

The Bluffs Food & Wine gazette



BIAGGI'S

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Fall Festival at Biaggi's

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President's Comments

Dear Members,

It is hard to believe the year is coming to a close. It has been a busy year. We have enjoyed wonderful events from formal dinners, tastings, outdoor barbeques and even an Escoffier play. My hope is that you enjoyed each and every one of them as much as Suzanne and I have.

Next year looks to be even better. Events are already scheduled into May. We will start with a Portuguese field workers' meal in January. Following that will be a 'Rendezvous in the Rhone' French dinner at La Voltaire. March will be an Irish dance presentation with dinner. April will feature a wine and cheese component at V. Mertz.

Aside from monthly events, our branch is building a wine cellar for us to enjoy now and in the future. In this issue you will also learn more about the wine cellar from our Wine Chair Patti Hipple. Through the efforts of Patti, along with Dr. John Fischer before her, we have accumulated some great wines. If you attended our December event you were able to enjoy four of them.

The Bluffs Food & Wine Gazette is one of the best newsletters in the Americas. It brings you not only news of our events, but an opportunity to learn more about wine and food. We are fortunate to have members who are willing to share their travel experiences and help us to better understand wine and food from around the world.

Our website acts as a reference for your use:

- Trying to remember that great wine you had at the last event?
- Check out the event page for a copy of the menu and wine list.
- Want to know when and where our next event is?
- Check the events page and even get directions to the restaurant.
- Can't find that email with the Bluffs Gazette?
- All issues dating to 2012 are posted online.
- Check the Education page to read articles on wine and food from our own Dr. John Fischer and Steve Hipple.
- The IWFS International website also offers much useful information.
(You need to be logged in to take full advantage of the websites.)

Your board has been meeting monthly to ensure that everything goes smoothly and the club is headed in the right direction. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated board.

We believe our branch offers a fun way of exploring wine and food while making new friends along the way. I thank you for being a part of our branch and look forward to continuing the journey in the coming year.

Enjoy!

Bob Kossow

P.S. You should have received your renewal notice for your membership to the IWFS Council Bluffs Branch from Diane Forristall. If you haven't renewed already, please respond to Diane at your earliest convenience.



Editor's Corner

Wow! It's been unusually cold for this time of year (late November as I write). Before it got really cold, we had a great event at Biaggi's. For a chain restaurant, they did an excellent job. Being a chain is not necessarily a criticism, and every time I've even been to Biaggi's I have had a good meal. I thought Chef Aaron King was grateful for the opportunity to get creative. Many thanks to Dean Dougherty and Mary Kay Young for making the arrangements. Also thanks for the contributors to this issue. It gets kinda lonely doing it all oneself. Submittals are more than welcome.

To plug my own upcoming event on January 18, 2015 a bit, this will be a unique opportunity to experience a Portuguese vineyard worker's meal as it was served to Mary and me at the world renown Port lodge Quinta do Noval. All Portuguese wines will be served except for quaffing. There will be one tawny and two Vintage Ports to finish the meal. The announcement will be coming out soon. Don't miss this one.

Inspired by her IWFS Rhône cruise, first time event producer Phyllis Hegstrom has settled on having a Rhône wine theme for the upcoming February event at Le Voltaire. Trying to get as close to Valentine's day as possible without running afoul of the restaurant's busiest day, February 6th, a Friday, has been booked. Mark your calendars now. Indeed, if there are other members out there who have never put on an event but would like to, contact anyone on the board. It seems that putting on an event is a great way to become more interested and active in this wonderful international society. It is a creative way to be more involved in the branch's proceedings. One requirement, however, is that you must be paired up with a Board Member. They can guide you on how to plan an event. The wine selection can be the scariest part, but again, that's why you have the assistance of a Board Member. The branch has put together a brochure on how to plan an event that spells out how it's done. So consider volunteering, especially if you know of a great chef or restaurant that you would like the group to share. Participation is a great way to increase and share your excitement and interest about being a member.

Finally, as Bob indicated above, we have an active landing pad on the International Wine & Food Society's web site. Starting with this issue, we are going to add, as a permanent feature of the Bluffs Gazette, a hyperlink to the Council Bluffs Branch site. This will be found on the end page of every Gazette. Take the time to browse not only our site but all the other educational opportunities that the site offers. And, yes, you can find articles penned by your Board Members. Once in, click Americas, then Publications, glide over to the right of Wine Food & Friends to reveal many more articles on a wide variety of topics.

Happy holidays!

