

Food & Wine



June 2013

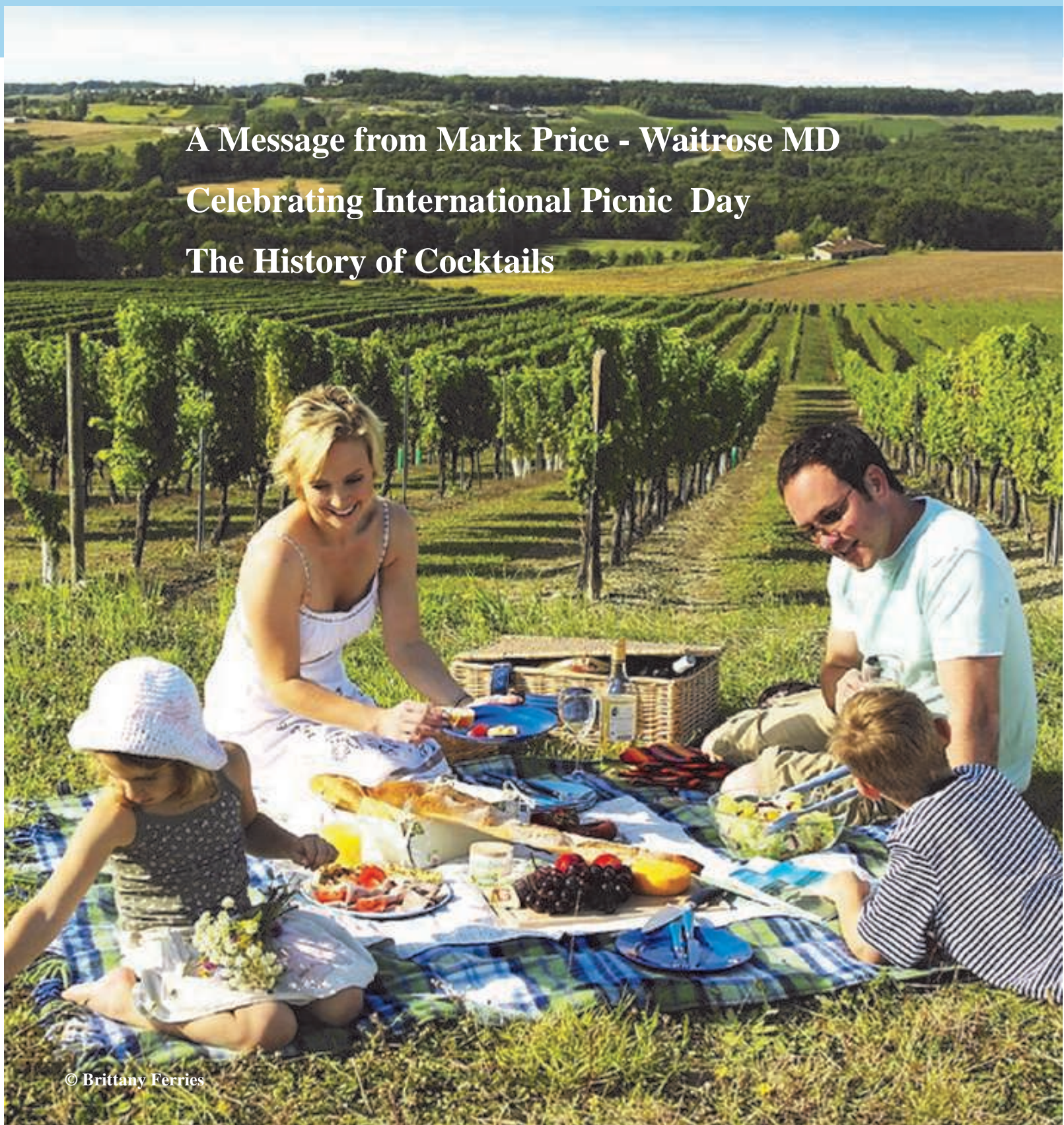
The Journal of The International Wine & Food Society Europe & Africa Committee

Free to European & African Region Members - one per address - Issue 115

A Message from Mark Price - Waitrose MD

Celebrating International Picnic Day

The History of Cocktails





CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Writing to you at three monthly intervals certainly brings home how quickly they pass. For Eve and me this period has seen relocation from our home of 39 years to something smaller, albeit within sight of the previous property. We were pleased to be able to find time to attend events of both the Manchester and the Merseyside & Mid-Cheshire branches, including their respective Annual General Meetings. I write this near the end of April and we are looking forward to attending a Liverpool branch event for the first time. Terry Lim and friends are to be congratulated on building that branch into a viable entity in a short space of time. Congratulations are also due to the Zurich branch for organising a very successful break in the Lake Maggiore area this April.

That leads me to mention news of some other areas where prospects are being nurtured. Experience has taught us that a promising start is no guarantee of getting sufficient members for a provisional charter to be granted but Latvia and Athens are two possibilities. So also is Munster and in that connection, if you have friends who live in or around Cork who might be interested in joining a branch in that area then please pass details to Katie Wilkins (contact notes appear next to the Editorial) so that they can be notified of developments.

There has been a good response for the 5th June Away Day in Bath and the October midweek visit to Norfolk with a choice of staying two or three nights. Whether there will be spare places when you read this I cannot say but do enquire if interested. Should you be thinking of attending the Festival in Santorini next May you will need to go on the waiting list as there has been an excellent response with strong participation from our friends in the Asia/Pacific Zone. Elsewhere in this issue are details of how to apply for places at the Avery Dinner and the Society's 80th Anniversary Lunch, on consecutive days in November that will also include the AGM and the annual André Simon lecture, to be given this year by Michael Broadbent MW. These are special events and I hope they will be well supported by all three zones.

In my previous message I said that we were looking at ways in which we could add to the benefits available to all our members, possibly by providing financial support to branches in our zone. The opportunity to do this arises through Council having rebated part of what is normally paid to the Society by the zone. The European & African Committee decided at its April meeting that it was appropriate to mark the Society's 80th Anniversary by making a contribution to all our branches operating at 01/01/2013 and to do so in the second quarter of 2013. The amount, based on the renewals for the current year, will be calculated at the rate of £10 per member. Branches will be free to decide how this is to be used but it is suggested that they may wish to recognise the anniversary and/or consider something of an educational nature. We have not forgotten our Independent Members who will be sent a wine voucher. Looking ahead we have much to do if we are to reverse the decline in the number of members in our zone. Consequently you will understand why I say that at present there are no plans to repeat these payments.

**Best Wishes,
John Legg**

The Society was formed on 20th October 1933 in London by wine writer André L Simon and bibliophile A. J. Symons. Within a month there were 230 members. Today there are over 6,660 in 133 branches worldwide.

The Society, which is an independent non profit making organisation run by volunteers, is divided into three areas – the European & African Region, the Asian Pacific Zone and the Board of Governors of the Americas.

In André's words,

“The purpose of the Society is to bring together and serve all who believe that a right understanding of good food and wine is an essential part of personal contentment and health and that an intelligent approach to the pleasures and problems of the table offers far greater rewards than mere satisfaction of appetites.”

In the over indulgent society of the 21st century we endeavour to examine some of the excesses of the western diet and to persuade consumers of the need for quality rather than quantity in the food and drink they consume. To this end we support suppliers of quality produce worldwide.

New members are always welcome, please see page three for details.



Editorial

As we go to print news is coming in that the EU have agreed to prohibit neonicotinoid pesticides, the chemicals' many scientists believe are one of the main causes for the decline in the bee population. Fifteen countries voted in favour of a ban - not enough to form a qualified majority but according to EU rules the Commission will now have the option to impose a two-year restriction on this controversial chemical and the UK will be unable to opt out. We were among eight countries that voted against the ban, while four abstained. The National Farmers Union argues that the science behind the proposal is inconclusive despite extensive research which has been carried out in France to the contrary. Neonicotinoid are used to coat the seeds of crops such as oil seed rape rendering the chemical systemic in the plant thus killing off any predator that visits. UK farmers argue that pest control by any other means would involve much more work spraying crops several times, be costly and lead to higher food prices. Of course the pesticide manufacturers have lobbied against a ban, they argue that it would harm food production.

One company in the UK that has taken notice of the dangers of neonicotinoid is Waitrose. Before the EU direction was announced they pledged to ban them on their farms indefinitely. The company has a very responsible approach to many food scares so, as the horse meat scandal rolls on, I asked Mark Price, their Managing Director, to enlighten our members on his companies position, you will find his message on page seven.

Wine articles for this issue were a little like London buses. I had none so had to start begging friends, then three came along at once. Jeffery Benson immediately put pen to paper and came up with a fascinating article on Cocktails. Bernard Lamb offered an enlightening piece on his experience of a tasting of English sweet wines. When we were just on full, I was offered, by Council, what could only be called a travelogue of Chilean wines and food. So, I hope there is something to suit all palates even if, like me, you are not a lover of Andrea's wine recommendation, the highly acidic Picpoul de Pinet, the literal translation for which is "Lip Stinger", aka - (in my opinion) - battery acid!

Our latest young Heptinstall award winner has sent a report of his exciting trip to Sweden to study at two of their top restaurants and with International Picnic Day on June 18th we take a look at the history of the picnic.

We also have a wide selection of branch reports, to grab your interest, so put up your feet, preferably in the garden and have a good read, summer has finally arrived.

*Enjoy,
Pam Brunning*

Cover Picture - We are indebted to Brittany Ferries for our cover picture showing a family enjoying a picnic in a French vineyard. Brittany Ferries run regular services to France and Spain from the UK and organise all types of trips including Gourmet Breaks.
www.brittany-ferries.co.uk/

Food & Wine

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Mark Price joined the John Lewis Partnership in 1982 as a graduate trainee. He held numerous posts before becoming Managing Director of Waitrose in April 2007. Prior to this, in 2005 Mark was appointed as the Partnership Development Director (responsible for Strategy amongst other things) when he became a member of the Partnership Board. In January 2011 Mark became Chairman of Business in the Community, a post he holds for three years. He is also Chairman of the Prince's Countryside Fund and a Non Executive Director of Channel 4.



Jeffrey Benson has been in the wine trade for 35 years. He meets producers worldwide as a buyer and wine maker, conveying his knowledge through his lectures and consultancy work. He was involved in the formation of 'Wines of Canada' and was the only non-North American judge to join their tasting panel at a three day event evaluating over 200 wines to determine medal winners. For twelve years, Jeffrey ran the annual evening wine school for the Society. He continues to lecture and adjudicate the Wine and Spirit Education Trust examinations and has written and contributed to seven books and many articles on food, wine and travel.
www.jeffreybenson.net



Paul Weaver - While on his travels Paul decided, that on his return to the UK, he would move to London to work. Having lived all his life in the wonderful town of Whitstable he fancied some city life, especially having had a taste of it in Stockholm. After a lot of deliberating and talking with friends in the industry, one name kept cropping up, Fergus Henderson. By pure chance his restaurant, St John Bread and Wine, located opposite Spitalfields market had a position available, and he can now be found there. Paul says. "It's a great place and I'm learning lots from a top brigade of chefs, led by Lee Tiernan".



Dr Bernard Lamb has made wines and beers with cultivated yeasts for 43 years and is a member of the United Kingdom Vineyards Association and of the National Guild of Wine and Beer Judges. He has a DSc in fungal genetics and did research and teaching in genetics at Imperial College London for 40 years. His books include applied genetics, wine and beer judging, standards of English, *The Queen's English* and *How to Use It*. He is an IWFS member.



Amanda Barnes is a British journalist who moved to Argentina in 2009 to focus on wine and travel writing. She is Editor of the Argentina-based magazine Wine Republic and also works as a freelance writer for travel and wine publications including Wine-Searcher and Fodor's Travel Guides. Based in Mendoza, she regularly travels and works around the wine regions of Argentina, Chile and Uguay.
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Dear Members

The most recent IWFS Council meeting was a teleconference held on Saturday 23rd February, based from New York, when Michael Messent was welcomed as a new member of Council, representing the EAC, and who will replace Ron Barker. All Council members and observers contributed to a number of new and exciting ideas for the members as a whole. Some of these are due to come to fruition in the forthcoming months – so watch this space. This may sound a bit cryptic but they are still in their early stages and therefore it would be prudent to wait until the plans are underway.... But it is hoped that these ideas will benefit all members around the globe.

This issue I am continuing to feature our wine consultants for the IWFS Vintage Card. We are incredibly fortunate to have these knowledgeable individuals on the team. Those featured this time are relatively new. Matthew Stubbs MW, recruited in 2011, provides our assessments for the Languedoc and longstanding advisor on the wines of British Columbia, John Schreiner. Read on and find out more about their background in the world of wine plus details of a wine and food matching they have enjoyed.

You will see below that Matthew's wine of choice is Picpoul de Pinet. I too am a fan of this light, dry, crisp, steely, white wine which comes from the sun baked vineyards of the Languedoc in Southern France and is the perfect partner with fish. Recently with friends we found it was a great match with Cornish lemon sole, brown shrimp, beurre noisette and samphire.

I hope to have more details about things in store for you in the next issue but in the meantime I look forward to meeting with a number of members at the forthcoming APZ Regional Festival in Kuala Lumpur in June 2013 when the next Council meeting is also scheduled. This will be my first trip to KL so I am keen to say hello to our hosts, the KL branch members, and to also enjoy some of the wonderful tours and meals arranged. It looks set to be another memorable IWFS food and wine extravaganza.

Wishing you a wonderful summer and hope you enjoy many delicious wines, maybe a glass of chilled Picpoul de Pinet

Salut! Andrea

Matthew Stubbs MW - IWFS Consultant on the wines of Languedoc

Matthew began his career in the UK Wine Trade in 1987 after graduating with a language and business degree. He worked in all aspects of the business from sales, marketing and brand management to buying, sourcing and retail development. 14 years was spent with Seagram, one of the world's largest drinks companies, followed by 3 years as Director of Wine at the UK supermarket Safeway.

In 2004 he moved to the South of France to set up his own consultancy and training company. Finally in July 2008 he opened Vinécole, a wine school based at Domaine Gayda near Carcassonne in the Languedoc. He runs tastings, courses and events in the South of France as well as UK, USA and Asia. He qualified as a Master of Wine in 1996, achieving the best results in the Tasting and Vinification papers.

Matthew's recent wine and food partnership which he enjoyed was - Pan fried Razor Clams and chilled Picpoul de Pinet, uncomplicated yet divine – sounds delicious....

For more information about Matthew and his consultancy please visit: www.vinecole.com.



John Schreiner - IWFS Consultant on the wines of British Columbia

Based in North Vancouver, B.C., John is Canada's most prolific author of wine books. He has authored 14 since 1984, including three Whitecap bestsellers: *British Columbia Wine Country*, *The Wineries of British Columbia* and *John Schreiner's Okanagan Wine Tour Guide*. The fourth edition was released in April 2012. A companion volume, *John Schreiner's Coastal BC Wineries Tour Guide*, was released in April, 2011. John juggled his passion for wine with a 40-year career as a business writer for *The Financial Post* until retiring in 2001 to devote himself totally to wine. He frequently judges at wine competitions, has been an accomplished home vintner and has chaired the selection committee for the Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival.

A food and wine pairing enjoyed by John - Foxtrot Pinot Noir 2009. It is a very elegant and polished wine, with good depth of flavour, from one of Canada's five best Pinot Noir producers. In my review of this sensuous wine, I said it was a wine to elope with! I accompanied it with a risotto (with asparagus and a bit of Black Forest ham in the dish) which plays a perfect supporting role to Pinot Noir.

John contributes regularly to www.planitbc.com and blogs on <http://johnschreiner.blogspot.com>.



