

The Bluffs Food & Wine *gazette*



IWFS GREAT WEEKEND IN
CHARLESTON SOUTH CAROLINA PART
5 SATURDAY 10/19/2019 FINALE



ALSO INSIDE • Do the Mollydooker Shake
• Event Report: Barbie on the Outback at Wine, Beer & Spirits

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS



Greetings to all;

Our August event was hosted by Dave and Tabitha Thrasher at the “Stokin’ Goat.” A highlight of the evening was the blind tasting comparing Bordeaux Red Blends, Columbia Valley Cabernet, Napa Valley Cabernet and Red Blend. An interesting array of food and wines followed for a fabulous evening. Thank you to Tabitha and Dave.

As I am continually interested in the art and science of pairing food and wine, a certain number of foods can be a challenge to pair with wine. To effectively incorporate the foods listed below, consider the cooking technique used as well as combining these foods with other ingredients to minimize the impact of the food on the wine.

Challenging foods to pair with wine:

Artichokes – contain cynarin – an amino acid which can produce an overwhelming sweetness and/or metallic taste.

Asparagus – contains mercaptan – a funky smell when paired with wine.

Chiles – contain capsaicin which can make high alcohol wines taste unpleasantly hot and accentuate astringency in tannic wines.

Cruciferous vegetables – release sulfur compounds when cooked contributing to an off-flavor impression to wine. Sweet potato, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower and carrots is a short list of cruciferous vegetables. This applies to eggs also.

Vinegar and foods pickled in vinegar – contain acetic acid which can alter a wine’s fruity flavors and create a bitter taste to the wine.

Grilling is one of the most recommended ways to cook these challenging foods so that they can be enjoyed with wine. Secondly, combining these foods with bacon or cream to reduce their impact on wine is also recommended.

Be safe and be well. 🍷

Connie Martin

Cover Photo: Mostly members of the IWFS Council Bluffs Branch at the final Black Tie dinner, Hotel Bennett, Charleston Great Weekend 10-19-2019. Photo by Wayne Markus’ camera. Not sure who took the photo as Wayne is in it! The greatest selfie ever?

“This girl today said she recognized me from the Vegetarians Club, but I’d swear I’d never met herbivore.”

IT’S TIME FOR SOME LEXOPHILES

EDITOR'S

CORNER

Barbeque is getting more and more popular, and what more fun than to have Australian styled BBQ, or as they say, grilled from the barbie. And an outback theme, no less. I guarantee you: we were the only ones in Omaha having kangaroo, emu and barbeque snags. We also learned what a mollydooker and a leeuwin meant. All this was enhanced by having Australian wines, with contributions from Tasmania. Even the dessert wine was a Rutherglen Muscat. Check out the event report.



During the event, we learned that the Mollydooker winery uses nitrogen so they can reduce Sulphur in the wine. Nitrogen also helps stabilize a wine during the transpacific shipping process. But nitrogen compresses the wine, and until it is 2 years old, it needs to be dissipated for maximum wine enjoyment. So we learned how to do the Mollydooker shake. I had never heard of it, so I am passing it on so everyone could learn this trick and be aware it even exists.

Wayne Markus ends his series on the IWFS Charleston Great Weekend. The whole trip sounded grand, what with the historic sites and neighborhoods. You also had an opportunity to sample Southern cuisine. The closing Black Tie Gala Dinner was at the Hotel Bennett, with a guest chef. The featured wines were from **Joseph Phelps** of Napa California, and yes, they got to sample their famous **Insignia Cabernet Sauvignon**.

If you want to examine the photos of an event before it comes out in the Gazette, go to our web site at IWFS.org, and click on The Bluffs Food & Wine Gazette & Photos. Yes, you can download photos from the site. You can also access our Branch's collection of recipes. We just updated them last month when we added Connie Martin's White Port Spritzer recipe. White Port is a bit hard to find in Omaha, but I was able to purchase a bottle at Wine Beer & Spirits when we were at the Australian event. Here's the recipe book link: https://issuu.com/omahapublications/docs/iwfs_cb_council_bluffs_recipes.