Tom Murnan



Photo courtesy of kugel.com

Riesling is a Wine for the Holidays

by Bob Kossow

Riesling is one of the few grapes that is capable of producing a complete spectrum of wine styles, from bone dry to lusciously sweet.

One of my new favorites is the 2012 Erdener Treppchen Riesling Spätlese WE 94 WS 90 Pts. The Spätlese (“late picked”) designation means that the grapes get an extra week or two of hang time, which helps them develop higher ripeness and deeper flavors than Kabinett. It is a fruit-driven Riesling that combines extraordinary concentration and length with bracing minerality.

The Dr. Loosen Estate was the Top 100 Winery of the Year 2013, in Wine & Spirit and has been in the same family for over 200 years.

The Erdener Treppchen vineyard (The Little Staircase of Erden) (pronounced AIR-din-er TREP-shen) is so steep that long ago, stone steps were built into the

hillside to enable workers to reach the vines. This vineyard was rated “First Vineyard” (“Erste Lage”) in the 1868 Prussian classification of the Mosel, and is rated “Great First-Class” in the Wine Atlas of Germany by Hugh Johnson & Stuart Pigott (1995). The iron-rich, red slate soil produces wines that are muscular and complex, with an intense mineral finish. Dr. Loosen’s single-vineyard vines average 70 years old, all on original rootstock (phylloxera can’t survive in the Mosel, so ungrafted vines are allowed here). Old vines produce naturally lower yields, resulting in higher concentration and richness.

Hopefully you will like this wine as much as I do.

Enjoy!

What is the definition of a good wine? It should start and end with a smile.

—William Sokolin





Event Report: Oregon & Washington Autumn Wine Dinner at Biaggi's

by Tom Murnan

For being at a Ristorante Italiano, we had quite an eclectic feast that was not particularly Italian throughout. Biaggi's is a chain of 22 restaurants that specializes in Italian, but tonight **Chef Aaron King** was un-tethered and allowed to be creative beyond the usual restraints of the printed menu. That was just fine with me because we had a wonderful assortment of courses. Twenty-eight people attended, including five guests. **Brian and Beth Mastry** were guests of David Hayes; **Chris and Cristina Toth** were guests of the Hipples; and Mary Kay Young's daughter **Lauren Davis** all participated.

We began with a nicely laid out antipasto spread of various hard and medium hard cheeses, charcuterie, and an unusual **Fig Mostarda**. I tasted mostly fig, not mustard, but it was sweet, fruity and figy, and accompanied the cheeses and charcuterie well. A propitious beginning. A nice assortment of quaffing wines were available.

We were called to table for the **Oregon Bison Carpaccio**. This proved to be a real treat. A very thinly sliced piece of raw (carpaccio) fat free, farm raised bison

was topped by slices of **Hickory Shiitake Mushrooms** and garnished with dots of **Mustard Emulsion** and peppered with smoked pepper. Not seen but definitely present was coarse salt grains. There was a smoky taste, but it came from the house-smoked shiitake mushrooms and the smoked pepper, not the meat. The overall effect was an incredibly flavorful piece of meat that just melted in your mouth. The salt grains exploded the taste even further, bringing out the smokiness.

The accompanying wine was a seemingly unusual **2011 Château d'Aqueria Tavel Rosé**. The wine was made from the Grenache grape. It was light and dry (unlike all those ubiquitous sweet white zinfandels), a perfect match. **John Fischer** selected all the wines for the event, and I asked him how he came to select such an unusual wine without ever having tasted the Bison Carpaccio. Here is your **wine lesson** of the evening, so pay attention! Thin-cut, cold meats need a lighter wine. In fact, **any cold food needs a light weight wine**. You are trying to **match the weight of the food with the weight of the wine**. For example, if you ate a thin slice of salami, you swallow the fat in the meat

whole. When it is cold, the taste receptors miss most of this richness and flavor. But when it is hot, the fat melts and goes all over the meat and your palate. So when you plan your strategy of pairing wine with food, the weight (read forcefulness) of the food and its serving temperature needs to be matched to a similar weight of the wine. And you thought all you had to do was choose the grape varietal! But that's why you joined this club, right? To gain some education about food and wine.

A **Char-Grilled Octopus** tentacle was then brought out. True to its name, the exterior was charred, giving the tentacle a smoky taste. Octopus is somewhat chewy in consistency but not rubbery. A **Sweet Potato, Chorizo and Salsa Verde** side went quite well with the seafood. The sweetness of the tuber, and the contrasting spiciness of the sausage and salsa complimented the octopus. A **2011 Friulano Bastianich Pinot Grigio** was the selected wine. Dry and mineral, it was a good match. It is available at Costco.