Important Announcement

NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL BRANCH REPRESENTATIVES MEETING (ABRM)

This year the ABRM will be held on Wednesday July 10th at
The Oriental Club, Stratford Place, London W1 1ES

Proceedings will begin at 11.30am followed by a light lunch in the Club.

Full details will be sent out to Branch Representatives, in due course, in accordance with the constitution.



Readers Letter

Dear Editor

It is always a pleasure to get the new IWFS membership card, but once again I feel a sense of annoyance at the lack of balance in the information provided by the vintage chart. Given the changes in wine-drinking habits in recent decades, is it still appropriate to devote two of the five pages on the card to France, when Spain and Italy are together deemed worthy of only slightly over half of a page that bears the rather condescending heading 'Other European'? And can there really be justification for a whole page on North America, with separate lines for three different grape varieties in Napa/Sonoma? As a consequence of such extravagance, the whole of the rest of the New World is granted one page, within which the red wines of Argentina, Chile and South Africa have to make do with one line each -- the same number of lines as are given over to New York, Oregon and Washington. Germany and Austria have one line each, and only for their white wines; similarly Portugal (but only red wines, though there is also a line for vintage port), and Hungary (tokaji aszu).

Is it still the case that three fifths of the wine drunk by discerning members of IWFS is either French or North American? Do Chile, Argentina, Germany each only account for one fifty-third of total consumption, and are there not perhaps significant variations between the regions within those countries (Rhine and Moselle; Colchagua, Casablanca, Bio-Bio in Chile)? Does the whole of the southern hemisphere only merit as much coverage as North America? Are we genuinely not interested in the quality of wines from Southern Italy or Sicily, or white wines from Spain, the Loire, South Africa, Chile, or Argentina, or the wines of Lebanon, or the increasingly excellent Pinot Noirs from Germany (or even English sparkling wines)? Are all these really of no concern when compared with Languedoc, Provence, Valpolicella Amarone, Hungarian Tokay, New York, or Ontario? Of course IWFS should reflect the importance of the great wine-growing areas of the world, but the vintage list has some debatable inclusions and omissions and is it not time for some changes that would be more in line with members' current tastes?

Ian Roe, Berkshire Branch



El Celler de Can Roca is named World's Best Restaurant

After seven years waiting in the wings, the Roca brothers have claimed the coveted number one spot on The World's 50 Best Restaurants list, sponsored by S.Pellegrino & Acqua Panna, swapping places with Denmark's Noma, which held the top ranking for the last three years.

The Roca brothers' restaurant has gained global acclaim for its combination of Catalan dishes and cutting edge techniques and the passion that they share for hospitality. Joan heads up the kitchen, Jordi is head pastry chef and Josep is head sommelier, in charge of front of house. Together they make a formidable team, creating a truly memorable dining experience.

Spain continues to dominate the top 10 with San Sebastian's Mugaritz at no.4 and Arzak (Elena Arzak Espina – The Veuve Clicquot World's Best Female Chef 2012) remaining at no.8. The country has five restaurants on The World's 50 Best Restaurants list in total. Quique Dacosta who is renowned for his eco-cuisine and sits amongst the Spanish avant garde giants, climbs 14 places to no.26. Asador Etxebarri features at no. 44 on the list.

The UK contingent remains the same with last year's highest new entry, Dinner by Heston Blumenthal, rising two places to no.7, Brett Graham's The Ledbury up one place to no. 13 and The Fat Duck at no.33.

A Message from Mark Price

Managing Director of Waitrose

Even before Sweeney Todd became an unwanted supplier to the pie trade, customers have sought reassurance about what they are eating and the quality of the food they feed their families. Between 1820 and 1860 attention was drawn to the issue of food adulteration and this resulted in the **1875 Sale of Food Act**. The Act established two principal offences: the mixing of 'injurious ingredients' and 'selling to the prejudice of the purchaser a food not of the nature, substance or quality demanded'. In 1905 in his novel *The Jungle*, Upton Sinclair highlighted the same issues in the meat packing industry in the United States. **Sinclair's book is still in print and makes powerful reading 118 years after its original publication.** Around the same time Sinclair was researching his novel, **Waitrose and Sainsbury's were established with the sole purpose of supplying safe and healthy food to Londoners of the day.** I'm sure that the recent food news around massive fraud in the meat supply chain will, quite understandably, alarm a new generation about what they may be eating, just as BSE sent shockwaves through us all more than 20 years ago.

However, in the most recent incident, some hysterical reporting managed to conflate two very separate issues to undermine consumer confidence. Many of the food products sold in shops today come from factories which deal with multiple species - they may freeze pork sausages, beef burgers and lamb joints all on the same day. In doing so there is a small risk of cross contamination if the equipment is not properly cleared between production runs although, of course, this is something that everyone works hard to avoid.

At Waitrose we have a team of 70 food technologists whose job it is to make sure that the products we put on our shelves are precisely as we have specified. If not, the product is withdrawn. These procedures and tests are not new, and withdrawals as a consequence of human error are a feature of the way the food industry does business.

If, like Waitrose, 100 per cent of your beef comes from British farmers and is grown and processed to your own bespoke high standards at a dedicated abattoir your quality should be assured. The risk emerges if you then send the beef to a third party to freeze, who mixes in another species because of a breakdown in their process.

But the issues of cross contamination is wholly different from finding the substantive part of a product contains horsemeat. That is clearly unacceptable. But how and why might that happen? We only stock fresh and frozen beef, pork and chicken from British farmers. This means we are able to work closely with our farmers and constantly check the quality and provenance of our meat. The only exceptions to our British-only sourcing policy are lamb and venison, both seasonal meats that require some New Zealand sourcing to make up for our requirements outside the UK season. Mirroring this approach at home, we have established a small group of New Zealand farmers who work closely with us to complement our lamb and venison producers.

If, however, meat is being purchased blind from outside the UK, and sometimes even via the internet in bulk, as sometimes happens in other businesses, it is less easy to find those guarantees that full knowledge and traceability give.

If, at the same time, there is a requirement to hit a price point for consumers under financial pressure then there will be an inevitable strain in the supply chain. If the only requirement on retailers is "who can sell the cheapest stuff?" I'm afraid it is inevitable that there will be a slackening of product specifications - **even if, not as concerning as the current situation, it's less mint in spearmint gum or not quite as thick a layer of chocolate on your biscuit.**

What makes the equation even more difficult is the current large increase in the cost of live-stock, as the price of feed and greater demand put pressure on supply. As a consequence it may well be the case that, somewhere along that long supply route, somebody has looked to cheat and take advantage of these circumstances either for their own personal greed or to keep a company afloat.

The simple fact is that food cannot be seen as a cheap commodity when so many factors are working against that premise, including population growth, climate change, greater urbanisation, and the spread of a Westernised diet in the developing world. If something good comes of the current scandal I hope it is the opening up of a debate around the true economics of food and a determination on the part of everybody in the food industry to apply renewed rigour to their processes and testing regimes to ensure that customers can relax and enjoy the food they buy.



Hunt Picnic by François Lemoyne, 1723

June 18th - International Picnic Day

*We look at Picnicking through
the ages*

We used to picnic where the thrift
Grew deep and tufted to the edge;
We saw the yellow foam flakes drift
In trembling sponges on the ledge
Below us, till the wind would lift
Them up the cliff and o'er the hedge.
Sand in the sandwiches, wasps in the tea,
Sun on our bathing dresses heavy with the wet,
Squelch of the bladder-wrack waiting for the sea,
Fleas around the tamarisk, an early cigarette.
Trebetherick - John Betjeman

Did you know that June 18th is International Picnic Day? Today, 'picnic' simply means a pleasurable outing at which a tasty meal is eaten outdoors, preferably in a beautiful landscape. In Victorian times these outings were quite elaborate, a picnic for twenty people might feature cold salmon, lamb, veal, chicken, ham, pigeon pie, sandwiches, fruit, a selection of cheeses, and a variety of baked goods. The modern-day picnic is much less complicated, as in the phrase 'it's a picnic' meaning 'it's easy'. In fact the relaxing and carefree act of eating outdoors and sharing quality time with those you care about has its roots way back in medieval times.

In Europe during the 14th century, some of the earliest picnics were medieval hunting feasts. As Lemoyne's painting of 1723 depicts, a respite before the hunt was an excuse for a pleasurable repast.

At these feasts the main foods would be hams, baked meats and pastries. At the other end of the society ladder were the harvest picnics, where the midday meal was brought to the fields by the womenfolk during harvest. This much more frugal fare often included pastries such as the Cornish Pasty, a portable and easy to eat 'convenience food', the wholesome ingredients providing enough sustenance to see the workers through their long and arduous working days.

The first usage of the word can be traced back to the 1692 edition of Tony Willis, *Origines de la Langue Française*. It mentions pique-nique as being of recent origin at that time and it marks the first appearance of the word in print. In that instance the term was used to describe a group of people dining in a restaurant who brought their own wine. The oldest print evidence of the word picnic in the English language appears in 1748, according to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) the word picnic first appeared in a letter of the Gallicized Lord Chesterfield, who associates it with card-playing, drinking and conversation.

The concept of the picnic has always been a meal in which everyone contributes something. The oft quoted idea that the word is based on the verb piquer which means 'pick' or 'peck' with the rhyming nique meaning "thing of little importance" is in doubt, the OED just says it is of 'unknown provenance'.

After the French Revolution the royal parks became open to the public for the first time and picnicking became a popular activity amongst the newly enfranchised citizens.

Early in the 19th century, a fashionable group of Londoners formed the 'Picnic Society'. Members met in the Pantheon on Oxford Street. Each member was expected to provide a share of the entertainment and of the refreshments with no one particular host. Interest in the society waned in the 1850s as the founders died.

An early American illustration of a picnic is Thomas Cole's *The Pic-Nic* of 1846 in the Brooklyn Museum of Art. In it, a guitarist serenades the genteel social group in the Hudson River Valley with the Catskills visible in the distance. Cole's well-dressed young picnickers having finished their repast, served from splint baskets on blue-and-white china, stroll about in the woodland and boat on the lake.

The image of the picnic as a peaceful social activity can be shattered when it is utilised for political protest. In this context, a picnic has been known to function as a temporary occupation of significant public territory. A famous example of this is the Pan-European Picnic held on both sides of the Hungarian/Austrian border on the 19 August 1989, as part of the struggle towards German reunification. But the most common reason for a large picnic is of course as a celebration. In 2000, a 600-mile-long picnic took place from coast to coast in France to celebrate the first Bastille Day of the new Millennium. In the United States the 4 July celebration of American independence is a popular day for a picnic and in Italy, the favorite picnic day is Easter Monday.

The first picnic many of us will remember reading of, was an intimate gathering of 5,000 along the shores of the sea, when Jesus fed the multitude with five loaves of bread and two fishes.

So to celebrate International Picnic Day, invite your friends and family to a summer picnic. Find a suitable location at a local park or field, and sit back and enjoy an al fresco meal in the company of your loved ones and remember 'it's a picnic' - 'it's easy'. Happy International Picnic Day!

See page 21 for a delicious recipe for this special day.



The Pic-Nic by Thomas Cole - 1846

'The Teddy Bears' Picnic'

If you go down in the woods today
You're sure of a big surprise,
If you down in the woods today
You'd better go in disguise.
For every Bear that ever there was
Will gather there for certain because,
Today's the day the Teddy Bears
have their Picnic.

John W Bratton

with James B Kennedy.



International Picnic Day 1911

Gone are all the rules of fine dining etiquette as people head outdoors to share their delights with others gathering to picnic.



THE HISTORY OF COCKTAILS

By Jeffrey Benson - London Branch Chairman



Every age rediscovers cocktails for itself, and every age seems to reinvent the basic idea of the drink. When a shiny, monochrome new bar opens on the high street, we scarcely bat an eyelid to see, alongside the imported beers and global wines, a bar list offering us the likes of Chocolate-Nut Martini (Plymouth gin, white crème de cacao and Frangelico) and Shamrock Espresso (Absolut vodka, Bailey's Irish Cream, butterscotch schnapps and espresso coffee). It wasn't always this way, though.

In the post-war years, cocktails had almost faded from view. Many households boasted something called a cocktail cabinet, but instead of being stocked with alcoholic treasures from the four corners of the earth, they came instead to hold glasses and ice-buckets, and perhaps the odd bottle of gin or whisky for when friends came to call. The concept of the cocktail party had receded into the past, where it featured as an indispensable aspect of our idea of the roaring twenties, the age of tittering flappers, the silent movies, *The Great Gatsby* and Prohibition.

Their first great revival of recent years came in the early 1980s, when they formed an essential part of the lifestyle of a group of movers and shakers in fashion and music known as the New Romantics. Image-consciousness was everything: girls' shoulders were padded robustly enough to allow them to engage in contact sports, while the boys looked as though they had paid rather more attention to their hair than was quite healthy in red-blooded males. What everybody drank was cocktails, and cocktail bars – which had previously not been heard of outside the confines of grand hotels – sprang up in every town and city in the United Kingdom to cater for the new craze.

As New Romanticism gave way to the Hard Times look during a period of economic privation, cocktails suddenly seemed too frivolous, and it was all export-strength beer and cheap spirits again. The beginning of the 1990s saw the introduction of 'shooters', short-sharp-shock drinks served in tiny glasses that represented something of a compromise between the old type of flamboyant drink (often served in something resembling a flower-vase and replete with sparklers, parasols and tropical fruit) and the new austerity. Shooters were lethally strong mixtures, often consisting entirely of alcohol, intended to be downed in one.

In the last few years, cocktails have made a big comeback, but with another twist. The hard, fast drinking of the shooters has given way to a softer, schmoozier style of cocktail, where the mixture is often of different fruit juices on a single alcohol base. Consider the sudden popularity of the 1960s recipe Sea Breeze, which is plain vodka dressed to impress with cranberry and grapefruit juices, a pleasing mixture and potentially a strong one if drunk in the kinds of places where they pour freehand instead of measuring out, but essentially not much more than a new twist on the old vodka-and-fruit-juice formula that began with the Screwdriver.

An interesting aspect of the new cocktails is that the ingredients are very often chosen to mask the flavour of alcohol, for people who don't especially enjoy the taste of it, but do quite like its effect. This is the case where sweet, fruity liqueurs play a dominant part in a mix, as much as when fizzy mixers such as Coca-Cola and ginger ale do, and it is also why the more neutral spirits, such as vodka, white rum and silver tequila, are widely favoured over the more assertive likes of gin or whisky.

That impulse to hide the alcohol, rather than play it up, harks back unwittingly to the cocktail era of the 1920s, when, in the United States at least, the recipes were all about masking the fetid taste of bootleg spirit in an era when alcohol was officially illegal. Over in Europe, where no such restrictions applied, the twenties were a period of wild experimentation as the full range of traditional spirits was used in often violent, always stimulating, combinations with the old Victorian liqueurs, as well as those of more ancient lineage, such as the famous monastic distillates of Bénédictine and Chartreuse. The liqueurs were, in a sense, rescued from what could well have been terminal decline in the twentieth century by the original and greatest modern cocktail era. Suddenly there was a crying need for bright green crème de menthe and the honey-based Scotch liqueurs that went beyond the annual predilections of infirm relatives at Christmas.

The Jazz Age also spawned the first publishing boom in cocktail books (its presiding genius was the great Harry Craddock of the American Bar at London's Savoy Hotel, whose *Savoy Cocktail Book* remains an essential reference-point today), and we have drawn resourcefully on our treasured copies of these to bring you a few of the early versions of what are now classic formulas (as well as a few that probably haven't seen the light of day since the Wall Street Crash) in the recipes contained herein.

Reaching back still further into the late nineteenth century, we find a less extravagant tradition of mixed drinks, some of which may be fairly said to be the prototypes of what was to follow, but most of which were little more than slight modifications of basic spirits, usually involving the addition of a few drops of bitters and perhaps some sugar to balance them. Mixed drinks were given their first real lease of life in this era under the tutelage of the granddaddy of all cocktail barmen, 'Professor' Jerry Thomas of the Occidental Hotel in San Francisco, author of the first bartender's guide and inventor of many classics of the repertoire, including – some say – the original Martini.

