

The Bluffs Food & Wine gazette



Event Report:

Eating Out in the Iowa Countryside

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The Changing Faces of Red Wine

Tom & Mary Murnan
Portuguese Wine Vacation
Vol. 16, June 7, 2012

Welcome

MONDAY - FRIDAY
LUNCH: 11am - 130pm
DINNER: 5pm - 10pm

SATURDAY
LUNCH: 11am - 4pm
DINNER: 4pm - 10pm

SUNDAY
LUNCH: 11am - 4pm
DINNER: 4pm - 8pm

PLEASE!
PARK BICYCLES ACROSS
THE STREET.







Editor's Corner

For our June event, we took a ride into the country. More specifically, we enjoyed the rolling Loess Hills, fields and patches of timber on the way to Minneola, Iowa. It was a dramatic break from our usual events in town. That's what I love about this Branch. We do a lot of unusual things, and this one was just plain fun. There was no expectation of this being haut gourmet. But the food was pretty good, and the wine, while not profound, fit the venue. More and more, I am coming to realize that having fun is one of the most important ingredients in a successful Branch. Camaraderie, an out of town dinner, and of course, good wine all combined for an enjoyable evening. Thanks, Todd and Sandy Lemke, for thinking up this unusual event. In addition to my usual Event Report, Sandy also submitted a (shorter) article.

John Fischer's article this month concerns the ever changing face of red wine. As it ages, the wine presents varying faces to the drinker. Usually raw and a bit nasty when in its extreme youth, red wine sheds this cloak to reveal different characteristics as time progresses. Color is just one change. Acidity and tannin also change. Read John's article to find out more.

June 12, 2012 was Mary and my first day on the Island of Madeira. We ended the day at a commercial restaurant with a terrific patio overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Check out what we were served, both for the wines and the food.

Salut!

Tom Murnan



If a man does not make new acquaintances as he advances through life, he will soon find himself alone. A man should keep his friendships in constant repair. —Samuel Johnson





Event Report: Eating Out in the Iowa Countryside

by Tom Murnan

It was D-Day (literally) and the Branch took the pleasant drive through the Loess Hills in the Iowa countryside, journeying to Mineola Iowa to Tobey Jack's. Those of you who have gone on the Thursday night "Taco Ride" know this is the end destination for bicyclists who ride their bikes down the Wabash Trace Nature Trail. A converted historic Wabash Railroad right of way, it draws hundreds of bike enthusiasts. Being the end destination of the 9.6 mile trek from Council Bluffs, Tobey Jack's provides Margaritas and tacos on Thursdays for hungry, and thirsty, riders. Being a Saturday, there were only a few bicyclists present. Bill and Kathy Good have been owners since 2010.

Arranged by Todd and Sandy Lemke, we had the back room of the restaurant all to ourselves. Seventeen people attended, of these two were guests: Mara and Mike Gerst of Gerst Painting fame and friends

of Todd. We began with two cheese plates from Hy-Vee, both with a nice hunk of Italian style cheese. The first had **Bella Vitano Merlot**, while the second had **Asiago Salsa**, both from **Sartori**. I loved the Bella Vitano. It seemed a bit richer and more buttery than the Asiago, but both were delicious. Green and purple grapes, as well as crackers and strawberries made for a nice selection.

After quaffing and hors d'oeuvres, we sat down to an Appetizer course. **Hand Breaded Onion Rings Surrounding a Shrimp Cocktail** was brought out. Shrimp were placed on the rim of, naturally, a margarita glass. A bed of lettuce supported a container of cocktail sauce. The base of the glass was surrounded by the onion rings, which proved to be delicious. No strike that: addictive. I had more than my share. There was just a little taste of the oil from the deep fat frying. Everyone remarked how tender and flavorful the shrimp was. Sometimes shrimp can be tough and rubbery, but not these. Our wine was a **2013 Jermann Pinot Grigio**. The wine hails from the Venezia Giulia district of Italy. Minerally with mildly sharp acidity and round pinot gris flavors, the wine was able to pair with the shrimp and the deep fried onion rings.