Ahi Tuna Crudo was next. Crudo, like carpaccio, means raw, and you better have top drawer quality because there is no



hiding the "raw materials." This tuna was sushi grade and melted in your mouth. It too was a **dish of contrasts**. Just when you got used to the **pickled fennel** taste, the **candied orange peel** shocked the palate with its totally different, citrusy and sweet flavors. Red capers and olive oil topped off this cold plate. Using John's wine pairing principal discussed above, a light **2012 Macon Lugny Les Charmes** Chardonnay was selected. This is a very affordable white Burgundy, also available at Costco.

To cleanse our palates, we were served a **Pineapple-Basil Sorbet with Pomegranate Gelée**. The sorbet had pomegranate seeds as a garnish, providing a little crunch.

Pumpkin Carbonara was the first of our main courses. This was an old school Italian dish, with **Paccheri pasta** noodles, **Guanciale**, and **Pea-Basil Purée**. Guanciale is derived from an Italian word for cheek, in this case, the jowl of the pig. The dish was served cold, and its pumpkin flavoring immediately noticeable. The wide Paccheri noodles were covered with a white sauce, and topped with a dollop of the pea-basil purée, a

piece of Parmesan Reggiano cheese that had been heated and melded together into a crunchy, wafer like consistency, and the piece of bacon. Atop the bacon was a barely cooked egg yolk, which served a wonderful sauce when punctured. We had two different wines to compare: a red and a white. The red was a **2011 Nipozzano Chianti Classico Riserva from Ruffino**. The white was a **2012 Willakenzie Estate Pinot Gris**. Our table thought the white went better as the salt and bacon didn't seem to help the red, but went well with the Pinot Gris.

Maple Leaf Duck was our final entrée. Three pieces of sliced duck breast sat in a pool of **Parsnip Purée**. Off to the side was diced **Golden Pear**. **Ginger bread sprinkles** added a sweet spiciness to the perfectly cooked medium rare duck. Duck always goes well with root vegetables and fruit, and this was no exception. Our final wines for the evening were a **2011 Tapiz Cabernet Sauvignon** from the Mendoza region of Argentina, and a **2009 Santa Rita Reserva Syrah** from the Valle del Maipo in Chile. Both reds worked, but I gave the nod to the Syrah. With its smooth

texture and velvety tannins, the Syrah was more pleasing than the angular and sharper Cabernet with the delicate duck.

There was no dessert wine, but I found that the Cabernet worked admirably with the **Dark Chocolate Cheesecake**. More cheesy than cakey, it had deep chocolate flavors with its chocolate ganache. A **raspberry coulis** was drizzled over the cake, and a **Bacon Brittle** was inserted into the cake. Chef King made his own version of peanut brittle, which had a bacon component, and was, well, brittle and crunchy.

I would like to thank all those involved in this delightful evening's meal. Thanks to our producers **Dean Dougherty** and **Mary Kay Young** for planning and organizing; to **John Fischer** for doing a stellar job of selecting the wines; to **Jeremy Beck**, a Managing Partner of Biaggi's, for guiding the impeccable service; to **Robin White**, chief server; and to **Chef Aaron King**, who thought outside the box for a wonderful meal with so many contrasts and culinary surprises.











IWFS Rhône River Cruise Part 4

by Tom Murnan with the
assistance of Phyllis Hegstrom
and Jill Panzer
photos by King Lee

June 12th, 2014 and the SS Catherine had moved, in wine parlance, to the Southern Rhône and docked in Viviers. The town, founded in Roman times, is derived from vivarium, a Latin word for a food and supply center. Viviers is a small walled city and is near to the celebrated Châteauneuf-du-Pape. The new château of the pope is actually in Avignon, but his holiness Pope John XXII found Avignon too warm in the summer and had a castle built on a hill far above the Rhône River, the perfect spot to catch all the cool breezes flowing up and down the river. »



Domaine Mousset



Ruins of the
Papal Summer Palace

« The name Châteauneuf-du-Pape, then, refers to the Latin name *Castro Novo* (fortified village), not the 14th century castle. Semantics aside, Châteauneuf-du-Pape (CdeP) makes the best wine of the Southern Rhône. Unfortunately, all that remains today is a few walls of the original château as the Germans blew it up in WWII, stealing what wine was there.

The big excitement today was a planned tour to the most popular CdeP in the United States: Château Beaucastel. In 1549, Pierre de Beaucastel bought the property near Coudoulet (now the name of the estate's Côte du Rhône). It was owned by the Beaucastels until 1909, when Pierre Traminer bought the property. It eventually passed into the hands of his son-in-law, Pierre Perrin, a scientist who increased the vineyard holdings. Jacques Perrin made great strides in quality until he retired in 1978. Today the estate is run by Pierre and Françoise. The group was

divided into two separate tours.