In this sanguine bygone era, cocktails were drunk at all times of the day, but especially before dinner, not so much as appetite-honing aperitifs, but as the marker that announced the end of the afternoon and the beginning of the evening. To this day in the USA, you will quite often find yourself being invited to take a 'cocktail' with companions at six o'clock or soon after. What is being offered is not something with at least four ingredients that has to be whooshed up in a shaker, but a simple mixed drink – a whisky sour or gin and tonic, say – that fulfils the function of separating off the business part of the day from its recreational coda.

As we glance retrospectively back, one of the oldest questions in any book must be squared up to. What is the origin of the word 'cocktail'? Authors have been having a go at deciding this question since the very first recipe books were published in the nineteenth century. It remains officially unknown, although theories that have been floated include the following.

1. The name refers to the habit of decorating flagons of drink with feathers from cocks' tails, a custom dating back to the Elizabethan era.

2. English buccaneers travelling in the Gulf of Mexico in the sixteenth century came upon a local custom in which mixtures of the rudimentary distilled drinks of the region were stirred up with a root that looked like a cock's tail, and was indeed known in the Spanish as a *cola de gallo*.

3. It is a corruption of the name given to a mixed drink fed to fighting cocks in the eighteenth century, and known as 'cock-ale'.

(These can be safely torpedoed, I think, on the grounds that the term would have been in use since the relevant period each tale respectively refers to, whereas the earliest recorded usage of the word only appears in the first decade of the nineteenth century.)

4. It arose at American race meetings in the early 1800s as a drink with which one toasted the chances of race-horses with tails like those of cockerels, or that were cocked up (i.e. stuck up in the air). There is indeed a distinguished subset of cocktails associated with Derby Days and horse races generally in the southern States, the most pre-eminent of which is the whisky-based Mint Julep, but nothing prevents this theory from being tenuous in the extreme. Why would all mixed drinks come to be known as cocktails? Why, even, would one name the drink after the fashion of the horse's tail specifically, as opposed to the more general milieu of the horserace?

5. It has some connection with the recipe for a Bordeaux-based French wine cup called *coquetel*, imported by French officers serving with George Washington's army during America's revolutionary period.

6. The name dates from an incident on a Mississippi river steamer some time in the nineteenth century when a bored passenger asked for a drink to be mixed up for him that contained a little of everything available in the bar. It was served in a large, bulbous glass that looked like the breast of a cockerel, so that when the stirrers were added to it, they resembled the bird's tail feathers, and the drink was named a 'cocktail'.

There are many more – mostly considerably more far-fetched than those summarised here. I have long inclined to another view, which I offer for your own idle perusal.

The word appears to arise at almost the precise moment – somewhere between 1806 and 1809, that is – at which it also came into use to denote one of those cock-tailed horses at the American racecourses. These were animals that, although held to be of racing quality, were not the thoroughbred article. By mid-century, this usage had undergone a metaphorical shift so that it also could be used to refer disparagingly to people. William Makepeace Thackeray, in a now little-known novel called *The Newcomes* (1855), has one of the characters roundly dismissed as 'such a ... coxcomb as that, such a cocktail'. It now referred to somebody showy, ostentatious, foppish, somebody good at masking their true origins in smart society. A cocktail is just such a drink. It is a hybrid, rather than the unblended thoroughbred creature, showy in presentation, and given to cleverly disguising its true nature – the spirituous liquor on which it is based – beneath an outer coat of bitters, sugar, water, mint, even eggs or cream.

However that may be decided (and it probably never will be), cocktails continue to endure. It is the sheer variety made possible by the potentially limitless combinations of drinks, alcoholic and non-alcoholic, that keeps us returning to them, even when we tell ourselves we perhaps ought to have grown out of them by now. While demanding the utmost respect for their potency, they lure us into an area where drinking is indubitably fun once again, releasing us from the habitual treadmill of Gin and Tonics, draught beer and Chardonnay. They restore creativity and adventurousness to the serious business of drinking.



Meat - The Big Question

Where do we go from Here

With over forty years experience in the trade your Editor explores the latest crisis in the meat Industry.



Throughout history meat has not been a widely tradable commodity due to its perishability but in the late 19th century, with the advent of refrigeration, world markets changed dramatically.

It was in 1877 that the first successful export of frozen meat crossed from Argentina to France. Three years later the merchant ship Strathleven took 64 days to reach London from Australia with a cargo of frozen beef, mutton and lamb destined for Smithfield market. The cargo, valued at less than 2d per pound on the docks in Australia was sold "in perfectly sound state, frozen quite hard" for between 5d and 6d per pound, a mark-up of 200%. And that was the start of world meat trading.

In 1985 there were 1,000 abattoirs in the UK buying animals direct from farmers and livestock markets and selling direct to over 21,000 butchers. This vast network, with short supply chains, accounted for about 70% of the country's beef consumption and 65% of pork sales. At that time supermarkets supplied just a quarter of Britain's beef and a third of its pork. By 2010, due to many factors including foot & mouth, swine fever and BSE, 15,000 butchers had gone out of business, the number of abattoirs had fallen to below 300 and today just fourteen supermarket chains control more than 80% of the UK meat industry. Over the past few years the UK's self-sufficiency in beef has dropped to 60% and home produced pork has declined to 40% leaving a wide gap to be filled by foreign imports.

People today expect to spend more on technology and consumer goods and less and less on the weekly food shop, families now pay out, in real terms, half of what a family in the 1950's would spend on food. Thus competition is rife throughout the food industry to capture every penny that the housewife spends and it has never been more so than in the meat sector.

McDonalds, which opened in the UK in 1974, today requires the slaughter of 8,000 - 9,000 cattle a week to keep its restaurants supplied with forequarter meat for its burgers. Many of the lower quality burgers sold in supermarkets often only contain around 50% beef. They are filled out with water, fat and what is referred to as 'seasonings', which is concentrated proteins often derived from pork rind or hydrolysed cattle hides. These are used as binders, they form a gel to hold the meat and water together. Such is the way the vastly complex meat supply chain has developed to use every scrap of a commodity that is in short supply. (See The Fifth Quarter).

Financial services company KPMG maintain that hundreds of assorted parties - from farmers to renderers, meat traders, processors, packers to retailers - might now be involved in the supply chain of a 21st century lasagne.

Back in the 1980's queues of lorries could be seen waiting to deliver boxed, processed meat from Poland and other Eastern block countries to Bowyers factory at Trowbridge in Wiltshire. Even in those days they were processing much more meat into hams and bacon than ever they bought off UK farms. Today, in huge factories throughout the world, carcasses are reduced to a countless amount of sellable parts, known as 'formats', which can be traded as 'commodities' and shipped thousands of miles to whoever will to pay the best price to process the meat into burgers, lasagne or any other 'value added' product. Little heed is paid to type of meat put through the mincer as long as it doesn't cost too much.

The 'beef' lasagne sold by Findus, which was found to be horse, was supplied by a French food manufacturer, Comigel, who had subcontracted the order to a factory in Luxembourg, who had bought the meat from a middleman who, searching the markets for a cheap product, found what he wanted in Romania. This practice has been going on for years, it is called business. The only difference is that in the last few months DNA testing has become much more wide spread and suddenly processed meat can be typed at point of sale and the meat industry is in turmoil!



Take as an example your average butchers shop. When mincing, a butcher grinds one type of meat then moves on to the next, possibly putting a piece of fat through the mincer between different species to clean it out. Butchers have constantly processed one type of meat after another, so there is always going to be traces of DNA of beef, pork, lamb or anything else that is being minced at the time in the final product. It takes at least half an hour to strip down, thoroughly clean, wash, dry and reassemble even a small commercial mincer so this is only done at the end of the day. With modern technology even the most ethical processor can now be accused of tainting one species with another, a process that has been the norm for centuries.



“The Fifth Quarter”

‘The fifth quarter’ is the term used by meat processors to define the parts of a beast that are left when the actual carcass is butchered. It comprises all the edible and non edible parts and can in some cases amount to up to forty percent of the animals live weight. It includes all the offal, (from Middle English, meaning - refuse, scrap waste), head, blood, bones, intestines/casings, fat and most importantly in cattle and sheep the hide. Traditionally it has always been the ‘fifth quarter’ that the slaughter man considered to be his profit.



The term was coined in ancient Rome, ‘quinto quarto’ literally the ‘fifth quarter’. Until modern time the division of the cattle in Rome was made following this simple scheme: the first "quarto" was dedicated to be sold to the Nobles, the second one was for the clergy, the third one for the Bourgeoisie and the fourth ‘quarto’ was for the soldiers. The proletariat could afford only the offal and entrails.

In the modern world things vary from country to country, depending on traditions, culture, religion and wealth. In France and Ireland, the by-products are an important part of the total meat consumption and in the Far East many fifth quarter products are considered delicacies. In Japan, beef tongue is a delicacy for which Japanese people are prepared to pay well, but in the US and EU it is rarely consumed. Beef tongue in Japan trades for prices comparable to high quality beef cuts in the US. In China, price differences are much sharper, with liver, kidney and tail prices approximately five times higher than in the west in 2011. The differences in the value of these products on diverse markets create arbitrage opportunities. The challenge for abattoirs is to optimise the value of the different products. Slaughterhouses have the opportunity to process different cuts into pre-packed, ready-to-eat products to increasing sales value. This requires a massive investment in machinery and labour and the ability to market to the highest bidder on a global market.

The William Heptinstall Award is a registered charity that is supported informally by members of the EAC. Each year it provides an award of £3,500 to a young chef resident in the UK to allow him or her to undertake an overseas *stage* or *stages* to gain suitable experience and further their career

Paul Weaver 2011 William Heptinstall Award Winner

“I will forever be indebted to you for making the trip one of the most unforgettable experiences of my life. Thank You”. Paul Weaver



I found out about the award by chance late one January evening. I was trawling through foodie websites, as a lot of chefs do after a busy day, and it really grabbed my attention. I spent a good hour reading through the stories of the previous winners and felt that this was exactly what I needed at this point in my career, a funded opportunity to travel and work abroad. I instantly sent an email asking for an application form.

Choosing the places

It just so happened that my boss at the time, Stephen Harris, and his partner Emma Read, at The Sportsman in Seasalter, had recently returned from a gastronomic trip to Sweden. They came back with photos and stories of two fantastic-sounding restaurants. I felt Steve and Emma's excitement. Young Swedish chefs had

themselves travelled, worked in great kitchens, returned to their motherland and opened up shop. They were doing something really interesting and were on the cusp of greatness. When I looked them up and read more about them I was sold. I wanted to experience these kitchens first hand. A few weeks later, The Sportsman proudly hosted an evening for a number of the world's best chefs who came down to the pub for a walk along the beach, to savour the seashore and sample a shortened, bespoke tasting menu. It was a very special occasion, everyone was in good spirits and having fun! Magnus Nilsson Chef-Owner of Fa'viken in Sweden was part of the group and we were introduced. I mentioned the possibility of coming to stage with him, he seemed really keen and gave me his email address.

My career started under the tutelage of Steve at The Sportsman. Having had no formal training, just like Steve, I really began to learn the importance of cooking seasonally, consistently and with the highest-quality ingredients. My palate developed, as did I as a person, over the five and a half years I was there Steve's support played a huge part towards my winning the award.

The Adventure

In May 2011, I started to plan the trip. After a few emails to fellow Brit, Sam Miller the then Head Chef at Faviken, I'd arranged a three-month internship. I was overjoyed and Sam kindly offered to let me rent the spare-room in his apartment.

I inquired into the possibility of doing a second placement at Frantzen/Lindeberg. I got a short email in reply: "two weeks at the start of December". I immediately accepted and then started looking into flights. Flights and living costs would be where the biggest chunk of my prize-winner's money would eventually be spent. Sweden is not cheap!

On Sunday 12 August 2012 I finally departed. When I arrived in Sweden the fresh, crisp air really struck me. From Trondheim I made a three hour train journey east, across the border to be met by Sam. He had very kindly prepared a welcome meal for me. It was an amazing Thai feast which told me instantly that Sam was a phenomenal cook.

So what is it about this tiny, 16-seater restaurant in a remote part of Sweden that was drawing, not just chefs to work there for free, but foodies from around the world to travel hours, sometimes days, to sample the food? I certainly found out over the next 12 weeks.

From our apartment, the restaurant was a 20-30 minute drive depending on the weather, road conditions and how many moose we would encounter slowly crossing in front of the car. They always came as a shock, even more so on the way back in the dark evenings!

Based in Jamtland, on an 8,000ha private estate owned by a Swedish hedge-fund millionaire, the restaurant is housed in an 18th century grain barn. I met the other full-time chef, Johnny Fredrikson, who is local and was also introduced to the charming Johan Agrill, who is a partner of the business and runs the front of house whilst also taking up role of sommelier. Sam gave me a tour of the restaurant and the surrounding buildings including the butchery/abattoir, laundry room, cold store bunker and the gardens.

Having cut his teeth in the three Michelin-starred restaurant L'Astrance in Paris under Pascal Barbot, Magnus Nilsson Chef-Owner returned to his native Sweden in 2008 and started to put his own personal stamp on proceedings. Using seasonal produce, sourcing ingredients locally, and cooking with traditional Swedish techniques, Magnus has fostered a rustic experience that he refers to as 'rektun mat' or 'real food'. With Faviken's grounds covered in snow for six months of the year, the kitchen relies on pickling, ageing, salting, smoking, drying, fermenting and other old-fashioned preservation techniques to help it through winter.

We had a sit-down staff meal at 15:30 every day. This included a briefing about the night ahead, the menu, what guests were in, any allergies, who would be sitting where etc. On Saturdays we would have a, sometimes three-course, evening supper after all the guests had gone, and Johan would open a couple of good bottles of wine. Those occasions, with the team around the table, were some of my favourite times.

My typical day as a stagiaire would include: the daily harvesting of herbs, flowers, berries, then cleaning and sorting them; plucking lots of the feathered game that would arrive, including grouse, pigeon, capercaillie, goose, duck, thrush, chicken; helping unload groceries; picking vegetables from the garden; keeping on top of the dishes and cleaning the kitchen and setting up the plates and trays for service. It was a full-on day and there was always something that needed attention. The quicker and more efficiently I did these jobs, the more time I had to take note of the more technically demanding sections, and try to get involved. The job made me use all of my senses, and it refined them. It was also my job, twice a week, to go and collect the fish and shellfish from a courier in Jarpen. My first trip there was my first time driving on the "other side" of the road, and driving the estates' big pick-up van was a bit daunting to say the least, but I got there (and back) in one piece!

There is no lunch service. Dinner is served Tuesday to Saturday at 19:00, there is one menu and everyone eats at the same time, albeit on their own tables. During service there was no real panic, rather a simple atmosphere of confidence, encompassed by precision and technique, but underpinned with a sense of urgency. Praise in Magnus' kitchen is absence of criticism. He does not believe in change for the sake of it. Change should only happen when it is necessary, because they have run out of something, or because they have come up with a better idea. He believes in the evolution of a dish.

