or great casual summer-type food. Vine + Branch does not have a kitchen, so they paired up with the **Jackson Street Tavern**, which shares the building with them and a number of other businesses. **Chef Deke Reichardt** from the Tavern prepared our food, which was served smorgasbord style, all at once instead of in courses.

Vine + Branch (V+B) is owned by a mother and daughter team, **Linda Cummings** and **Tish Rasmussen**. They started the business a few years ago after going to the west coast and experiencing wonderful oils and vinegars. Finding nothing similar once back home in Nebraska, they decided to start their own company. Their products can be eaten alone or with bread or in recipes. Go to www.fineoilsandvinegars.com for more information and recipes.

Linda Cummings was introduced to the group. She told us that V+B has 30 flavored oils and vinegars that are free to sample. The Balsamics are great for drizzling over fruit, for example. Next, **Chef Deke** spoke of the food. Several recipes utilized the specialty vinegars and oils from V+B. For example, the pulled pork used **Garlic Cilantro Balsamic Vinegar**, and the Coleslaw had **Strawberry Peach White Balsamic Vinegar** and



Blood Orange Olive Oil in the recipe. I liked the coleslaw so well I asked for the recipe, and Linda graciously supplied it. Find it after this story.

Dinner consisted of a table spread with **fumé smoked sea salt** on chicken and the afore mentioned pulled pork and coleslaw. The fumé salt gets its flavor from being smoked from wood of old wine barrels. The chicken also had a red BBQ sauce that added interest. A side plate held the freshest blueberries, strawberries, water melon, black berries and grapes. They sat there beckoning anyone who would gaze upon it. **Candied Pecans** coated with a brown sugar mix (sold in the store) were hard to stop eating as was a wonderful pork and beans. I went back several times for the beans they were so good. (Maybe I should have asked for that recipe as well!) A side of sliced onions, just cooked through, were sitting in **Smoked Balsamic Vinegar** and were delicious. Dessert was a kind of pound cake topped with whipped cream and a toothpick spearing a maraschino cherry and pineapple tidbit.

Since this was like an informal picnic, without the bugs, heat and humidity, one could choose whatever wine was set out. Selections included **Felsina I Sistri, 2011 Soter Vineyards North Valley Pinot Noir** from the Willamette Valley, **2012 Easton Amador County Zinfandel**, and **2008 The Stump Jump Shiraz** from d'Arenberg in Australia. Our dessert wine was a **2013 Moscato d'Asti** from **Saracco**. It had just the right sweetness

to pair nicely with the pound cake.

Many thanks for our producers **Cordie Fisher, Deb Tritsch, and Shonna Schramm** who planned and executed the event and sharpened their pencil for the price. Thanks as well to Linda Cummings who spoke of the food and condiment pairings, and to Chef Deke Reichhardt and his crew who prepared the food. I could have used even more information about what went into some of the recipes and the products from the shop, but we can all go to the web site for recipe ideas.



Chef Deke Reichardt's Coleslaw

with Vine + Branch's Strawberry Peach White Balsamic Vinegar and Blood Orange Olive Oil

Vine + Branch joined forces with Jackson Street Tavern's Chef Deke Reichardt to make this impressive and unusual coleslaw which your guests will remember even after they go home.

One pound bag of prepared coleslaw

1 250 ml bottle of Vine + Branch's Strawberry Peach White balsamic vinegar

1 100ml bottle of Vine + Branch's Blood Orange Olive Oil

1/4 cup mayo.

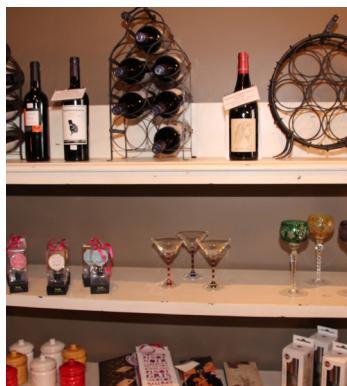
Celery salt to taste

Fresh black pepper

Fresh strawberries to garnish, sliced

Combine all ingredients and refrigerate if not consumed within one hour.









Murnan Portuguese Wine Vacation

Vol. 12, June 6, 2012: Vigneron's Lunch at the Quinta do Noval

by Tom Murnan

After tasting our way through an amazing number of Ports and still wine, it was time for lunch. We were in for a treat because we were about to have a traditional vigneron or fieldworker's lunch. The setting was absolutely stunning: a patio just outside the house, shaded by an ancient cedar tree, overlooking the rugged Pinhão Valley below. The cedar tree is referenced on the label of the **Cedro** (Cedar) **do Noval** white wine that we enjoyed at lunch.

To refresh our palates on this somewhat warm day, we were served **White Port Cocktail**. Simply mix one part Noval Extra dry White Port in a wineglass with ice. Add one part Schweppes Tonic Water and a slice of lemon and you have a refreshing and thirst satisfying summer drink.