Cheers Mates!

Tom Murnan



NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU PUSH THE ENVELOPE, IT'LL STILL BE STATIONERY."

— IT'S TIME FOR SOME LEXOPHILES

Event Report:



BARBIE ON THE OUTBACK AT WINE, BEER & SPIRITS

STORY & PHOTOS BY TOM MURNAN

G'day mates. If you didn't attend our Barbie on the Outback event, you missed a unique chance to pair Australian food with an (almost) all Australian wine lineup. We did have some Tasmanian wine, which is at least in the "neighborhood." We tried a new venue with this event: Wine, Beer and Spirits in the old Oak View Toy's R Us. This is Beau Starkel's new 31,000 square foot investment with a business plan to offer the lowest price on beer, liquor and wine. But it is a work still in process. A bar and event room are still not completed as our hostess, Patti Hipple, discovered when she arrived to decorate at 9:00 a.m. There was a lot of construction stuff in the way. This all had to be moved for our event. Luckily, she was able to call United Rentals, who was about to deliver the tables, to add an installation of a black curtain to limit the size of the room and hide the eyesores. We had a group of 35 attendees, of which 3 were guests.

Our caterer was **Hap Abraham**, and they did everything right for COVID-19. Servers wore masks and gloves while they passed our appetizers and waited on tables, and we had a server pouring our quaffing wines. Our hors d'oeuvre were interesting and flavorful. **Grilled Oysters Kilpatrick** had a lot of bacon with that cooked oyster,

as well as breading and BBQ sauce. Its saltiness went well with the Pewsey Vale Eden Valley Dry Riesling 2018. **Barbeque Snags** were pork and beef sausages, about 2 inches long, made with avocado, onions and spices, and drizzled with another kind of BBQ sauce I was not familiar with. Then there were **Toast Points with Avocado and Chicken Salad**. Our other two sparkling quaffing wines were from Tasmania: a Jansz Premium Cuvee Brut Tasmania non-vintage and a Jansz Premium Rosé Brut Tasmania also non-vintage. All the quaffers were good with the appetizers.

Our **First Course** was **Grilled Rock Lobster Tail and Smoked Gouda Mac n Cheese**. This was a nice sized lobster tail, but the dish came out tepid. My tail was nicely cooked where it melted in your mouth, and was not rubbery as sometimes happens when overcooked. The Macaroni was rich and tasted of smoke from its Gouda cheese. Erin Clark came out to speak on the wines. Erin has worked at a number of restaurants before, including Le Bouillon, V. Mertz and The Boiler Room. She currently works for Beau. She explained that the term **Leeuwin** refers to a warm current that flows southward around the western coast of Australia. This keeps the continental shelf areas warm in the winter and cool in the summers, affecting the wine growing areas. ▶











◀ Leeuwin Estate is one of the five founding wineries in the Margaret River area. Robert Mondavi visited the area and pointed out the future site of the winery by saying how special this terroir was. **Leeuwin Estate 'Prelude' Chardonnay 2017** was contrasted to the **Leeuwin Estate 'Art Series' Chardonnay 2016**. The Art Series has some barrel fermentation to it, so it is a bit more complex and oaky. It has been said that it is the Chassagne Montrachet (a high-end French white Burgundy) of Australia, and expensive to boot. The Prelude is a little lighter in body, less complex and more citrusy for less money. I found the Art Series polished, smooth and elegant, while the Prelude was more basic, not as complex and interesting, and a bit more acidic. Both wines did a fine job with the lobster.