Here are a few of the dishes taken from the menu served whilst I was there, with their exact description;

- A little lump of very fresh cheese, floating in warm whey with one petal of lavender
- Wild trout's roe served in a warm crust of dried pigs blood - see photo 1
- Crispy lichens, seasoned with smoke dried trout and grated egg yolk, light garlic cream
- Dry old fish
- Scallop "i skalet, ur elden", cooked over burning juniper dishes
- A big piece of monkfish grilled slowly over birch coals and cut after the cooking, a leaf of kale steamed so briefly that it is dying on the plate, alcoholic vinegar and juniper - see photo 2
- Blueshell mussel and wild pea pie
- Leeks picked just minutes ago, sheep's cream whisked with mead, grated cods roe - see photo 3
- Mushrooms, stone brambles and extremely fresh green peas
- Roasted bone marrow and dices of raw heart from cow, pea flower, grilled bread and sage salt
- Grouse fried in the good butter, paste of innards
- Fermented lingonberries, thick cream, caster sugar, Wild Raspberry ice
- Pine tree bark cake, pudding of milk and cream, acidic herbs and frozen buttermilk, grated Hydnellum suaveolens
- Sorbet of milk churned like in the old days, whisked duck eggs and raspberry jam
- Dried berries, meadowsweet candy, tar pastilles
- Liqueur of sour cream, liqueur of duck egg yolks, blackcurrant digestif or bitter.

Looking back, I had an amazing three months at Faviken which I hope I have conveyed in this report. At times it was seriously hard graft and I missed home occasionally, but I feel lucky to have been part of this unique restaurant.

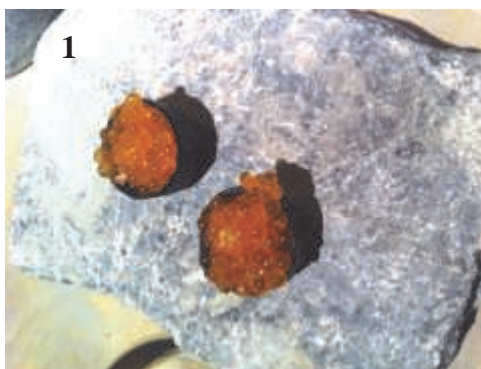
When I left, I made my way down to Stockholm, as I jumped off the metro I walked into a huge snow storm. The snow stayed for the whole of my stay, with temperatures plummeting to -18°C. I'd chosen a hostel which was only a two minute walk to the restaurant Frantzen/Lindeberg which is located in the old town. The location was perfect and I felt it was good value. I slept in a four bed dorm, meeting some very bizarre characters along the way. The restaurant has 2 stars in the Michelin Guide, and is 20 on the Restaurant Magazine's "50 Best" list and has also won the White Guides Restaurant of the Year in 2011 and 2012. My expectations of the food and the kitchen were high but they were met, and bettered.

It is run by Bjorn Frantzen and Daniel Lindeberg who are obsessed with getting the perfect ingredients.

On my first day I was asked to arrive at the restaurant at 10:00am. Whilst changing into my whites I met

another chef who was also starting his stage on the same day, Barry Fitzgerald from Dublin. He was previously head chef at the Harwood Arms in Fulham and was on a sabbatical, working in as many top restaurants as he could, whilst looking for a property to start up on his own. We went to meet the team and have a chat with head chef Jim Lofdahl who explained about the restaurant and the menu. The team was made up of Joe and Jack from England then Oskar, Lina and Filip from Sweden.

The opening times for this 17 seat restaurant were Tuesday to Friday for dinner, and Saturday lunch and dinner. There is only one sitting and the tasting menu is on offer from the best produce chosen on that day. They also have four seats at the kitchen-counter where you can sit and watch the chefs in action and get thorough explanations of the dishes and subtleties, it's like being at the front row at the theatre. I really liked this aspect of the restaurant. One night the renowned British food critic A A Gill was sitting there. He was guest judge for a national newspaper, to help with the judging of Stockholm's best restaurants. Frantzen/Lindeberg won the top honour for the first time off the back of his meal. ➡



My time was split between helping out with mise-en-place for both the hot and the cold kitchens and also one night I did a service for a private party across the road with Fred and Malin. There was a lot of precision and finesse in everything the chefs did here, everyone knew their job and did it with care, focus and ease. A talented brigade from whom I learnt many new techniques and presentation styles.

Again, we would sit down in the late afternoon before service as a team and have staff food. During one of the meals, Barry asked me if I thought it would be a good idea to ask if the two of us could come for a meal in the actual restaurant. I thought it was a fantastic idea. We enquired with Mattre'd Jon Lacotte who also seemed keen on the idea that we try the food properly. He found a space on our last Saturday for lunch, perfect!

Saturday's lunch menu is slightly shorter than the evening service. We had an amazing meal, with a wine pairing very kindly given "on the house". Even though I knew what food I would be served, it still blew me away. The menu here is divided into 'The Prologue', 'Chapter 1', 'Chapter 2', 'Chapter 3', 'Chapter 4' and 'The Epilogue'. Here are a few of my favourite dishes from the lunch

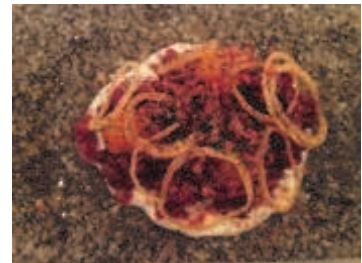
1) The Prologue consisted of 6 bite-size amuses bouches,
Pig's head, crackling, Vendace roe (from North Sweden, Kalix), green apple, samphire.
Blood pancake, foie gras, lingonberries, beetroot and potato crisps
Spelt brioche, chicken skin, roasted garlic
Beef tartare (from 46-month old animals of the 'Chubai' breed), crispy lichens
'Vichyssoise', Gotland truffle and ash
Carrot macaroon, liver and tarragon Bone marrow with smoked parsley, Smetana and Oscietra caviar



2) Satio Tempestas is a dish that's been on since the start in 2008 and changes daily. Today it consists of no less than 36 ingredients including various vegetables, herbs and nuts, Swedish sea salt, homemade butter, egg and fried fish scales involving as many as 18 different cooking techniques to create this work of art. Every diner is presented with a list of ingredients before the dish is served.



3)Reindeer (Hamerdal) Tartare, Vendance Roe and Smoked Eel. Jim came to our table and seared the lamb using Japanese charcoal.

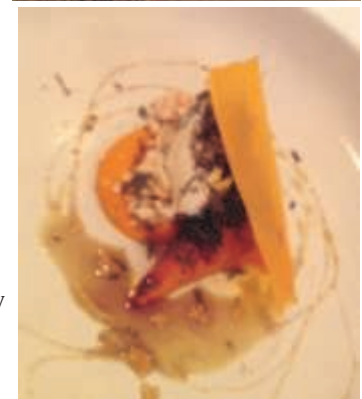


4) Roti roasted Hokkaido pumpkin, muesli, truffle honey, pumpkin seed oil and truffle ice cream.
Service at lunch, led by Jon Lacotte with sommelier Niklas Lofgren and his assistant Fanny Waller, was some of the best I have ever experienced in a restaurant. "Casual elegance" - is how they describe it, and they absolutely nail it!

Reflections

My trip gave me an insight into many of the current Swedish trends, including old traditions and techniques that are successfully being reclaimed by these leading chefs and the vast array of unique produce and creatures of the land, the air and the water. The Swedish gastronomy scene is thriving and one which promises to evolve into one of the world's richest and most exciting contemporary culinary cultures. I feel very lucky to have played an, albeit, small part.

The whole extraordinary experience was a journey of self-discovery. Sweden captivated me. I cherish the memories that I have. They're priceless.



I'd like to say a huge thank-you to the Heptinstall trustees who gave me this fantastic opportunity. I can not thank you enough.

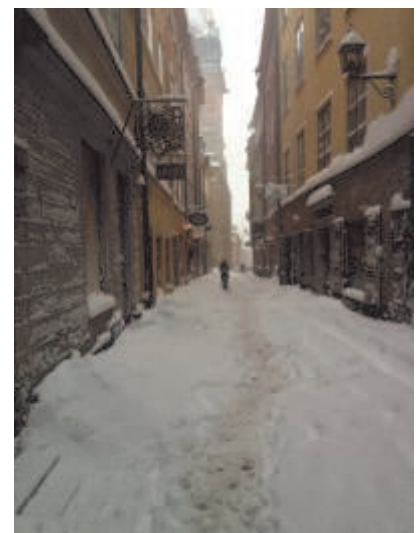
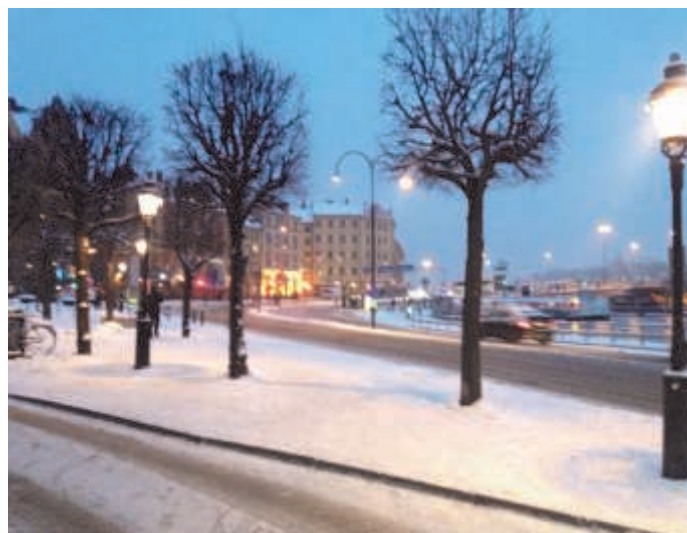
And finally, to the amazing people I met along the way, to my colleagues and people I am now lucky enough to call friends, I will forever be indebted to you for making the trip one of the most unforgettable experiences of my life. Thank You.

I really urge any young chef reading this to apply. It will open so many doors and change your life like it has mine. If anyone has any questions or would like some advice or even some further information about my trip please get in contact, my Twitter username is @pweaver1984.

www.thesportsmanseasalter.co.uk

www.faviken.com

www.frantzen-lindeberg.com/en



English Dessert Wines

Dr Bernard Lamb is an enthusiast



Although we hear a lot about English sparkling and still dry wines, our dessert wines can be truly world-class, as good of those of France or Italy. Yields will be low and the risks of late harvesting may often make such wines uncommercial, but when I have shown them in tastings, people cannot believe how brilliant they can be. Rain, birds, wasps, deer and anti-Botrytis sprays (used to deter grey rot but also acting against noble rot) all hinder their production.

Recently I did a tasting of Very Mature Wines for a London group, Wine Lovers. The Pilton Manor Westholme Late Harvest, 1992, 10.5%, (Somerset) was absolutely delicious, with a lovely peach-and-apricot bouquet, a good body and balance, and a wonderful flavour. It was made from Botrytis-affected Huxelrebe grapes and won the 1994 United Kingdom Vineyards Association's top award, the Gore-Brown Trophy. I have also shown the 1994 Pilton Manor Late Harvest, 12%, with similar approval. The Denbies 1992 Noble Harvest (Surrey), from Optima and Ortega, had 22% potential alcohol and 16.5% final alcohol.

The Paradox 2007, Bothy Vineyard, 10.5%, (Oxfordshire) from a year with heavy rains, is heavenly. It is pale, unlike the deep gold Battle Estate Saxon Dessert NV, (from Schönburger and other varieties, East Sussex) which one year had 16.5% final alcohol and a huge body and sweetness. I can't wait to give the latter wine blind to some prestigious wine expert! Other beautiful English dessert wines in my collection include the rich gold Thorncroft Noble Harvest, 1994, 12%, (Surrey) and the Chiltern Valley Luxters Dessert 1992, 12%, (Oxfordshire) in which Commander Bond detected a trace of other fruits; it always staggers tasters with its lusciousness and gorgeous flavour.

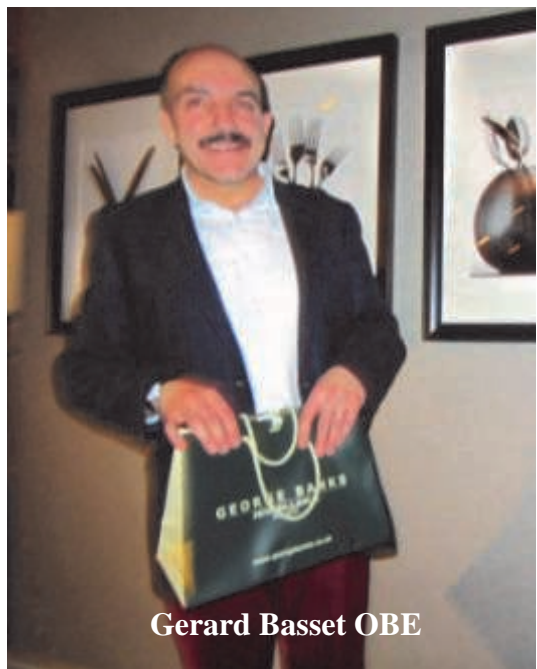
In 2001, I showed Autumn Gold, 1992, Cane End, Reading, 12%, (Berkshire) which received a lot of praise and 'I can't believe it's English' comments; the Cane End Autumn Glory, 1991, 12%, was also splendid. Sandhurst 1999, Late Harvest, 11.5%, (Kent) was very good and is getting even better. The Thames Valley Vineyard, The Clocktower Selection, 1990 Botrytis English Table Wine, 11%, (Berkshire) was guessed by blind-tasters to be from one of the best Sauternes producers, and was absolutely of the highest quality. Tony Skuriat's Eglantine dessert wine North Star, from Nottingham, has often won gold medals. It is made icewine-style from frozen Madeleine x Angevine 7672 grapes; when I showed it, the tasters were really effusive in its praise. The balance was so elegant.

German wines have often been sweetened with unfermented grape juice, süß-reserve, followed by Pasteurisation or sterilisation to prevent re-fermentation. In 1993, Stephen Skelton (now MW) sold me two 23 litre containers of süß-reserve, one of Scheurebe and one of Gewürztraminer Spätlese. The latter was from Rüdesheim bei Bad Kreuznach, on the Rheingau/Nahe border, with 90° Oechsle and 209 g/l sugar. Surprisingly, the reputed 400 ppm of sulphur dioxide (to inhibit fermentation) was not noticeable. The juice was a light yellow-gold with a deep fruity aroma, a moderate body and an excellent flavour. I fermented some to a still wine and put the rest in sterile beer bottles with crown caps. At my 2013 Wine Lovers tasting, the unfermented süß-reserve now had a beautiful gold/amber colour, a heavy sweet bouquet (someone said 'molasses'), and a huge body. It was very sweet and luscious.

We amateurs can also make great dessert and after-dinner wines, unhindered by commercial considerations or EU rules. At the National Association of Wine and Beermakers' Annual Show in Hull this March, I was lucky enough to judge the fortified Madeira-style after-dinner whites and the fortified Port-style after-dinner reds, with many of the home-made wines being distinctly better and fruitier than their expensive commercial equivalents. Recently I shared the last bottle of my 1986 white after-dinner wine, made from dried figs, dried apricots, sultanas, apple juice and tropical fruit juices. It was absolute vinous heaven and still improving! I would love to see more English commercial dessert wines to taste and buy, but know that they need special conditions and more risk-taking than dry wines. The speed with which wines like Bothy's Paradox sell out shows that the market is there. I encourage IWFS members to try them - if they can find them.

The Art of the Sommelier

Ron Barker enjoys dinner with the experts



Gerard Basset OBE

Last year the EAC organised a series of events in the English New Forest. The best meal was the dinner at Terra Vina. The Restaurant is owned by Gerard Basset OBE who is the only person to be both a Master of Wines and a Master Sommelier. Decanter magazine named him as their 2012 Man of the Year.

In 2003 I took over the editorship of Food & Wine and for the first three years Paul Heathcote MBE who, as a chef, had won two Michelin stars, provided menus and a food column. Gerard and Paul, one French, one Lancastrian respectively, met and became



Paul Heathcote MBE

friends on a trip to the Chilean vineyards over 20 years ago. They agreed to collaborate in a meal in Heathcote's Brasserie, Winkley Square, Preston, in April 2013 designed to demonstrate the matching of Food and Wine. Paul, who at one stage ran ten restaurants and a chain of pizzerias, has scaled down his operation to this single location.