We then had a first for the IWFS Council Bluffs Branch: we all went to the salad bar. This was a typical **salad bar** one would see in many small restaurants, with iceberg lettuce, your standard choice of dressings, beets, potato salad, sliced cucumbers, carrots, broccoli, hot peppers, pudding and the like. Chicken and rice soup was also available. Chilled plates were available right out of the chiller (part of the bar) and the lettuce was crisp and cold. A **2013 Duckhorn Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc** was served here, with its crisp, noticeable acidity and lightly grassy flavors. It was more gentle than many SB's, causing me to look at the label. A portion of the wine was barrel-fermented in French oak. Semillon was added to further tame the SB. It was a complex and delicious SB that did well with the salad.

The entrée was an 8 oz **Whiskey Marinated Steak with Four Butterflied Shrimp** and your choice of **potato**. The sirloin was not too tough and flavorful from the marinade. Again, the shrimp were noticeable for their tenderness. This time, they were breaded (probably in the same batter as the onion rings) and deep fried. A few detractors were the vegetables, which were either overcooked or canned.

Likewise, the gravy on my mashed potatoes came from a can.

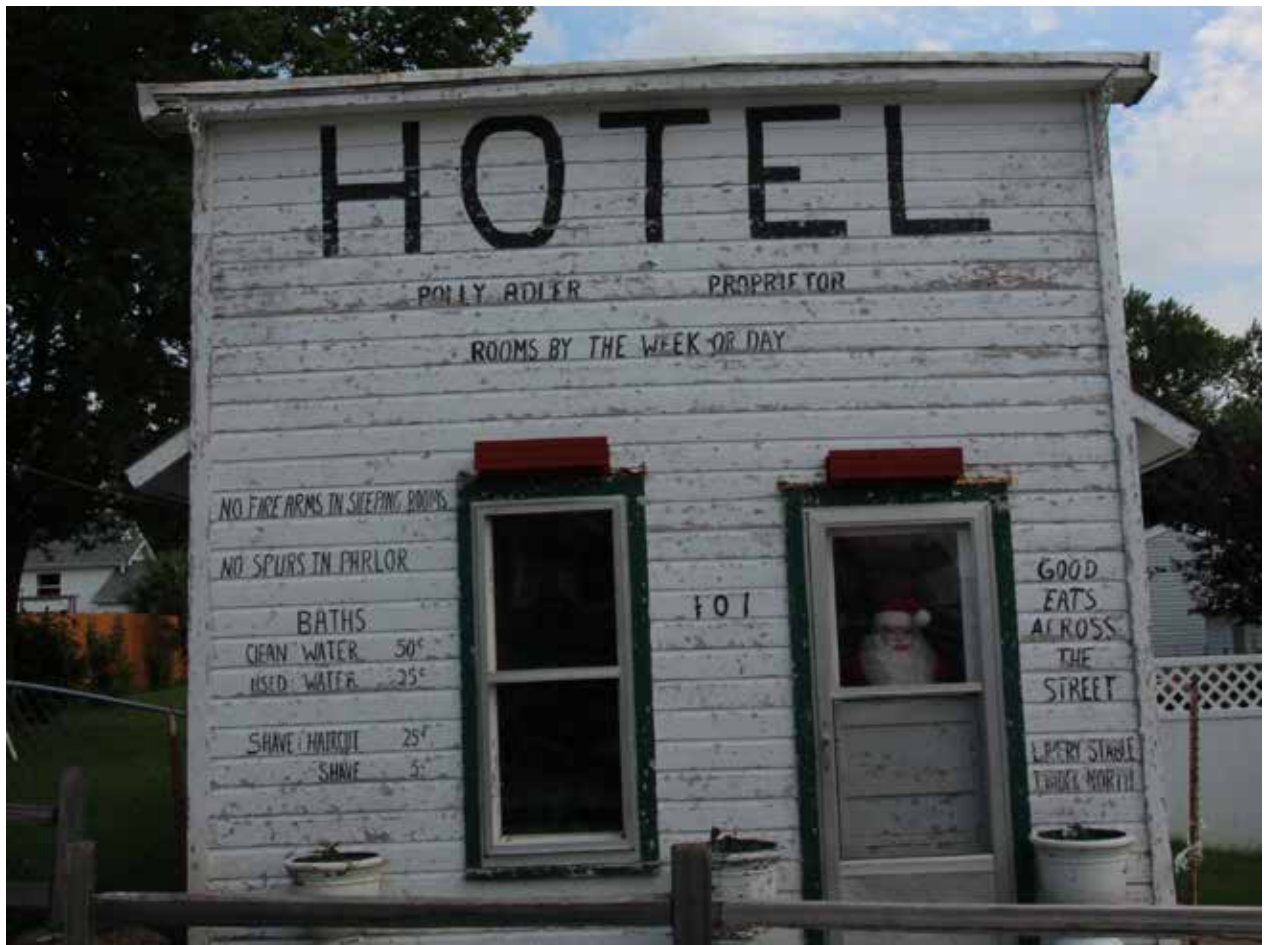
We had two wines to compare and contrast with this course. A **2009 Waterstone Cabernet Sauvignon** from Napa Valley, and a **2011 Norton Malbec Reserve** from Mendoza, Argentina. The Waterstone, from the Branch cellar, was nicely oaked, with cassis flavors and light tannins. The younger Malbec seemed less forthcoming and closed-in. It was fruitier, but needed more time in the bottle to integrate its flavors. Neither wine had been breathing beforehand, but the Waterstone seemed to pick up weight and complexity as it sat in the glass.