The **Second** course was our most unusual offering: **Emu Slider with Red Cabbage Slaw** contrasted with **Kangaroo Slider with Asian Slaw**. You can't get more Australian than Kangaroo and Emu. Sorry, I forgot to take a photo on this course (as did my backup photographer), but it looked like two small hamburgers on the plate. Unfortunately, I found the Emu very chewy. It tastes similar to beef but is very low fat. I suspect it would get very chewy very fast if overcooked. It is supposed to be cooked rare to medium rare. I did not see any pinkness in the cooked product. The kangaroo however, was much more tender. It reportedly tastes like filet mignon but is very lean at 2% fat content. I found it to be very enjoyable. Both slaws worked well with their respective meats.

Our duo of wines were the **Mollydooker Blue Eyed Boy Shiraz 2017** and the **John Duval 'Plexus' GSM Barossa Valley 2015**. Erin gave us a tutorial of the wines. GSM in the Duval means Grenache, Mourvèdre Syrah. John Duval is a 3rd generation wine grower, but a first-generation wine maker. He went to school at Adelaide and then worked at Penfolds working around Grange Hermitage, their most renown wine. He eventually got promoted and he became winemaker for Grange for about 10 years. His wine is from the Barossa area. Here, Erin said the Grenache adds some red fruit notes, but the Syrah is not as blue fruited and heavy.

The **Blue Eyed Boy** is 100% Shiraz and comes from Mollydooker, a famous Australian winery who introduced America to a more modern style of Australian wine. Mollydooker is Aussie slang for a left-handed person. They also were among the first wineries who began using the **Stelvin**

screwcap closures instead of corks. This helped preserve freshness on its long ocean voyage to the USA. Stelvin closures are also cheaper than corks, helping to lower the price for many start-up wineries. Mollydooker tops up their wines with nitrogen gas to reduce the amount of Sulphur. (You are instructed on the label to shake the bottle to get rid of the nitrogen before you drink the wine. See the accompanying story.) The wine comes from McLaren Vale where you typically get a lot of blue fruits on the palate. I found the Duval 'Plexus' my favorite red of the evening. It was complex, with smooth tannins, well balanced and elegant, whereas the Blue Eye Boy was cruder with rougher tannins, with more acidity.

Our **Third** course was more traditional. A **Grilled 8 oz Ribeye with Roasted Potato Wedges**. The steak was about ½ inch thick, tender, and smoky from the grille. No sauce was added. We compared a **Penfolds 'Bin 389' Cabernet Sauvignon-Shiraz 2017** to a **Mollydooker Gigglepote Cabernet Sauvignon 2016**. I found the Penfolds young, a bit grapy and new, with moderate tannins. It needs time to come together. The Gigglepote comes from McLaren Vale and again was very young, with raspberry fruit and a touch of rhubarb, but still tannic.

Dessert was **Grilled Upside-Down Pineapple Cake** which was very nice. I had not had one for quite awhile. As a treat, we had **Campbell's Rutherglen Muscat**. Rutherglen has a long and predictable growing season where the grapes can hang on the vine for a long time, until they are almost raisins. When pressed, since it is almost raisinated, it has more pigment. Instead of a golden color you typically see, it has deep amber and tawny hues. This is a **solera**, not a vintage wine, meaning they mix different vintages into the final product to create a house style. At 17% alcohol, it is a fortified wine like a tawny port.

Many thanks to Patti Hipple who spent a lot of extra time and trouble getting the room ready for us, and to Steve, who helped to manage the wine organization. We did not get a photo of the Hap Abraham staff nor the chef, but we also thank them as well. Thanks as well to Beau Starkel for the use of his new event room. Thank goodness the air conditioning was working well as it was 100°F outside when we arrived. 🍷



IWFS GREAT WEEKEND IN CHARLESTON SOUTH CAROLINA

Part 5

Saturday 10/19/2019 Finale

STORY & PHOTOS BY WAYNE MARKUS

Saturday began with **Breakfast with Bubbles** in the Hotel Bennett. Domaine Chandon Étoile for breakfast! Many attended the IWFS Americas Annual General Meeting. The rest of the day was free time until the Black-Tie dinner.