Eight members of Blackpool branch decided to attend, despite the price which was high by Northern standards. We were accompanied by 2 friends from the trade. One who has passed the Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET) exams; the other studying the Sommelier exams. Although we occupied the largest table there were over 50 other guests filling the room.

Paul opened the event by explaining that he had written the menu although the kitchen brigade was under the control of his Head Chef Carl Moller. He had sent the menu to Gerard who had selected the wines. Between the courses Gerard entertained the audience with anecdotes based on his career firstly as a Sommelier, then the guiding expert behind the Hotel du Vin group and now as an independent restaurateur.

Before we entered the main room we were served Champagne with canapés in the reception area overlooking **Paul's Italian Pizzeria, the "Olive Press"**. The three canapés were warm Mushroom tartlets with crispy quail's eggs, potted shrimps with tarragon served on buttered fried bread, and Whipped goats cheese and sun dried tomatoes served on olive shortbread biscuits. There were enough for everyone to enjoy each one and sufficient left over for seconds to help resolve the debates about which were favourite. My preference was the tartlet because the egg yolk was still runny but my wife preferred the potted shrimps. In the North West we argue the merits of Morecambe Bay or Southport potted shrimps which use different herbs in the butter. These were prepared in the restaurant kitchen and were mainly flavoured by tarragon and mace. Champagne may be an easy choice to match three very different tastes and I am sure that price paid a part in selecting the Charles Chevalier NV Brut but it showed the correct amount of yeasty aroma.

Once we had moved into the dining room and had been introduced to the two presenters we were served with a Ceviche of Sea Bass (1) marinated in lemon and orange, and served with chicory, radish and cucumber. The small minority that could not face raw fish were served a substitute dish but as this did not apply to anyone on our table I could not see what it was. It does however illustrate the problem with food and wine matching if guests vary off the chosen menu. Gerard had chosen a Spanish white wine Bodegas Naia "K" 2012 from Rueda. This is a wine made mainly from Verdejo but with some Viura and Sauvignon Blanc added. It had enough acid to compliment the citric flavours on the plate. It is strange that a wine made nearly 200 miles from the sea works so well with sea fish. The second course was one of Heathcote's traditional specialities, a soufflé (2). This was not one of the "twice baked" types but came in individual dishes flavoured with real Lancashire Cheese, Blacksticks Blue, and spinach. It was decorated with double podded broad beans, peas, giant oyster mushrooms and shavings of asparagus. There will always be a problem serving more than 50 individual soufflés at nearly the same time. I was very lucky; our table was served first and my soufflé was as light as the proverbial feather and extremely tasty. I suspect some of the guests served last would have finished their wine before the food arrived.



It is perhaps not surprising that as they first became friends in Chile, that Gerard would find room for a Chilean wine on the menu. **This one was Emiliana "Adobe" Gewurztraminer 2012 from the Rapel Valley.** My wife and I are fans of Alsace Gewurztraminer, particularly the "over the top" examples produced by Zind Humbrecht or Rolly Gassmann. Either would have overpowered the soufflé even containing blue cheese. This one from Chile was more austere but with sufficient varietal notes to stand up for itself.

Before we left home for this event we had been watching a programme on television that argued that the number of wild deer in the country was becoming a problem and that a cull was needed. So it was appropriate that the main course (3) was Roast Venison "mirepoix" served with juniper braised leeks and a side dish of smoked mash pie. The roast loin was very tender but I preferred the slow cooked braised venison in the pie. To accompany this dish Gerard had chosen an Italian red from Piemonte, **Rive Barbera d'Asti 2009.** Although many unsophisticated wines are made with Barbera in Southern Italy and California, it can produce fine wines when grown at higher altitudes. Rive means very steep and this one has been kept for 18 months in a combination of old and new oak before bottling and showed vibrant aromas of black cherries and prunes with chocolate and toasty oak undertones and a touch of mint.

For reasons I do not confess to understanding the next two wines were served together with the cheese which was a selection of Lancashire's finest. **The two wines were an LBV Port** (Wiese & Krohn 2005) which was chosen to accompany the cheese and a Vin Doux Natural, Le Maury Rouge de Saint-Roch, which was supposed to go with the chocolate desert. Because they were served together many people chose to conduct a comparative tasting of the two fortified styles with the cheese and thus had very little dessert wine for the pudding. I am not a fan of Late Bottled Vintage port and I thought that Gerard had chosen it through tradition rather than pure matching. I would have wished that he had chosen a white wine to demonstrate that most cheese is equally at home with wines of both colours. In my personal and uneducated opinion the Maury was also too jammy for the cheese; if we needed a fortified wine a dry Oloroso Sherry or an Aged Tawny Port would have been more interesting. But when the dessert, a Chocolate terrine with malt ice cream, was served the Maury, from the Mediterranean coast of France came into its own. Very few wines have the strength of flavour to stand up to dark chocolate but this one with its Moreno cherry flavours did so excellently. In fact most people at our table

thought that the kitchen had been over generous with the terrine and some, not me, even left some on their plate complaining that it was too heavy at the end of a meal.

The evening was completed with Gerard answering questions whilst we enjoyed coffee and sour cherry amaretti. Sommeliers are competitive and there are European and World wide competitions. As well as advising clients on selection of wines to accompany their meal they have to serve bottles of wine ensuring that each person at the table gets **the same amount without going back to "top up".** He won the **Best Sommelier of Europe in 1996 and the Best Sommelier in the World in 2010.** He has dual nationality; although born in France and with an accent that grows stronger when he talking to a group, he enters all Sommelier competitions as a proud Brit. One anecdote is worthy of repeating and this demonstrates the need for the sommelier to evaluate the customer as well as the wines. When Gerard was working in a Michelin starred restaurant in London an elderly lady came in and accepted his offer of help with selecting a wine to accompany her meal. He chose a middle of the road red that was on the wine list for about £50 but that matched her choice of main course. The following day she turned up again but when he offered his help it was declined; she asked to see the full list and selected one of the fine wines that the restaurant sold for £400. He had misread the customer! I do wonder how much of the skill is in assessing the client.

Both restaurateurs commented that their organisations had grown much smaller due to the economic situation over the last 5 years. The evening including 5 courses, 5 wines plus champagne and canapés and coffee and amaretti cost £70 per person. I thought we got good value.

Wine - a matter of *balance*

by Prof. Alan F Harrison

Focused.

Harmony in all aspects of wine

Pleasant proportions of sugar & acid

We progress from one of André Simon's quotations on wine as, '*a work of art with many facets*,' (March 2013, p15), to his more specific thoughts on the wine term, *balance*. Beginning with, '*Well-balanced - Harmony in all aspects of wine*', we will learn more soon. In the meantime, it would be as well to consider that the two quotations on the seesaw can be differentiated in type. On the left, the general term *harmony* is used. On the right, we gain a different perspective from Prof. Adrienne Lehrer, an Arizonian linguist with an interest in wine. Two writers, so far, have interpreted the wine term *balance* in different ways and we will see other variations.

The adjective *focused* has been placed with *sugar* and *acid* for consideration and the terms are intended to be more specific. They distinguish between words describing wine content and its results. While the amount of sugar and acid in a wine is measurable, people may agree less precisely when declaring their thoughts on sweetness and acidity. Thus, wine terms many of us take for granted may constitute more than meets the eye (or nose and taste buds).

Following from the *harmony* quotation above, another of André Simon's interpretation of the word *balance* was in the context of wine being dependent upon balance for its very existence. He said, '*Wine is the living blood of the grape. Wine is harmony; a marvellously complex and well-balanced blend of ever so many different substances in a solution of water and alcohol.*' (A better quotation for the seesaw but too long.)

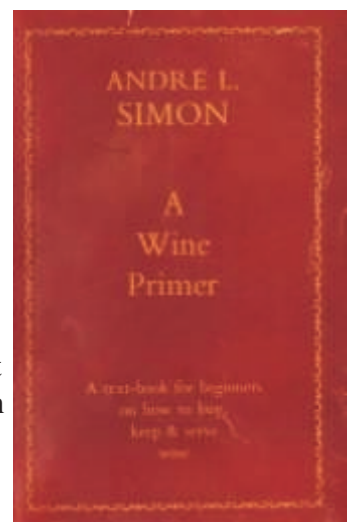
Michael Broadbent describes it thus: '*Balance - the combination of natural components. Well-balanced - satisfactory blend of physical components (fruit, alcohol, tannin, acid) and the less tangible elements (breed, character, finesse, etc.)*'. Some of the quotations point to the fact that although authors *explain* the terms they use, the explanations can use others which are often assumed to be understood. At present we consider the main term *balance*, and see that '*qualifiers*' are sometimes used to provide more detail.

Wine terminology includes numerous abstract adjectives, examples of which we have seen. Those used by Adrienne Lehrer in the title graphic were described in 2009 as 'New words for balance'. As before, we need insight into what some of these might mean and *Wines that are integrated are "bound together harmoniously". Wines that are focused have flavours that integrate. An Internet source gives - 'Focused in a wine means well defined, flavours and aromas are in place and can be identified'.*

The world of single words and the more involved descriptions which can be applied to wine is truly vast. We have heard from two wine experts and a linguist interested in wine. Our final (Internet) quotation is: '*English doesn't come equipped with terms to describe all the tastes and qualities one looks for in wine. The winetaster tries to grab words as close as possible to the sensations he or she experiences. ... the words are attempts to capture the overall character of the wine or the mood it incites.*

Grab glasses, fill them with wine words and then capture the spirit of the wine. Readers will determine what specific terms mean in the context of their choice of wine, and the *table-talk* which concluded the last article. Two's company and, like heads, two independently-consumed glasses are better than one. The more, the merrier.

The sources within this (extended) article are to be found at www.gastron-omy.com/iwfsjune2013/ Read more André Simon wine quotations from this and his other books.



Grumpy Old Gourmet!

Hoi Polloi - 'The Masses' (OED) are taking over.

What came first? Dress down Friday in offices or the desire of the masses to 'be comfortable', regardless of its effect on others trying to keep up standards.

The restaurant industry adopted the idea very quickly as a means of reducing laundry bills, no table clothes, paper napkins, packet sugar to save waste in open bowls. Often there is no side plate for your bread, you are expected to break bread on a table that has been wiped by a rag that has wiped a dozen other tables that day. Small, scruffy tables and uncomfortable seating has been readily adopted so as to persuade people not to linger, facilitating a second sitting and quick turnover. Restaurants are often housed in stark, unwelcoming rooms with unconcealed ducting and pipe work, where bare brickwork with unfinished plaster work and faux exposed beams gather dirt and dust. There is even a restaurant in the New Forest that is decorated with wall paper that is designed to look as though it is peeling off the walls.

In country hotels you find what can only be called the 'farmers bar syndrome'. No sign of tractors or muddy land rovers outside, just Mercs and BMW's, but the bar is crowded with 'OK Yahs' in Barbours and green wellingtons perching around on bar stools stuffing overpriced sandwiches while for the same money they could be sitting down on comfortable chairs being served a properly balanced meal.

As for eating in the street, nowadays this disgusting habit is the norm. When I was a boy I can remember asking my father about this practise and was told only common people walked around with food. My first wife tells me when she was at school pupils would receive detention or some other type of punishment if seen eating even an ice cream in the street. Today there is even a term for such fare 'street food'. Glasses have gone out of fashion, bottles are the preferred drinking vessel for the Hoi Polloi, they think it gives a macho image.

Have you noticed the majority of ladies dress up smartly for an evening out but often their partners are in scruffy jeans, tea shirts and dirty trainers spoiling the pleasant ambiance of a respectable restaurant? Even in some expensive restaurants how often are you asked, 'Is evry fing OK?'

We are told the dining table has gone out of fashion and architects' are designing houses without dining rooms as all the hoi polloi want to do is slummock in front of the TV with a ready meal.

Inverted snobbery is much more common, often a person scorns the conventions or attitudes of his own social group and attempts to identify with individuals of a lower set and dress down on the principle that they have nothing to prove.

As every generation, since time immemorial, has declared the world has gone to pot! But remember it behoves members of a Society such as ours to maintain some standards for future generations.



A Tasty Dish for your Picnic Hamper - Sausage Plait

Pastry

140g / 5ozs Stork margarine

225g / 8ozs plain flour - sieved

2 tbs cold water

Make the pastry and chill for an hour.

Roll out to a 25cm x 25cm (10" x 10") square and place on baking parchment on a baking tray.

Filling

285g / 10ozs sausage meat (if using shop bought sausage meat add seasoning to taste)

60g/2ozs medium onion finely chopped

60g/2ozs mushrooms chopped

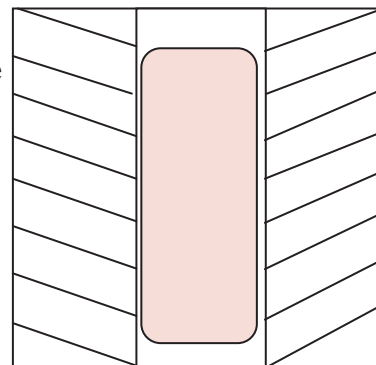
60g/2ozs tomato chopped

Mixed chopped herbs to taste

1 egg for glazing

Mix all the ingredients (except egg) together thoroughly and form into a sausage shape down the centre of the pastry. Cut slits in the pastry down either side.

Moisten the ends of the strips with egg glaze, fold both ends in and fold strips over the top alternately in a lattice pattern. Refrigerate for at least an hour or overnight. Heat oven to 220°C/425°F, place Plait on centre shelf and turn oven down to 190°C/375°F, cook for 50 - 55 minutes. Cover loosely with foil if it gets too brown. Cool on a rack. As with all pastry this is best served unchilled, while the pastry is still friable.



Mapping out Chilean Wine and Gastronomy

By Amanda Barnes



There aren't many places that can boast the prodigious geographical diversity of Chile. Deep forests buffeted by creeping glaciers; sun cracked deserts and white washed salt flats; snowcapped mountains, smoking volcanoes and the dizzying heights of the Andes. There are fertile valleys with rolling hillsides and an enviable expanse of Pacific coast spanning 29° of latitude. The heart of Chilean wine and gastronomy reflects this topographical potpourri and any glimpse into Chilean cuisine reveals an encyclopedia of endemic ingredients.

One of the greatest influences in shaping the country's culinary culture is the coastline stretching over 4000kms across the entire length of this skinny nation. The coast is one long fish counter for Chileans. Established favourites such

as oysters, small sweet scallops with melt-in-your-mouth corals, fleshy salmon, pink and succulent clams and Patagonian King Crab. Enormous Pacific sea bass are accompanied by a plethora of weird and wonderful native sea dwellers. The Humboldt Squid (reaching a monster-sized 2 meters), Erizo de Mar (sea urchins which are quite logically translated as 'sea hedgehogs'), Cholgas (a gargantuan relative of the mussel), Picoroco (ginormous and irrefutably ugly barnacle) and so much seaweed that you wonder if biofuel will be Chile's next cash cow.

Most Chilean seafood and fish is prepared simply and often eaten raw with just a dash of limon de pica, which are small sharp limes, Pebre, a Chilean condiment of coriander, onion, chilli, garlic and olive oil, or a pinch of their delicious Fleur de Sel. The Spanish influence is seen in rich fisherman's stews. Other fusion influences arise in dishes like ceviche, sushi, clams 'al parmesano', shellfish pasta and risotto, seafood pastry pies and even the humble battered fish sandwich makes an appearance.

It almost goes without saying that the perfect pairing for most Chilean seafood are crisp, aromatic and fresh coastal wines. Pioneered by winemakers like Pablo Morande in the 80s, the main coastal wine regions of Casablanca, San Antonio and Leyda benefit from brisk sea breezes and protective, low coastal mountains creating a buffer from extreme cold and a cavity to bathe the vines in cool morning mist before the afternoon sun emerges.