For dessert, we had a wonderfully rich sticky from Barsac: the well known **Château Coutet**. Barsac is a neighbor to Sauternes, both about a 40 minute drive from downtown Bordeaux. It was made a Premier Cru Classé in 1855 and consists of 80% Semillon, 15% Sauvignon Blanc, and 5% Muscadelle. It went very well with our **Homemade Apple Pie à la mode**. Not on the menu, a **Strawberry pie** was also served randomly. A very tasty way to end our meal indeed.

Although not gourmet by any means, the restaurant's menu stuck to what they did best. The onion rings, and especially the shrimp were quite good, and the steak tasty. The salad bar was left as is, a reminder of how it is usually done in small town America.

Thanks to owners **Bill and Kathy Good**, server **Chris Androy**, and **Chef Wayne Walker** and sous chef **Justin Fahrenkrog**. Thanks again to our event producers, **Sandy and Todd Lemke**, for thinking outside the box and providing a delightful alternative to our usual restaurant haunts in the big city.













Dessert
Homemade Apple Pie & Ice Cream
2005 Coutet Barsac





An Evening Out in the Iowa Countryside: a Producer's Report

by Sandy Lemke

Council Bluffs IWFS members were treated to a lovely drive in the Iowa countryside on Saturday, June 6 for the dinner at Tobey Jack's Mineola Steakhouse. The venue is nestled in the rolling hills of western Iowa and is famous as a rest stop for the Taco Ride bicycle riders.

Our group gathered in the restaurant's party room. A highlight of the evening was the hand-breaded onion rings, tender and tasty. Host Todd Lemke noted that a unanimous vote selected the 2009 Waterstone Blend Cabernet Sauvignon as the winner in a side-by-side pairing. It beat out the 2011 Norton Malbec Reserve. These wines accompanied the Whiskey Marinated Steak in the Dinner Course.

It was an enjoyable casual evening, as is the usual for summer IWFS events. The owners Bill and Kathy Good and chefs graciously came out to greet our group for photos and lighthearted questions.

The Changing Faces of Red Wine

by John Fischer





In this article, we will be considering wines that are designed for aging. Wines that are vinified to be consumed at the time of bottling are usually focused on fruit with limited complexity and often have a somewhat compressed lifespan.

An often overlooked consideration in the life history of wine is the pedigree of the winery. Wine quality is dependent of the DNA of the grapes used in its production. Two wines from different producers may have nearly identical characteristics in their youth; however, one may begin to fall apart in just a few years while the other may slowly evolve over tens of years into a masterpiece. Wines, like people, are under the control of their DNA.

Wines designed for aging can have a lifespan of tens of years. This style of wine has an anthropomorphic character: it has a birth, youth, maturity, decline, and death. We get our first picture of a wine when still in the barrel—its birth. At this stage, people with experience can predict the ultimate quality of a wine with some accuracy, but beware, it is nonetheless just an educated guess.

In its youthful stage a wine is rambunctious, aggressive, scabrous, acerbic, and unsophisticated. The wine is tart and tannic, and its flavors are tightly wound up in a budlike stage. A high quality wine goes through a carefully defined ripening period as it ages, tannins and acids progressively decrease; the wine becomes softer and rounder and the flavors start to unfurl. Nevertheless, all of the stages must be in sync. In other words, a wine must keep in step during its evolutionary process.