Upon debarking from the bus, one is immediately struck by all the galets, fist sized rocks that cover the ground below the vines. These were not naturally deposited, but laboriously carried up from the riverbeds to the vineyards. Why? Because the stones give off the sun's heat at night. The vines are trained to be low to the ground, near those galets, and the heat at night helps ripen the grapes.

Beaucastel uses only organic methods of fertilization. Over 500 tons of manure are used annually. The vines are replaced on a rotational system, maintaining an age of about 50 years. All thirteen grapes varieties, the maximum allowed by law, are grown on the estate. Only Mont Redon and Domaine de Nalys do likewise. Uniquely, Beaucastel uses more Mouvèdre than almost any other CdeP, but a lower percentage of Grenache than typical. Mouvèdre gives the wine structure and tannin, and a noticeable nose

of mushrooms and animal scents.

The group moved inside for the tour. One of the most interesting things about this meticulously estate owned for five generations by the Perrin family is the use of vinification à chaud. Developed by the current Perrins' grandfather (3rd generation), and perfected by Jacques Perrin (4th generation). It involves heating the grapes up to 86°F for one minute, then cooling them down to 68°F as they go into the fermentation tanks. According to Robert Parker, this procedure "1) halts the tendency of the grapes to oxidize. 2) It extracts deeper, richer color, aromas, and flavor from the skins of the grapes. 3) It prolongs and slows the fermentation. 4) It precludes the necessity of using much sulfur during the fermentation. The results speak for themselves, but critics call it a flash pasteurization." Most of the wine is aged in large foudres except syrah which sees aging in small oak casks. The

wine is bottled in two years after an egg white fining.

After leaving Beaucastel, lunch was held at La Sommellerie, a hotel/restaurant. The group was so large that some were seated outside in a bamboo covered area to reduce the sun's rays. Then it was on to the former Papal summer palace for a walk around the ruins. Next stop: Domaine Mousset, who was having an exhibition of the artist J.E. Turquin. It seemed very Americanized because, besides just having wine to sell, there was a shop that sold cosmetics, oils and the exhibited art. A sit down wine tasting featuring Mousset's Châteauneuf-du-Pape was conducted.

At 4:45 pm it was time to return to the ship. The Champagne reception presented the 2004 Ruinart Blanc de Blancs Brut. Dinner featured Niçoise Salad (lettuce, tomatoes, string beans, artichokes, tuna and a the trademark hardboiled egg) and a Cream of Crab Soup featuring local crabs

called Favouilles were both paired with a 2011 Pouilly Fumé from La Doucette. Cod in bouillabaisse juice was next paired with a 2012 Pouilly Montrachet premier cru Referts from Dom. Gauffroy. The meat entrée was a Rack of Lamb covered with a mustard herb crust. A 2011 Château Phelan Segur from St. Estephe, Bordeaux was selected as a wonderful accompaniment to the lamb. The 2011 CdeP Vieux Télégraph went next with the cheese selection. A 1999 Grahams Quintas de dos Malvedos Vintage Port finished off the libations with Iced Montélimar Nougat Parfait with red berry sauce.

Only one more full day left as the ship steamed back towards Avignon.

Source on Château Beaucastel information: Wines of the Rhône Valley by Robert Parker



Galets covering the vineyard at Beaucastel









New Member Welcome

Diane Hayes, our newest member to the wine club, is the recent bride of a long standing member David Hayes. Dave and Diane met through mutual friends 2 1/5 years ago at a fish fry and have been inseparable ever since. One of their first dates was at a wine dinner and the rest was history.....she was hooked. Was it Dave or the wine club, we'll never know!

Their honeymoon was spent on a river boat cruise this past summer with 26 friends from the wine society through France's Rhone river. Dave and Diane share a love of wine, fine food, and great friends which is what the wine club brings every event they attend. Welcome to the Council Bluffs Branch, Diane!

Our Wonderful Wine Cellar

by Patti Hipple.

Wine Cellar Chair

Dear CB wine lovers,

Many of you may not realize we have a cellar. It is still in its infancy but it's growing beautifully. Our branch is purchasing very high quality wines from around the world. All wines score 90 points or better by reputable, professional wine critics. A few may be drunk immediately but most will need to mature in our perfectly controlled wine cellar in order for us to enjoy their true quality. We drink our wines at their peak of maturity. My goal is to give you diversity and quality for a reasonable price. It is nearly impossible to get great wines at a restaurant for a good value. Furthermore, we nearly always provide two wine pairings with each course. With time we will be able to offer you more wines from the cellar at our marvelous events.