Mixed fish ceviche with coastal
Sauvignon Blanc at Pichilemu



The varied coastal wine regions, which extend to the borders of the Atacama desert region, produce wonderful seafood pairings: the herbal aromatics and citrus fruit of crisp Sauvignon Blanc from coastal Leyda; the voluptuous, tropical and chalky Chardonnay from Limari; or the earthy and fruity cool climate Pinot Noir of Casablanca Valley. Further inland, the natural acidity and mineral notes of the Chardonnay from Malleco, one of the southernmost wine regions in the world, also works well in seafood pairings.

Intensely aromatic whites – Riesling, Gewürztraminer and Viognier – have seen a rebirth since the exploration into cooler climates. Their acidity, off-dry nature and sublime fragrance make them fun pairings for the influx of Asian cuisine using local seafood.

Moving in from the coastal mountain range the country morphs into warm flat plains, breeze brushed foothills and the rugged start to the Andes. Naturally the cuisine shifts focus onto land dwellers and Campesino (rural) cooking dominates. **The simple Huaso Asado (Chilean cowboy's BBQ) with grilled meats like pork, beef and lamb are an ideal partner** to the bigger reds from the Central valleys.

The Asado tradition of hours spent around the fire warrants an equally time-absorbing wine. **Syrah is Chile's new champion** and the deep black fruit, rosemary, smoky and pepper notes, juicy tannins and bright acidity of Syrah from Apalta in Colchagua is dreamy with slow-cooked Patagonian lamb. **"Apalta is mostly colluvial with granite and some clay – it's a great terroir for Syrah for its soil and water,"** says winemaker Andrea Leon who makes terroir selection Syrahs.

Another favourite of the cowboy culture and prepared all over Chile is the hearty stew. Usually with a base of root vegetables, coriander and full flavoured meats like cow tongue, it pairs well with what really was a Campesino's wine of years past: Carignan.

In the Southern regions of Maule, Itata and Bío Bío some gnarly trunked, old bush vines had been forgotten by the wine world, until recently. Old vine Carignan from Maule is a muddle of rich cassis, mulberry and wet earth with a refreshing acidity. **"Carignan from Maule is concentrated but not necessarily rustic,"** says owner of Santiago wine bar Bocanariz, Katherine Hidalgo. **"It has a countryside flavour but it can be super elegant."**

País too is a rediscovery. Once the most planted variety in Chile, it was later dismissed as table wine to make way for noble varieties, although now the old vines – some up to 350 years old – are producing unique wines. More rustic than Carignan, País has dark fruit and drying tannins with attractive floral and citrus notes.

Like anywhere, stews in Chile are made big. They are inherently for sharing. One treasured national dish is Estofada de San Juan, a stew comprising dried and smoked meats with acid cherries and always eaten on 24 June, National Indigenous People's Day. **As part of the necessity of the day, the native Mapuche tribe had a rich culinary culture preserving foods - still echoed in contemporary cuisine.**

The Mapuches also developed techniques cooking directly in the fire. The Rescoldo method of cooking in the ashes is still avidly practiced in the campfire and roadside favourite: Tortillas de Rescoldo (flatbreads cooked on embers resulting in a rich smoky flavour).

One spectacular indigenous dish is Curanto, coming from the lost-in-time Chiloe archipelago. Villagers tie a stilted house onto a platform and, with oxen, drag it to a new location in an annual 'Minga' ceremony. This century-old tradition is followed by a Curanto cooked for the entire village: a large hole filled with hot stones where layer upon layer of shellfish, meat, potatoes, vegetables and dumplings are covered by native Nalca leaves and cooked underground resulting in a medley of flavours. Time-conscious, less romantic chefs can replicate it in a pressure cooker.

The greatest Mapuche inheritance though is Merkén. This heady combination of smoked chilli peppers, coriander seed and sea salt is used to add flavour to many dishes in Chile, which unlike its namesake actually features little spice in typical dishes.



Pruning Chardonnay vines in Maipo during winter

Patagonian Lamb cutlets on a bed of root vegetables with Clos Apalta blend





Turning soil between gnarly, old Carignan vines in Maul

The smoky flavours of Mapuche cooking methods work well with the fruit forward, spicy and oaked Central Valley wines. **Merkén has an almost poetic pairing with the country's signature grape variety: Carménère. Its fruity spiciness, earthy flavour and softer oak-aged tannins sit quite happily alongside the smoked pepper. "The smoky taste of Merkén is a bridge with the oak of the wine," says Chilean food guru Pilar Rodriguez.**

Carménère occasionally still gets a bad rap as being overly green, but since winemakers started harvesting it almost a month later than previously practiced, contemporary styles are softer and fruitier but still with appealing spice. **"Carménère is a great variety with a medium body so you can pair it up or down, with lighter or heavier dishes," says Marcelo Pino, Best Chilean Sommelier 2011. "It's a very versatile wine."**

Cabernet Sauvignon is equally as versatile in food pairings. **"The commercial style of Chilean wines makes them very easy to drink and pair,"** comments Argentine sommelier Martin Mantegini, **"even Cabernet Sauvignon."** The most acclaimed Chilean Cab is arguably from the rocky Andean terrains of Alto Maipo, reaching up to 800m in altitude and producing deep, layered and lush wines with cassis, red fruits, chocolate and herbal aromas.

The softer Merlots and jammier, medium bodied reds of the Central Valley are often paired with the nation's No.1 comfort food, Pastel de Choclo: a casserole with a base of 'pino' (minced beef, chicken, raisins, boiled eggs and onions), topped with a corn crust. The creamy corn used in many Chilean kitchens, especially for Humitas (wrapped with onion and basil in corn husks) can also call for buttery oaked Chardonnay from Limarí. The valley borders the driest desert in the world - the Atacama - and has mineral rich soils that give the Chardonnay a steely edge that cuts through creamy dishes while retaining its tropical fruit characteristics.

The different soils and microclimates are terroir porn for winemakers, but Chile's diversity also makes it a forager's paradise. Although foraging is as old as time, it has scavenged its way back into fashion in Santiago. 35-year-old chef Rodolfo Guzman has taken foraging and Mapuche techniques into haute cuisine in his molecular gastronomy restaurant Borago where he serves unique dishes involving soil, trees, fungi, flowers and parasites in a theatrical tasting menu. Guzman also started a research institute with Universidad Catolica documenting Chile's endemic flora and fauna. **"Chile is the coldest country in Latin America, that is why we are so different to the rest,"** enthuses Guzman. **"You might jump into the sea water and it's freezing, but it's wonderful in your mouth. The geography makes so many endemic ingredients. All of Chile is abundant and in many different ways."**

This abundance and diversity in food and wine makes Chile mouthwateringly good to explore.



Photography by Matt Wilson, www.mattwilson.cl

“Val Bishop Tours” seek the sun in South Africa

by Angela Britland, with wine contributions by Paul Bishop

On 25th February “Val Bishop Tours” departed from Heathrow with a group of thirty three members comprising twenty three from Mid Cheshire, six from Manchester, three from Blackpool and one from Canada.

We arrived in Cape Town to dazzling sunshine and temperatures of 26 degrees, so welcome after the cold, dank climate we had left behind! We were met by our guide for the duration of the tour, Charl Chambers and our driver, Chris, both of whom added greatly to the holiday, with their courtesy, good humour and wealth of knowledge.

The first two nights were spent at the Protea Dorpshuis Hotel in Stellenbosch. Stellenbosch is a lovely town, founded in the late 17th century, with beautiful Dutch colonial architecture. After an excellent lunch, some of the group decided to rest and unpack, whilst others set off for the first wine tasting of the trip at False Bay Vineyard which is owned by Paul Boutinot, the Manchester Wine Merchant. The wines were well received by those who attended. The whites showing particularly well, especially the Peacock Ridge range of Sauvignon and Chenin Blanc.

In the evening we attended an African Buffet at the Moyo Restaurant, Spier Wine Estate with traditional colourful entertainment and a good variety of dishes and wine.

On day two we visited the restored Colonial houses in Stellenbosch. These contained well chosen Dutch and English furniture plus some German artefacts which were the property of the original owner. The traditionally clad African guides were most helpful and gave us insight into the lives of the people through the centuries.

Late morning we visited the L’Avenir vineyard for a wine tasting and lunch. L’Avenir is a working farm and is dedicated to the growing and production of fine wines on an international level. We were shown around the cellars and tasted wine from the steel fermentation tanks - a new experience for many members. Afterwards we tasted three vintages of the Pinotage for which they are renowned. They supply the Wine Society with their exhibition wine. The best vintages are reasonably priced for the quality and very good value. Lunch was buffet style, outdoors, with meats which include ostrich and springbok.

In the evening we enjoyed an excellent four course dinner, with specially chosen wine pairings, at the Overture restaurant, at Hidden Valley Wines. The excellent meal was accompanied by their own wines. A smooth elegant Chardonnay, fairly light, a red blend still young and slightly tannic but with excellent potential and a very pleasant Chenin dessert wine, were served.

Our guest was Shirley Killian, EAC member of Council who travelled all the way from her restaurant in Franschoek to be with us to represent the local branches. It was a pleasure to have her as our guest.

The following day we departed for Oudtshoorn, the ostrich capital of the world, also known as the “Feather Capital of the World”. We stayed at the Queens Hotel for two nights. Queen Elizabeth II spent her 21st birthday at this hotel with her parents and Princess Margaret. In Oudtshoorn we dined at the hotel’s Colony Restaurant and at Kalinka, a Russian style restaurant. In the morning we visited the Cango Caves with their amazing lime stone columns in a variety of colours and saw remnants of their occupation for thousands of years by the San people. From here we were taken for a very educational tour of an Ostrich Farm and this was followed by ostrich steaks for lunch which were well prepared and very similar to tender beef steak. ➡



Shirley Killian with our three Chairmen
Paul Bishop - M & Mid Cheshire, Bob Loyd - Manchester
& Brian Sager - Blackpool

All these tourists are boring!



The highlight of the tour was a visit to the Garden Route Game Lodge. We enjoyed breakfast lunch and dinner at the Serengeti Restaurant. Here we were able to sample not only a wide range of meat and fish dishes but also, Bobooti, the national dish of South Africa, and Marvla Pudding, the national dessert. Various wines were chosen and I particularly liked the Beyerscloof Pinotage 2010. We experienced two wonderful game drives, in the evening and the early morning where we saw a wide variety of animals including giraffes, elephants, lions and all the common species of antelope.



En route to Knysna, we visited the Bartelomeo Diaz Museum in Mossel Bay. This museum contains the replica of the first ship to round the Cape of Good Hope in 1487. This magnificent ship carried Madeira wine and was the first to take maturing fortified wine into the Southern hemisphere. The changes in its character were observed on subsequent voyages and lead to the process used to make Madeira Wine, today. Our three day stay in Knysna, at the PH Knysna Quays, enabled us to sample a variety of local restaurants, **The Sirocco, The Dry Dock and JJ's restaurant, all situated on the waterfront. At JJ's restaurant** we sampled an excellent La Motte Bordeaux blend 2007 vintage supplied by the proprietor in place of the house wine - at no extra charge!

En route to Hermanus we visited Cape Agulhas, Africa's southernmost tip and enjoyed some local sparkling wine, where the Atlantic and Indian Oceans meet. We spent two nights in Hermanus at the Harbour House Hotel, which had magnificent views of the bay, noted for its whale watching in South Africa's spring months. **On the first evening we dined on fish pate and salad, followed by Cape Salmon, at Bientang's Cave. This was an open fronted restaurant set in a natural cave by the harbour at Hermanus. The following afternoon we visited the Hamilton Russell Vineyard for a tasting. We were treated to a detailed explanation of the varied terroir and drainage of the vineyards and a full explanation of the history and methods of production. They produce the best Pinot Noir in South Africa - a World Renowned Wine of consistent quality. We sampled several examples and at the end I tasted an experimental Pinotage and a Chardonnay which will eventually be on sale. Our visit to Hermanus concluded with dinner at Coco's Restaurant, overlooking the sea.**

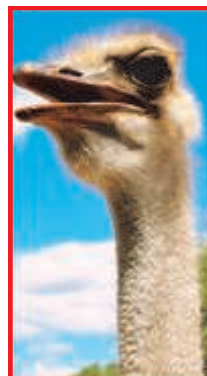
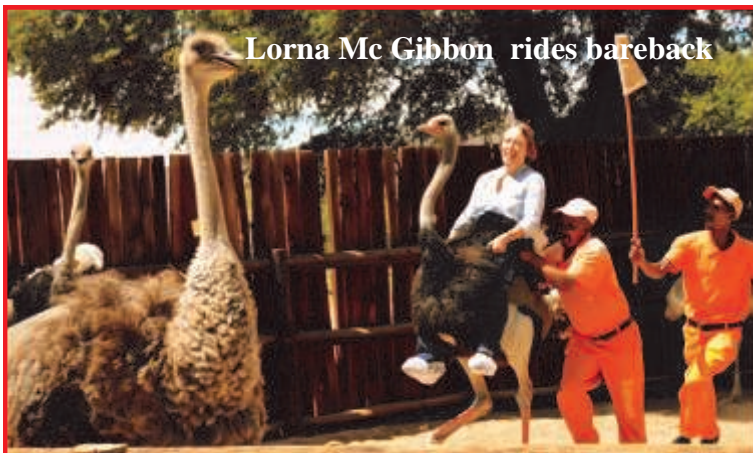
From Hermanus we travelled to Cape Town on a journey that took us through apple growing country, breathtaking mountain passes and the beautiful town of Franschoek. This picturesque town was originally settled in the 17th century by Huguenots and is famous today for its restaurants and surrounding vineyards. We visited Boschendal Wine Estate for a tasting.

The crowded tasting room impaired our experience. We tasted mainly their entry level wines. Fortunately we eventually tasted their consistently good Bordeaux blend Lanoy, a very young 2011, just beginning to show its potential. As compensation for the overcrowding we finished with their excellent champagne method sparkling wine, before walking over to the main house for a superb buffet lunch. Members chose their own wines from the house list.

Our three night stay in Cape Town was at the Townhouse Hotel. We dined in the hotel restaurant, at Quay 4, on the lovely V and A Waterfront, and at Gold Restaurant, where we were treated to a variety of South African dishes, accompanied by traditional entertainment. On our final, full day a number of us lunched at the Mount Nelson Hotel. The food, the wine and the service was excellent; the perfect way to spend a hot, sunny Sunday afternoon.

Our holiday ended with a visit to Table Mountain on one of the hottest and calmest days of the year. It was a superb holiday, in a beautiful country, with good food, good wine and good company. Thank you Val, for yet another excellent tour and we are looking forward to the next one!

Lorna Mc Gibbon rides bareback



Alistair Bolter at Cape Agulhas



around the branches - Surrey Hills



Sunday Lunch in Weybridge

The Branch Chairman, opened her house for a Sunday Lunch for fourteen members at Gable End in Weybridge to cheer up a cold February day. We started with a glass of Prosecco and then sat down to a rather 'cosy' lunch. It was a case of eat with your elbows in! First there was an Amuse Bouche of Cream of Cauliflower Soup followed by a Terrine of three different Salmons, Smoked Salmon, Salmon and Salmon Trout. The main course was an Italian traybake of Chicken, sausages and potatoes cooked with rosemary, and lemon and a green salad. The dessert was a Meringue Gelato Ice cream cake with raspberries and chocolate sauce, these last two dishes came from Nigella's New Italian cook-book. Coffee followed with Helen's homemade Cherry liqueur, year of 1976. The wines throughout the meal were a selection from her cellar, including a bottle of decanted Elderflower wine again 1976 vintage! It was reckoned to taste a bit like a dry sherry!