Flavors evolve by two mechanisms. First, the compounds in the wine commence to come together (chemical reactions) and produce new flavorful substances (esters, ketones, terpenes, etc.), and second, a decrease in the level

of aggressive tannins. Recall that tannins have a blanketing effect on wines flavors. When flavors reach their zenith the wine is at the peak of its maturity. At this point, the wines complexity (the assortment of its flavors) is also at its summit. If tannins are too high when flavors peak it will smother the flavorful extracts and the wine will be scabrous, aggressive, lacking in flavor, and out of balance.

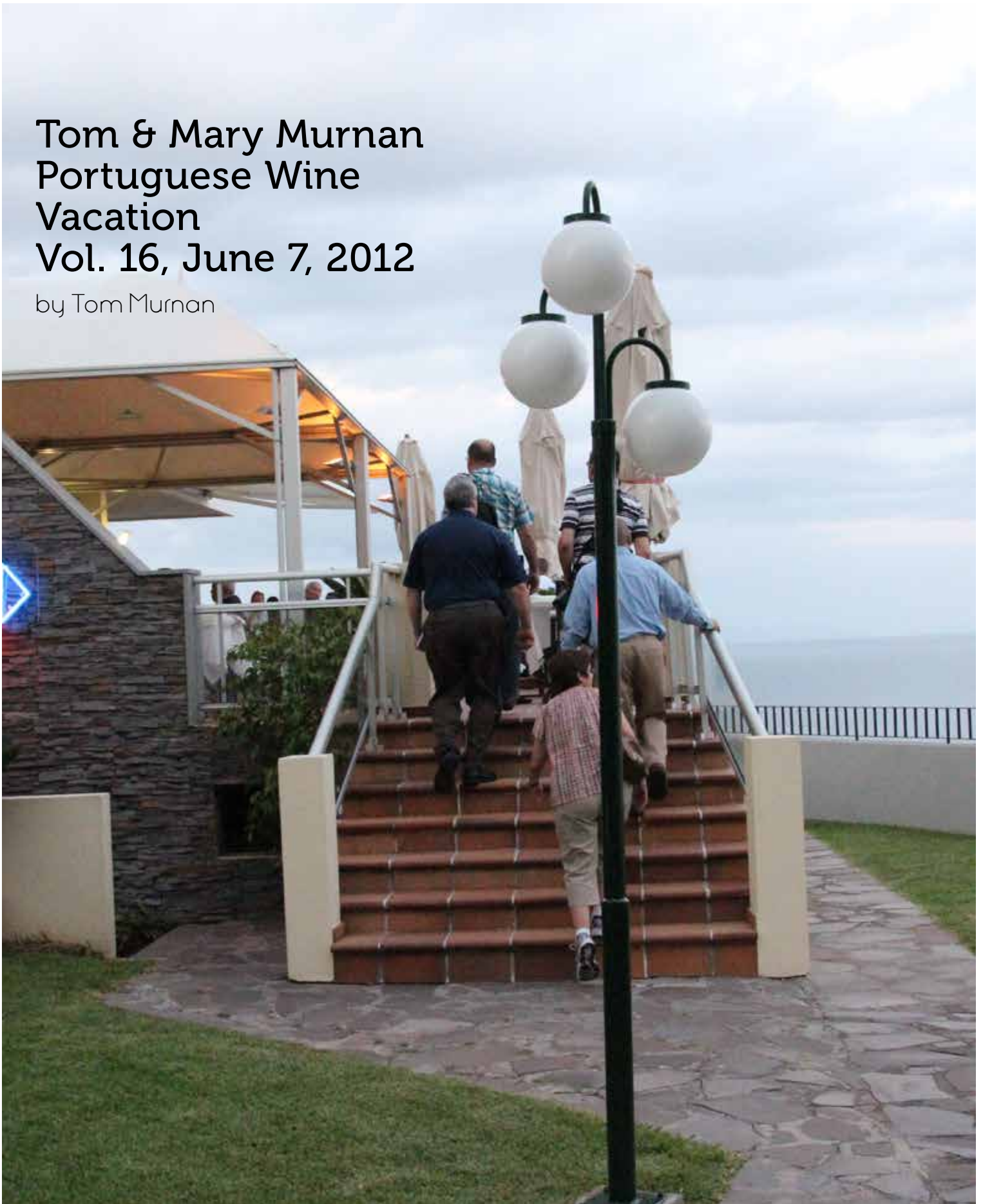
As wine ages, acids, like the tannins, continue to fall. It is acidity that is the primary taste element in wine that supports its flavor; acidity is the spine of a wine. At the point of full maturity acidity is “just right.” As acidity continues to fall, its flavors progressively collapse, and the wine loses its zing becoming flat tasting and insipid—its death. May it rest in peace!