We have recently purchased wines from the Rhône, Portugal, Spain, Argentina, Italy, Bordeaux and California. Below is a list of our wines for you to peek at. The wines in red are ready to drink. All others are still sleeping.

If you are hosting an event and would like to use a cellar wine please contact me to see if it is available. Here is a look at the contents of the cellar. »







Champagne

BTLS	YEAR	WINE	SCORE	DRINK BY
CABERNET & BLENDS				
12	2008	Hall	WA-95, WS-91	2010-25
12	2009	Waterstone Blend	JS-93	
8	2010	BV Tapestry	RP-90, WS-90	2010-22
8	2010	Two Hands Sexy Beast	WS-91, RP-91, ST-91	2013-19
CHAMPAGNE				
7	2010	Argyle Vintage Brut	WA-91, WS-90	Now
CHARDONNAY				
8	2012	Patz & Hall	RP-93	2013-17
12	2012	Beringer Private Reserve - Chardonnay	WS-93	Now-20
BORDEAUX				
7	2009	Barde Haut	RP-94, WS-93	2012-27
10	2009	Les Gravieres	RP-93, WS-90	2012-27
8	2010	Haut-Bergey-Pessac-Leognan	WS-92, WA-92, WE-91, WC-91	2014-29
8	2010	Chateau Teyssier Saint-Emilion	RP-92, JS-92	2014-29
8	2010	LaVielle Curé Fronsac	WS-92, RP-91, ST-90	2015-25
GREECE				
3	2009	Naoussa Boutari	WS-90	Now
ITALIAN				
8	2009	Felsina Rancia - Chianti Reserve	WA-94, WS-92, JS-92, IWC-92	2019-39
8	2010	Torrione Petrolo Toscana Sangiovese	WA-93, JS-93, WS-91, IWC-91	2015-24
12	2010	Paitin Serra Barbaresco	JS-94, AG-93, WS-92, ST-91	2015-30
PINOT NOIR				
2	2008	Bergstrom Cumberland Reserve	WA-91, WS-90	2012-20
8	2010	Pegasus Bay	WA-92, ST-92, JS-94	2012-18
RHONE				
5	2009	E. Guigal Cotes du Rhone Vintus		Now
8	2010	Jean Royer Prestige Chat. Du Pape	WA-92, WS-93, IWC-93	2014-27
8	2011	Pegau Reserve Chat. Du Pape	WA-93, WS-93, IWC-92	2014-26
8	2011	Clos Saint Jean Chat. Du Pape Vieilles Vignes	WA-93, RP -93, WS-90, IWC-92	2012-27
SHIRAZ				
8	2010	Heartland Directors Cut	JH-94, WS-93, ST-91	2013-20
PORTUGAL				
8	2011	Wine & Soul Douro Pintas Character	WA-90, WS-94	2013-22
PETITE SHIRAZ				
8	2011	Girard	WS-93	2014-25
SPANISH				
8	2009	Finca Sobreno Especial	WA-90	2014-20
12	2012	Bodegas Castano Solanera	RP-94	Now-18
4	2004	Vina Ardanza Reserva Rioja	WS 94 #22/100, WA 93, IWC 92	Now-20
DESSERT				
1	2003	Chateau Coutet Barsac	RP-92, WS-95	Now
PORT				
		Dow 10 yr Tawny		Now
ARGENTINA				
12	2012	Luca Malbec Uco Valley Mendoza	WS-93, WA-92, ST-92	2013-20

Upcoming Council Bluffs Branch Events

Mark Your Calendars!

-  **January 18, 2015**
Quinta do Noval's Traditional Field Worker's Meal.
We will replicate the meal we had at this famous Port Lodge during our Portuguese Wine vacation in 2012. Douro still wines and both Tawny and Vintage Ports.
Chef Hattam Catering.
Producers: Tom & Mary Murnan.
-  **February 6, 2015**
Rendevous in the Rhône. French dinner with Rhône wines from several Appellations celebrating the IWFS Rhône Cruise.
Le Voltaire
Producers: Phyllis Hegstrom and Tom Murnan
-  **March 1, 2015**
Omaha Country Club
Irish theme replete with Irish dancers
More details to follow.
Producers: Jill Panzer and Bill Clark
-  **April 12, 2015**
Cheese & wine pairing.
V. Mertz
Producers: Diane Hayes and Patti Hipple

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
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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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