The Great Gurkhas, Weybridge

Our AGM was held at The Great Gurkhas Restaurant on 20th March. The cuisine is Nepalese and we had a varied menu including for starters – Chicken Hariyo and Choyela, Nepalese Kebabs and Onion Pakauda. The main courses were Everest Chicken and Everest King Prawns, Mayalu and Himalayan Chicken and Phewa Lamb. These were accompanied by a Gurkhali Dal and Sag Aloo, a side dish of spinach and potatoes. There were two rice dishes, Anda Bhat and Gurkhali Bhat plus Lasun ko Roti i.e. Naan Bread. Most of these dishes were cooked with ginger, garlic, chillis, yoghurt, peppers and many different spices. A different style of cooking from Thai or Chinese. We started with a glass of Prosecco and throughout the meal we drank Miss Molly Morenson SA a 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot and el Coto Rioja 2010.

We welcomed nineteen members to the AGM, our own and some from other Branches. The business was conducted in record time with the same Committee as previously and suggestions were put for-

ward for different events for the following year. As is the case for most organisations anywhere we need more members and some fresh ideas for events. No doubt we shall be holding our unique Starters and Puds again. Will we get a summer in which to hold Garden events? Only time will tell! Watch this space.

Helen Mills, Chairman



around the branches - Dubai



Laurent Perrier Champagne Master Class and Luxury Food Event

We were all excited to receive Lyn Born's invitation to a Laurent Perrier Champagne Masterclass and luxury food event to be held at a members stunning home located at the tip of one of the gracefully curving fronds of the Palm Jumeirah.

We were greeted with a flute of Laurent Perrier Brut Champagne and led into the garden veranda to join the other members. The weather was perfect, gentle tropical breezes flowing in from the Arabian Sea. 25° Celsius, clear skies and the recent sunset still pale on the horizon. We knew we were in for a very special evening indeed.

Lyn called us to the center of the garden to introduce our guests from Laurent Perrier, Antoine Gouffier, Brand Ambassador for Laurent Perrier, who would guide us through the Masterclass and provide



fascinating information about the Company and the process of creating Champagne. We raised our flutes in warm welcome just as Chef Gus of Gustronomy sent his staff forth with the first of the many delicious delicacies to come.

The Laurent Perrier Brut was paired with Mini Caesar Salads served in tomato scented pastry baskets, they were as delicious as they were beautiful to behold. **The pastry cup was baked to perfection.** Meanwhile we learned from Antoine that Laurent-Perrier traces its foundation to 1812 when a former cooper (someone who makes wooden staved vessels, bound together with hoops and possessing flat ends or heads) and bottler by the name of Alphonse Pierlot purchased two parcels of land. Pierlot willed his company to his cellar master, Eugene Laurent, who operated it with his wife, Mathilde Emilie Perrier. After Eugene Laurent died in 1887 his widow, Mathilde, took control and attached her name to the company, changing it to Veuve Laurent-Perrier (veuve being the French word for widow). Veuve Mathilde led the company to great success before the first war interrupted business. Under Mathilde's management the house produced a record-breaking 50,000 cases of Champagne in 1914, confirming its position as an industry leader.

Antoine also described the L-P Brut as their signature champagne and said that the Brut's style, is defined by its very high proportion of Chardonnay, which provides a natural purity, freshness and elegance. The Laurent-Perrier Brut also benefits from ideal ageing in the cellars: three years minimum for a 75cl bottle, and four to five years for a magnum.

The second pairing with the Brut was, a delicately flavored crab fried rice, served in an individual oriental spoon. The crab fried rice was superbly delicious, although eating from the rather large spoon was a challenge for my dignity. But I was happy to try several times in order to perfect the technique. Antoine next spoke of the origins of Champagne. Contrary to legend and popular belief, Dom Pérignon did not invent sparkling wine, although he did make important contributions to the production and quality of Champagne wine. The oldest recorded sparkling wine is Blanquette de Limoux, which was probably invented by Benedictine Monks in the Abbey of Saint Hilaire in 1531. They achieved this by bottling the wine before the initial fermentation had ended. More than a hundred years later the English scientist and physician Christopher Merret documented the addition of sugar to a finished wine to create a second fermentation. His discoveries coincided happily with English glass makers technical developments that allowed bottles to be produced that could withstand the internal pressures of the secondary fermentation process. Before this technique was developed, creating and



consuming Champagne could be very hazardous with the French calling Champagne the "Devils Wine" due to the many exploded bottles that resulted in less than perfect dinner events.

Next on the Champagne tasting agenda was the Laurent Perrier Ultra Brut. New flutes were delivered and the Champagne flowed as Antoine told us more about this marvelous wine. He called this, a "truly unique" Champagne as it is made without the addition of any sugar. Laurent-Perrier is now one of the last Champagne houses to still produce Champagne of this type. With nearly equal parts of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, Ultra Brut is made exclusively with grapes from very ripe harvests. Antoine said that selection has to be rigorous to ensure that only grapes with both high sugar levels and low acidity are used. This is essential, Antoine told us, as there is no sugar dosage added. The second fermentation on yeast lasts at least four years.

Antoine correctly predicted that the Laurent-Perrier Ultra Brut's delicate finish would leave the palate fresh. It was magnificent Champagne that paired elegantly with our next service from Gus's kitchen. Next on the tasting agenda? Oysters! Two types of fresh chilled oysters served on the half shell with all the normal trimmings. Fabulous plump and nutty Gillard family oysters (grown in Normandy, near Utah Beach) and the elegant Fines de Claire produced in Marennes-Oléron, Southwest France and known for a firm texture and sweet flavor.

around the branches - Dubai



Our second tasting round was completed with delicious Parmesan cheese aged for 3 years. During the slow and natural aging process of Parmesan cheese, the amino acids combine with the volatile flavors produced by the lactic bacteria to create a highly complex flavor palette. This delightful cheese matched perfectly with the Ultra Brut.

Our flutes were collected and replaced with Bordeaux wines glasses. Our garçons and barmen then circulated to pour the *pièce de résistance* of the evening's Champagne tasting venue: the Laurent Perrier Grand Siècle. As Antoine began speaking to tell us of this special wine, you could see the pride in his face as he described the Champagne. He explained the origin of the name. In the 17th Century, during the reign of Louis XIV, France enjoyed its most illustrious era. Louis XIV became known as the "Sun King" for his benevolence and his patronage of the Arts, which became the foundation of France's rich artistic heritage. At the Palace of Versailles Louis XIV was the first French King to drink Champagne. Louis XIV's era became known as the Grand Siècle - the "Great Century". Antoine explained that the Grand Siècle is the epitome of Champagne cuvées, as it blends complementary wines from Laurent-Perrier's very best growths and most successful vintage years.

Grand Siècle is made with a Pinot Noir and Chardonnay blend, with the latter being slightly dominant. Twelve of the most prestigious villages supply these grapes; all of them classified at 100% Grands Crus such as Ambonnay, Verzenay, Mailly, Avize, Cramant, Chouilly and Le Mesnil-sur-Oger. Within the vineyards of these villages, only the very best plots are selected, as are the finest musts from the pressings. The blended wine is then aged during the second fermentation on the yeast for approximately five years. Needless to say, we savored every sip of this extraordinary Champagne.

Not to be out done, Gus presented his Foie Gras Balotine with (appropriately) a Champagne Jelly and Raisin chutney to accompany the Grand Siècle. As we know, Foie Gras is not the easiest dish to prepare but this service was sublime. It had a very buttery texture, creamy, rich and smooth with a very subdued flavor of goose liver. I thought **at this point that the evening couldn't get any better or the food more delicious, but Lyn and Gus were only getting started.**

Next came the Rabbit and Pork Belly Rillettes served on Brioche toast. I know Gus must have been proud of the rich texture and bronze color he achieved during the cooking process. It was simply one of the most delicious servings we have ever tasted.

Suddenly a great and grand fireworks display erupted behind us. The incredible display was coming from the Burj Al Arab and the Jumeira Beach Hotel. It was a wondrous display that lasted at least 10 to 15 minutes. We asked Lyn how she had arranged **such a splendid show just for us. Without hesitation she said "nothing is too good for our members!" It provided the perfect backdrop as we finished savoring the Grand Siècle.**

Once our Bordeaux glasses were cleared we were served Sauvignon Blanc glasses and a excellent Laurent Perrier Cuvée Rosé was poured. Antoine explained that the Cuvée Rosé Laurent-Perrier is a delicious apéritif. This cuvée, thanks to its aromatic character, allows various food and wine pairings. Antoine told us that the Cuvée Rosé Laurent-Perrier was created in 1968 using bold, innovative *'savoir-faire'* methods learned from production of still wines called *'Coteaux Champenois.'* Perfected at each stage of its making, the Cuvée Rosé is now the benchmark in its category. He was confident we would enjoy it with our next food servings and once again he was absolutely

correct.

Gus next wowed us with Scallop Carpaccio on orange and lemon scented humous. It was heavenly and so light. This was followed by a delicious treat of Wagyu Tataki. The Japanese tataki process browns the meat surface slightly while leaving the inside **quite rare. We felt spoiled by Lyn's choice of the superbly marbled and tender Wagyu beef. Somehow the Cuvée Rosé paired ideally** with each of these last two courses of our pairing menu.

We all expected that this most memorable evening would be coming to a wonderfully satisfying conclusion as we finished the Cuvée Rosé. But as usual with Lyn, we would be so wrong. She and Gus surprised us with Wild Mushroom Risotto topped with sautéed wild mushrooms and followed that delicious surprise with a marvelous sliced beef fillet on a blue cheese potato puree. Our barmen distributed wine glasses and we were served our choice of Colle Stefano Verdicchio di Matelica 2011 or Catena Alamos Cabernet Sauvignon 2010.

This unforgettable evening finally came to a lovely close with the service of Dessert Canapes and a Brillat Savarin draped in Truffle Honey and – get this – a 24 carat Gold flakes!!

It was a truly memorable evening that has us all wondering – what does Lyn have planned next to surprise, inform and spoil us? We will just have to wait and see. Thank you Lyn!

David Ray.

around the branches - Liverpool



Dim Sum With Liberty Wines

On Sunday 28th April 37 members and guests of the EAC's newest branch met by the river Mersey to enjoy a Dim Sum lunch with wines selected by one of our own members. The Chung Ku Restaurant is not in Liverpool's famous Chinatown but is located in Columbus Quay near Brunswick Dock. The management had let us use the whole of the upper floor with picture windows overlooking the river allowing members to watch the sailing races in what was an unusually choppy river.

We were joined by 4 members from Blackpool Branch and 4 from Manchester including EAC Chairman John Legg and EAC Secretary Chris Redman. When we arrived we received as an aperitif a glass of Charles Heidsieck Brut Reserve NV Champagne. With this we were able to toast the news that one of our members, R Ian S Meadows OBE DL, had recently been appointed by the crown as High Sheriff of Merseyside. The cheers increased when Ian confirmed that his home and gardens were available for a Branch BBQ in August.

The Office of High Sheriff is an independent non-political Royal appointment for a single year. The origins of the Office date back to Saxon times, when the 'Shire Reeve' was responsible to the king for the maintenance of law and order within the shire, or county, and for the collection and return of taxes due to the Crown. Today, there are 55 High Sheriffs serving the counties of England and Wales each year.

Whilst the duties of the role have evolved over time, supporting the Crown and the judiciary remain central elements of the role today. In addition, High Sheriffs actively lend support and encouragement to crime prevention agencies, the emergency services and to the voluntary sector. In recent years High Sheriffs in many parts of England and Wales have been particularly active in encouraging crime reduction initiatives, especially amongst young people.

We sat at 4 large circular tables and were served, as a first course with 5 steamed Dim Sum:-

Siu Mai (Pork Dumpling)
Har Gau (Prawn Dumpling)
Ngau Yurk Cheong Fun (Beef Rice Roll)
Ngau Yurk Yuen (Beef Ball)
Char Siu Bao (Barbecued Pork Bun)

For many members, even those used to Chinese cooking, some of these dishes were a new experience and there was much friendly banter about the various merits of each one. When these were cleared away they were replaced by 5 fried Dim Sum



R Ian S Meadows OBE DL

Wu Gok (Deep Fried Taro Ball)
Har Gok (Deep Fried Prawn Dumpling)
Heung Jin Gou Choi Beng (Fragrant Chive Pancake)
Lo Bak Gou (Pan Fried Radish Cake)
Mak Yue Beng (Deep Fried Octopus Cake)

Once again there was absolutely no consensus as to which were preferred but it was noticeable that although there were plenty of items served very few were returned to the kitchen.

One of our members Jeremy Cowan works for Liberty Wines and he had arranged the wines to accompany the Dim Sum. During the two courses we were given both a white (Amalaya White 2012 from Calchui Valley in Argentina) and a red (Ca'Di Alte Pinot Nero 2012 from the Veneto in Italy) wine. The white did match the subtle flavours and spices of the fish, seafood and vegetable dishes whilst the red put up a good fight with the beef dishes. But the best wine was saved to the end; half bottles of Mount Horrocks "Cordon Cut" Clare Valley Riesling 2011 from South Australia was served with a dessert made up of Daan Daat (Egg Custard Tart) and Gai Mei Bao (Coconut Bun). Both of these dishes needed a strong, sweet and complex wine and only the price prevented members buying the remaining stock.

It was an educational, enjoyable and very different event and we are looking forward to the branch BBQ.

Terry Lim, Chairman

around the branches - Zürich



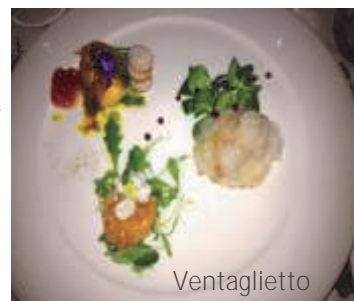
A Long Weekend to Lago Maggiore

Thirty members from the Zurich Branch as well as from various English Branches enjoyed a total Italian gourmet weekend in the town of Baveno, staying at the Grand Hotel Dino.

The festivities began on a sunny and warm Thursday evening outside, overlooking the gardens and lake with a Champagne (read Prosecco) reception. A welcoming speech was given by the President John Macdonald who introduced the organiser of the event Edy Hug. He went over the weekend and hoped that everyone had brought a umbrella and a warm raincoat. The event was planned as a carless weekend, every place was accessible by boat, so one could enjoy the wines to the full. After a few more glasses of Prosecco, we repaired to the dining room where we enjoyed an excellent

meal with classic Piedmont wines. Friday saw the group off to the beautiful botanical gardens of the Villa Taranto in Verbena. The rain held off and everybody enjoyed a morning viewing the various Spring flowers. Lunch was left to the individuals and nearly everyone enjoyed the afternoon in Pallanza at a local restaurant and later strolled through the open market.

By evening the rain had started and instead of taking the boat to our evening event at the Ristorante Milano, the hotel recommended we take a bus. By this time there was a general downpour with thunder and lightning. Ristorante Milano is one of those hidden away gems that you would drive right by without knowing it was a five star restaurant. In fact one would not even know there was a restaurant there. However once inside it is a wonderful place. The dining room overlooks a beautiful picturesque harbour and on out over the lake. The owner and his wife greeted us with a reception of Prosecco of a special *cuvée* from the house of de Faveri accompanied by some delectable hors d'oeuvres. From then on we knew we were going to be in for a great evening and we weren't to be disappointed.