The Saturday evening **Black Tie Dinner** at Hotel Bennett was prepared under guest **Chef Todd Gray**, chef and co-owner of Equinox in Washington, D.C. Todd studied at the University of Richmond and graduated with honors from the Culinary Institute of America, earning five nominations for James Beard Foundation's "Best Chef, Mid-Atlantic" Award. He was the first chef to be invited to speak in the White House Rose Garden and was appointed by then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to serve as one of the inaugural State Department Chefs.

Dom Pérignon Brut Champagne 2008 and passed hors d'oeuvres were served during the reception. Everyone was dressed to the nines (a term from the 18th century poetry of Robert Burns and possibly referring to the game of nine pins). Multiple groups arranged to have group photos hampered by the ability to get the photographer (me) and members of the group together at the same time.

The featured wines of **Joseph Phelps Vineyards** were presented by Bill Phelps, son of the late Joseph Phelps. Joseph Phelps wines have been well known to the more mature members of IWFS for many years. It remains a family owned winery. The winery was founded in 1973 and the flagship wine Insignia, a blend of

Bordeaux varietals, was first made in 1974 and scored 99 by Robert Parker. This wine was one of the first to dispel the argument that California wines do not age. The original intent of the Insignia label was to be the best wine of the year be it Cabernet, Chardonnay, or any of their varietals or blends, but it has always been a Cabernet or Merlot predominant blend. Robert Parker has awarded **four perfect 100-point scores** to the 1991, 1997, 2002, and 2007 vintages of Insignia. **Parker wrote:** "Joseph Phelps was one of the great visionaries of Napa Valley. His legacy is one of extraordinary quality. He was one of the first to see the merit in blending, which his legendary Insignia, which first debuted in 1974, has proven year after year. It remains one of the world's finest Cabernet Sauvignon-dominated blends."

The first course was Lemon Rosemary Glazed Jumbo Prawn with Morel Mushroom Grit Cake and Spiced Butternut Squash Puree. The wine was **Joseph Phelps Chardonnay, "Firestone Vineyards," Sonoma Coast, 2015.**

The second course was Pan Seared Charleston **Wreckfish** served on Celery Root Galette with Beurre Rouge, Black Truffle and Porcini Dusted Enoki Mushroom Tempura. Wreckfish in the South Atlantic are large predators that lurk in caves and under overhangs on the Charleston Bump and come out to feed on fish and squid. They are deep-water marine fish and can be found on the ocean bottom, where they inhabit caves and shipwrecks (hence their common name). The wine was **Joseph Phelps Pinot Noir, "Firestone Vineyards," Sonoma Coast 2017.** The

wine scored 96 points by Wine Enthusiast and 94 points by James Suckling.

The third course was Hazelnut Crusted Saddle of Lamb with Parsnip Custard, Spinach Cannelloni, and Sweet Garlic Lamb Jus. It was served with **Joseph Phelps Insignia, Napa, 2010.** The Insignia scored 95 points by Wine Advocate.

The dessert course was Olive Oil Pound Cake, Mix Berry Marmalade, Lemon Vanilla Cream, and Raspberry Coulis. The dessert wine was **Joseph Phelps Delice, Napa, 2017.** Delice is 100% Scheurebe from the Home Ranch Vineyard in St. Helena. Scheurebe is a hybrid of Riesling and Bukettrebe. The grapes are hand-picked, frozen, partially thawed then gently pressed.

Several awards were given out. **Hal Jones** of Southern Glazier Wine & Spirits who selected and obtained the wine for the weekend; **Bill Phelps** Executive Chairman of Joseph Phelps Vineyards who presented the evening's wines; and **Chef Todd Gray** at Hotel Bennett were all given the IWFS Certificate of Appreciation. **Stephen Greenwald** was awarded the André Simon Bronze Medal for all his work on the Festivals & Events Committee.