The color in red wine also follows a progressive pathway that can tip you off as to where a wine stands in its lifespan. A young wine will have a purple/ruby color. With age, brown tones progressively accumulate. They can best be seen at the meniscus (the top edge of a tilted glass of wine). At maturity, there is a definite rim of brown tones that are limited to the area of the meniscus. With further aging, the brown tones progressively make their way down into the bowl of the glass. A dead wine will have the color of brewed tea. More about a wines color in a future article.



Tom & Mary Murnan Portuguese Wine Vacation Vol. 16, June 7, 2012

by Tom Murnan



Our first full day in Madeira has been a busy one. After sleeping in from out late plane arrival, we started our island tour with a multi course lunch at Chalet Vicente Restaurante with Maderian recipes and mostly Madeira wines, including a still white. Then it was off to Henriques & Henriques for a tour, lecture on the island and its wine making traditions, followed by a massive 17 bottle tasting of the wine the island is famous for: fortified Madeira. Our livers were certainly getting a workout.

In the evening, after returning from H&H, we went to the **Restaurant O Classico**, right on the main road following the sea coast towards downtown Funchal. It was a modern place, and we were seated on the marvelous patio overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. The weather was gorgeous. We began our repast with an appetizer plate that consisted of **olives, chopped pig's ear (a house specialty) with onions and leek greens, prosciutto and crab with mayonnaise**. We had two wines from the Douro to accompany the hors d'oeuvres. One was a three year old **Magalhães dry white**, and the other a **Quinto do Sival**, the second label of the renown Port Lodge Quinta do Noval.

Sausage with corn was next. Soft, deep fried corn was processed into something like polenta cubes. This was served with Chorizo sausage. In addition, another dish had **Tripe with fava** type beans, thick bacon and sausage.

With appetizers completed we ordered off the menu for the first course. I had a **seafood crêpe**, Mario had **limpets**, each on its original shell, Luis had **tomato**

soup with onions and eggs, and Mary a **vegetable soup**. The wine was a **2008 Colheita Beira da Quinta**, made from the grapes **Verdelho and Arnsburger**. It's producer was Joao Mendes Unipessoal, Funchal. A white wine, it was produced in the bottom of a crater in an extinct volcano on the north coast of Madeira. It was dry, fruity and light with natural sweetness.

While waiting for the second entree, we learned that Portugal was the first "Global Village" in its age of discovery in the 16th century. Ordering off the menu again, I had a tenderloin with mushrooms. Ruth had **Avocado and Shrimp**. A few ordered **Cataplana**, an Arabian dish when Portugal absorbed the Arabian culture (the Portuguese village). Huge prawns, monkfish and vegetables in a kind of tomato broth were all found in the soup. This course's wine was a red **2010 Duorum from La Vale do Ria de Oro**, Douro Portugal.

Dessert was a **30 year old Tawny Port: Magalhaes from the Quinta do Silva**. Contented, stuffed and tired, we took our bus back to the hotel. On the way back we learned that the waiter asked Mario, our Portuguese speaking guide, how many Chinese girls he wanted that night! We all had a good laugh on that one.

The main import of the dinner was experiencing all the unusual food, with those Portuguese and island touches: limpets, pig's ear, monkfish etc., all done in a way with which I was not familiar.

Next time: The Madeira Wine Company.





Upcoming Council Bluffs Branch Events

Mark Your Calendars!



August 15, 2015

Council Bluffs Country Club. Italian theme.
Producers: Tom Schierbrock and David Tritz.



September 13, 2015

Little España in Rockbrook.
Producers: Patti & Steve Hipple



October 11, 2015

A Halloween themed Walk-around at the homes of
the Hipple, Panzers and Farmers.
Producers: Patti Hipple, Jill Panzer and Liz Farmer



November 8, 2015

The Heritage (the old Zin Room) 316 South 15th St, Omaha
Producers: Barb & Barry Kricksfeld and Tom Murnan



December 5, 2015

President's Holiday Event at Le Bouillon in the Old Market.
Producer: President Bob Kossow

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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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.

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.

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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