We started with **Acorda de Tomate**, a purée of tomatoes, onions, olive oil, garlic and bread, topped by soft boiled eggs from the estate chickens. A very simple recipe, you pour the sautéed tomatoes and flavorings over bread and bake. The runny yolks of the soft boiled eggs provide a sauce. It was so good. We had a branco, or white **2008 Cedro do Noval** with this course.

Next was a **Arroz de Pato**, or Rice and Duck with bacon. Duck and bacon have an amazing affinity, and along with the rice, it proved a hearty dish. We switched to red wine here and



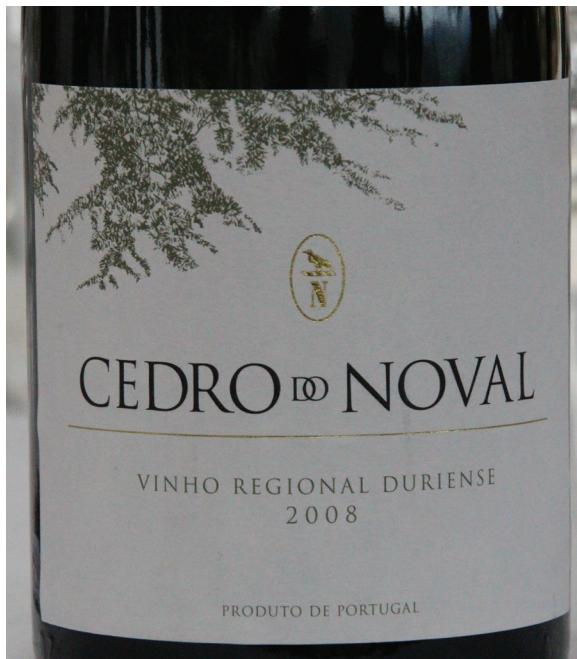
tried the **2008 Quinta do Noval Douro DOC**, a still red. Youthful, concentrated and tannic, it is nevertheless made to be drunk young. It held up well to the strong bacon and duck flavors.

Bacalhau com Natas was next, or Cod, Cream, and Cheese. Cod, the national fish found everywhere in Portugal, was accompanied by carrot, garlic and onions, topped with cheese and placed in an oven to cook. We continued drinking the same wine as with the duck.

But with the dessert course next, we moved into the Ports. A **Torte de Amêndoas**, or Almond Tort, went perfectly with a **QdN 1997 Colheita**, or vintage dated Tawny. Interestingly, it had just been bottled 2 to 3 weeks earlier. It was very fresh, still having some red tinges of color remaining in its body after 15 years in the wood. The woodsy flavors married perfectly with the almonds in the tart.

A cheese and cracker platter was brought out before we moved to the vintage port (VP). **Queijo Serra da Estrela**, whose appellation was nearby, is sheep's milk cheese made to rigorous specifications by small artisanal producers, from November to March, and allowed to cure from its original semi liquid state to a sliceable solid when aged. Its appearance reminds one of Brie.





A 1997 QdN VP was brought out first. Very young and tannic as one would anticipate. But a great surprise came out next: the 1997 QdN Nacional VP. This limited production wine came from the Nacional vineyard, which cemented QdN's reputation with its 1931 Nacional. The Nacional vineyard was not grafted onto American rootstock in 1926 when it was replanted. Its vines were 71 years old in 1997. No more than 250 cases were made for the world in the 1997 vintage. A plum colored, dark red wine with great breeding, the Nacional is declared less often than other VPs. Delicious and well balanced, no acidity was stabbing the palate, nor were tannins coating the entire mouth as some young VPs do. Smoky and bacon tones were detected, as well as meaty espresso flavors. Outstanding. A bit later, when we went to the Quinta's wine store, this wine was selling for 2234,50 € a bottle, or about \$2,882.50. It certainly paid to join this For The Love Of Port Fortification Tour!

Next time: the adventure changes venues to the Island of Madeira.



Upcoming Council Bluffs Branch Events

Mark Your Calendars!

⌚ July 13, 2014

Hosts: Jon & Jill Panzer and

Patti & Steve Hipple

Come and experience the culinary fusion of Chef Jose Dionicio's Peruvian heritage with the local summer harvest. Taita's (Peruvian for Father) is becoming one of Omaha's top seafood restaurants, but, it is so much more. Please join us on Sunday, July 13, 2014 for a Peruvian inspired meal and some South American wines.

August 16, 2014

Lobstahfest!

Enjoy fresh Maine Lobster flown in fresh that morning (or Iowa "lobster", otherwise known as rib eye steak) along with all the fixins.

At the home of John & Valerie Ware in rural Council Bluffs / Glenwood.

September 21, 2014

Lamb dinner at the home of Jerry & Mary Sorensen in Harlan IA.

October 3, 2014

Hosts: Lorrie Burdeny & Patti Hipple

Wild game dinner on fine china at the home of Lorrie and Derek Burdeny.

Walla Walla Washington wines
Catered by Chef John Benker.

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: dmatz@darland.com



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Keep 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.

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