The following morning the event was over, and we all went our ways. Karen and I went to **McLead Plantation** then **Savannah** for a couple days. We had never spent any time in Savannah and thoroughly enjoyed it. We were looking forward to the Paris and Bordeaux event with side-trips to Normandy, Lourdes, and Alsace. Now, due to the COVID 19 virus that is on hold until 2021. 🍷



BREAKFAST WITH BUBBLES

BLACK TIE DINNER





Do the Mollydooker *Shake*

WHY DO YOU DO THE MOLLYDOOKER SHAKE ON YOUR WINES?

It's the very best way to prepare our wines for drinking!

Most wines contain sulphites in order to protect them. Sulphites can cause an allergic asthma type reaction and we realise a lot of people are sensitive to them. So wherever we can, we use nitrogen to protect the wine so that we can reduce the amount of sulphites. However, when you use nitrogen in winemaking it compresses the flavour - if you think of flavour as a big round ball, the nitrogen flattens the back end of the round ball. As soon as you do the Mollydooker Shake it releases the nitrogen and the flavour pops back out to its full size again, maximising the flavour profile.

SHOULD WE DO THE MOLLYDOOKER SHAKE ON ALL YOUR WINES?

No. The Mollydooker Shake should only be done on our still red wines under two years old. Our rosé, white and sparkling wines are already full of life!

TAKE THE MOLLYDOOKER TASTE TEST

From a new bottle of Mollydooker, pour some wine out into a glass and set it aside. Do the Mollydooker Shake on the rest of the wine in the bottle and pour some into another glass. Then taste them side by side. The difference will amaze you!

Sarah says "Pre-shaken the wines are intense, concentrated and still magnificent. However, after the shake the wine becomes more approachable, the aromatics are lifted and the fruit is smoother on the palate. An overall more enjoyable and total Mollydooker experience!"

Don't worry, the first glass you poured isn't wasted. After a short time, it loses nitrogen, so you can enjoy it soon after. We call it pourer's perks!

HOW OLD MUST THE REDS BE BEFORE YOU DON'T NEED TO DO THE MOLLYDOOKER SHAKE WITH THEM?

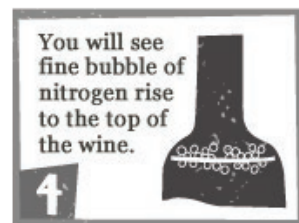
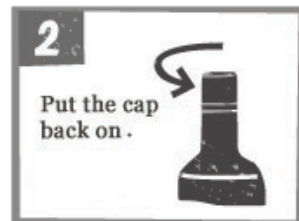
Two years old. They should have softened and integrated naturally by this time.

CAN I DECANT MY MOLLYDOOKERS OR USE AN AERATOR INSTEAD OF DOING THE MOLLYDOOKER SHAKE?

No, because it does not produce the same effect. Decanting, or dispensing with an aerator, oxygenates the wine. If there is nitrogen in the wine, it acts antagonistically to oxygen, so by not doing the Shake, not only are you not releasing the nitrogen, you are also reducing the effectiveness of the decanting/aerating. We have done blind tastings of the Shake v the Decant and the Shake is always the winner. If you want to do both, do the Shake first which will release the nitrogen and then decant. 🍷

Source:

<https://www.mollydookerwines.com/MollydookerShake/tabid/94/Default.aspx>





UPCOMING COUNCIL BLUFFS BRANCH EVENTS

Mark Your Calendars!

SEP.
13

DOLCE

Theme: Who's Right?

Producers: Thrashers & Hipples

OCT.
17

SPENCER'S FOR STEAKS & CHOPS

Harvest Dinner

Producers: Suzanne & Bob Kossow

NOV.
14

SPEZIA

California vs. Oregon Pinot Noir

Producers: Tom & Mary Murnan

DEC.
6

J. GILBERT'S RESTAURANT

Producers: Connie and Gary Martin

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**



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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

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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

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Editor: **Tom Murnan**
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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.

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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