Vini
Erbaluce di Caluso "La Rustia" 2011 Orsolani
Roero Arneis "Saglietto" d.o.c. 2010 Malvirà
Barbera d'Asti d.o.c.g. 2009 L. Spertino
Curtefranca Franciacorta d.o.c. 2011 Conti Ducco

Menu
Stuzzico in agrodolce con pesce di lago
Stuzzico with sweet and sour fish from the lake

Ventagietto di pesce di lago agli antichi sapori
Ventagietto fish from the lake to the old flavours

Tortelli alle erbe con salsa di noci
Tortelli with herbs and walnut sauce

Filetto di Fassone Piemontese in crosta guarnito con verdure
Fassone crusted fillet garnished with seasonal vegetables

Tommetta stagionata sulla paglia con pane nero e salsine fatte in casa
Tommetta matured on straw with brown bread and homemade sauces

Tarte Tatin con gelato artigianale alla vaniglia

Tarte tatin with vanilla ice cream

Caffè e friandises

One of the most interesting of the courses was the "Ventagietto fish from the lake to the old flavours". Three different fish presented in three different formats. The flavours certainly tickled the palate.

The Filetto di Fassone Piemontese was a form of Beef Wellington. The beef comes from cows which are left outside year round in the fields to graze on whatever they can find. The presentation was spectacular and so was the serving of beef one got on their plate.

The cheeses which followed were a perfect portion of a creamy local ewe's and cow's cheese (which we were told were aged on straw), brown bread and house made chutney. Finally, we indulged ourselves in a tarte tatin accompanied by ice cream generously speckled with vanilla seeds. Needless to say the wines were all exceptional especially the Curtefranca Franciacorta d.o.c. 2011 Conti UDC, a blend of various Bordeaux varieties.

All in all it was a delicious way to spend an evening, which Edy's verbal thanks and our strong applause reflected well to the chef and his team, before we made our way back to the hotel.

It seemed that the theme for the next day was water, as we awoke to torrential rain! Not to be outdone, the party set off in a water taxi to the market in Intra. Sadly the weather had deterred many of the traders, but it gave some of us a chance to stock up on salsicce, salami and fancy wellington boots! It also meant the best cappuccino of the trip for me, at a local market cafe, with the very non-Swiss price of just 1.4 euro!

Another trip in the water taxi took us to Isola Bella- with its grand house and formal gardens- still beautiful even when viewed from under an umbrella. The tip of the day was a small restaurant recommended by the boatman, tucked away in the back streets and run by a formidable lady owner. Sustained by all manner of warming house-made pasta and sauce, we water-taxed back to the hotel, where some of us continued the day's water theme with a swim in the pool and a relax in the jacuzzi!

A final evening trip to the island of Pescatori took us to a local fish restaurant. Where else on such a watery day?! All courses were "the catch of the day" except the first, which was a gravadlax variation beautifully garnished and served on slate with a raspberry and balsamic reduction.

Heartfelt thanks to Edy and Ruth of the Zurich branch for their organization and care during our time together. It was a great way to spend a weekend, making new friends and in the company of people who share a love of wine and food. Isn't that what life's about?!

John Macdonald and Christine Gilbert, photos by Hans Walter Keller and Kurt Haering

around the branches - Manchester



Aspire – A Demonstration of Desserts!

On Wednesday 20th March, 51 members and guests of the Manchester Branch met at Aspire Restaurant in Trafford College, West Timperley near Altrincham for an evening with the Level 3 Students and a Cookery demonstration by Matthew Shaw, head of Aspire Restaurant.

On arrival we had a reception with canapés accompanied by Laurent Bréban Decorée 2011, a very pleasant sparkling wine from South West France. The wine was carried over into the Demonstration, to assist with our concentration.

The demonstration of Desserts turned out to be Pan fried Fillet of Sea bass, with Coconut, Lentil and Cauliflower fritter. After our initial surprise, we all sat back to listen to a very interesting demonstration which was enjoyed by all.

A meal followed in the main Restaurant.

Preceding the meal Chairman Bob Lloyd welcomed our guests, Ron Barker & Valerie Ramsey, Derek & Wyn Price, Susan & Peter King and Christine Stewart. The Starters were a choice of Goats Cheese Pansotti with Lime and Spring Onion Salsa, or Quail Egg and Kedgeree Potato Cake with Wild Leaves and Citrus Oil. The Pansotti was generally enjoyed, but the Quail Egg and Kedgeree Potato Cake was greeted with mixed feelings. Some members felt it was too big for the dish, others enjoyed it. The Panilonco Sauvignon Blanc 2012 from Chile matched the food well. Nice grassy aromas and citrus fruit.

To follow came a cup of Chilled Almond Soup with Iced Grapes. This was well received. Nice texture and served to perfection.

The main course was Rack of Lamb with Parsnip Puree and Garlic Jus. This dish was excellent, cooked pink to perfection, lovely and succulent, a superb presentation, an absolute joy. The wine to go with it was Chateau de L'Estang 2009 from Cotes de Castillon, Bordeaux, France. This wine went very well with the dish, a view agreed by all.

The Dessert, a plate of Raspberry Pannacotta with Almond Biscuit and Parfait Mousse was well received by the members.

The College are to be congratulated on the standard of service they provided and for the pleasantness we received from the students who served it. An evening thoroughly enjoyed by all, at a very good venue.

Pan fried fillet of sea bass, with coconut and lentil, and cauliflower fritter

Serves 4 Ingredients

Sea bass	1 whole fish	Lime	1
Coconut milk	1 tin	Lime leaf	4 leaves
Chilli	1 chilli	Lemongrass	1 stick
Ginger	50g	Thai fish sauce	to taste
Garlic	2 cloves	Palm sugar	100g
Spring onion	1	Cauliflower	1 head
Coriander	1 bunch	Butter	50g
Shallots	2	Puy lentils	250g

Method

Soak lentils according to packet instructions and fillet sea bass.

Cook lentils with Thai flavours. (Leave whole) Red chilli, ginger lemongrass, lime leaf.

Remove Thai Flavours and leave lentils to cool down.

In a pan heat coconut milk. Add chopped chilli, ginger, lemongrass, lime leaf, shallots, garlic, Thai fish sauce, palm sugar. Reduce until correct flavour and consistency.

Finely slice spring onion and ginger, chop coriander. Set aside.

Turn on deep fat fryer.

Prep cauliflower into small florets, blanch in boiling salted water for 2-3 minutes, cool in iced water.

To make batter for cauliflower. Sift 85g plain flour and 1 tbsp cornflour with ½ tsp fine sea salt into a large mixing bowl. Whisk in 200ml ice-cold sparkling mineral water, don't over beat. It doesn't matter about a few lumps.

Place lentils in a pan and add coconut milk reduction. Bring back to boil.

Add spring onion, coriander and lime juice. Check seasoning.

Heat non-stick pan. Add olive oil. Place sea bass fillet in pan and cook skin side first.

After 2 minutes turn sea bass fillet over. Add butter to pan (be careful not to burn) and coat sea bass fillet with the butter.

Coat cauliflower in batter and deep fry. Drain when cooked on paper towel.

Divide cooked lentils between four plates, present sea bass fillet on top and garnish with cauliflower fritter.

Bob Lloyd, Chairman



around the branches - Malmö



Mat & Vin Slottsparken - Food & Wine in the Castle Park.

Named after a tiny little village, Stolpaberga Mat & Vin (Stolpaberga Food & Wine) was run by Peter and Marie Skogström for many years. The restaurant was situated in an old farmhouse just outside Malmö and we have arranged a couple of dinners there over the years. The city is however coming closer and closer and there was an obvious risk soon to be surrounded by shopping centres and car parks. That might have been one reason why they decided to move into town and to buy a restaurant very

beautifully located in a large park and consequently changed names to Mat & Vin Slottsparken (Food & Wine in the Castle Park). The restaurant is open for cooking courses, conferences and private dinners only and has been nicely refurbished with open space between kitchen, lounge and dining room.

On arrival we had a glass of the clean and crispy 2011 Chardonnay, Les crêtes, Valle d'Aosta together with a spoonful of rillettes from goose, duck and foie gras and to follow:

Oyster with parsley root

2008 Riesling Grand cru Pfersigberg, Bruno Sorg

Haddock marinated in salt and dill, pickled cucumber and smoked mayonnaise

2010 Fixin Blanc, Alex Gambal

Crudit  of roots with ch vre, cress and hazelnut

2011 Pouilly fum , Dom. Du Bouchot

Calf with salvia, baked parsnips and pickled baked red onion

2007 Etna Rosso, Tenuta Scilio

2010 Gigondas, Dom. des Bosquets

Blood orange with yoghurt ice cream and liquorice

Beerenauslese, Heidi Schr ll, Rust

The mineral Riesling matched the delicious oyster dish nicely and the elegant and slightly oaked Fixin went well with the fish as well as with the mayonnaise. The ch vre needed the fresh tones of black currant leaves from the Pouilly and both the light fruity Sicilian and especially the complex Gigondas with herbs and mineral went very well with the tasty calf. The blood orange was no problem for the rich Beerenauslese.

In all it was a most enjoyable evening and as the building was originally used for a caf  and then for some reason for a Greek restaurant I am pleased that the place has now finally got what the location deserves!

Rolf Fransson, Photo: Pierre Mens



around the branches - Manchester cont.

AGM at The Laurent- Perrier Suite The Alderley Edge Hotel

How do you attract 50 members to an AGM which is certain to be smoothly run and non controversial? No problems with the accounts which show a modest surplus and certainly no members fighting to be elected to the Committee. The answer to the problem is to follow the AGM with what some members considered to be one of the most outstanding meals they had ever tasted.

The Alderley Edge Hotel has built up a reputation for good food over many years. The surroundings are comfortable and traditional, the service is first class and the napery immaculate. Changes to modernity have included the removal of the grand piano and the establishment of a brasserie. However, the change most appreciated has been the ever increasing standard of the cuisine under Head Chef, Chris Holland, who was about to take part in the BBC's latest 'Great British Menu' series.

The sea bass to our surprise was served cold, but the flavours of the tomato concass , carrot, courgette, fennel and cucumber topped off with a loop of orange pure  making a delicious starter. This was accompanied by De Martino, Cacara Limari, Chardonnay 2010 from Northern Chile. The clean freshness went particularly well with this fabulous dish.

The locally sourced, classic dry aged Beef Wellington was accompanied by potato pure  enhanced with black truffle and a rich Madeira sauce. Wine Master of the evening, David Chapman, had chosen the Martinborough Vineyard, Te Tera Pinot Noir 2011, a smooth fruity wine with a hint of sweetness which complemented the dish.

We drank the Pinot Noir with the Artisan cheeses and another surprise, grandma's piccalilli with plump juicy grapes. It was fresh and delicious but some felt just a little overpowering with the cheese. Finally, the tour de force. Hot passion souffl  for fifty people was served almost at the same time accompanied by the Wine Society's delicious Exhibition Sauternes 2009 Ch teau Cantegril.

Addendum

At the AGM we noted the resignation from the Manchester Committee of David Chapman who has been pivotal in creating a successful branch. Members have been astounded by his fantastic memory which can tell them which road to turn off to find a discreet Michelin starred restaurant in France and by his ability and even his pleasure to cook joints for forty or more people for the Summer Garden party. Fortunately, David will still be a member of the Manchester Branch and as an EAC member will be the Awards Officer.

Christine Redman



around the branches - London



Mature Champagnes and English Sparkling Wines

This tasting was held at the Naval Club, Mayfair, on 5th February. It was organised by Bernard Lamb using wines from his collection. Brenda Lamb provided a cold supper with puddings afterwards. The figures out of 10 are subjective quality scores. As well as talking about the various vineyards, the organiser summarised the factors involved in sparkling wine maturation, and how the winemakers could influence when their wines reached a quality peak or plateau. The three parts of the grape give juice of different properties and are represented in different proportions in the first, second and third pressings.

For figure-lovers: the 24 grams per litre of sugar added for the secondary fermentation give 12 g carbon dioxide, 1.5% extra alcohol and 6 bar (atmospheres) pressure. A standard 750 ml bottle of Champagne therefore contains about 4.7 litres of CO₂ when the gas is measured at 20°C. A gas pressure in the neck of the bottle of 6 bar at 20°C goes down to 4 bar at 7°C.

Meopham Valley Sparkling Rosé Brut 2005, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir; Meopham, Kent, 12% alcohol. An attractive orange-pink colour. Initial foam then a good steady bead. Excellent bouquet and a delicious flavour. Keeping very well. 9/10.

Ridgeview Merret Fitzrovia Sparkling Rosé Brut 2004, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Meunier; Sussex, 12%. Orange, with less bead and less bouquet than the first wine. Well balanced and not tiring; it was disgorged after 18 months on the lees to keep freshness. 8/10.

Moët & Chandon Brut Impérial (NV), Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier; Épernay, 12%. This had been kept about a year after purchase. Pleasant light gold. Good mousse, bouquet, flavour and balance. 8/10.

Moët & Chandon Brut Impérial 1983, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier; Épernay, 12.5%. This had been kept in a Eurocave since purchase in the 1980s. A slightly darker gold than the NV. Initial fizz then a slow bead but not strong. Biscuity nose and a lovely flavour. Keeping well. Generally very well liked. 9/10.

Mystery well-known make Vintage Champagne Brut 1986, Blanc de Blancs, Épernay, 12%. Gold. Not much mousse but small bubbles. Good biscuity bouquet and flavour. Some people preferred this to the 1983. All were astonished at the make, which understandably no one guessed. **It was actually Sainsbury's own, produced by Beaumet of Épernay. Ironically, the back label said 'Should be consumed within one year of purchase'! It had kept well in the (unheated) guest bedroom. 8½/10.**

Louis Roederer Brut Premier (NV but kept 15 to 20 years), Reims, 12%. Gold. Only a little mousse. Low but very attractive but-tery bouquet. Delicious flavour. A lovely drink. 8½/10.

Nytimber Classic Cuvée Brut 2004, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier; West Sussex, 12%. Light gold. A big head then a steady bead. Fizzy in the mouth. Adequate bouquet and good fresh acidity. Needs time to develop. 7/10.

Nytimber Classic Cuvée Brut 2003, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier; West Sussex, 12%. This was from an excellent hot year. Light gold. Small bead. Good bouquet and an excellent flavour, with some biscuitiness. Definitely better than the 2004. 8½.

Nytimber Classic Cuvée Brut 2001, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier; West Sussex, 12%. Gold. Low mousse and bouquet. Good flavours and fresh acidity. 7½.

Nytimber Chardonnay Blanc de Blancs Brut 2000, West Sussex, 12%. Attractive gold. Big foam, slow mousse. Attractive mature nose – butterscotch! Good flavour. Very good and ageing well; very different in style from the Nytimber Classic Cuvées. Both then had about five years on the lees. 9/10.

Sparkling wines lose carbon dioxide at a rate dependent on the cork, with nearly all fizz going by 60 years or earlier. As this tasting showed, if you like the biscuity flavours and bouquet of older sparkling wines, you have to accept some loss of sparkle. Some English fizz producers (Bob Lindo of Camel Valley, David Grey of Meopham Valley) told me that their wines definitely improve with keeping, but Mike Roberts (Ridgeview) said that his wines were made for freshness and should be drunk young.

Bernard Lamb

around the branches - Capital



A Return to Ruchetta in Wokingham

We held events at Ruchetta twice in 2008, the first time in March for a superb lunch then we returned in June to present them with a well earned Society Restaurant Award.

Gianni is still here plying his trade and with the proprietor Angelo running front of house and lending a hand in the kitchen they are still producing top quality meals as Capital branch members found out when we lunched there in March.

An aperitif of Brut de Noir ROSE, Cleto Chiarli was delicious. Our starters were Baked white onion in sea salt, with truffle fondue or Cornish salted cod risotto with turnip tops, marjoram and cannellini beans. Both were pronounced excellent. My baked onion was sweet and tender and its cheese stuffing light and creamy with a quail's egg yolk nestling in the centre and the pan-fried foie gras with caramel a superb accompaniment. The Wine a Pinot Bianco Thurner 2011, Colterenzio went well with both dishes.

Main courses were Fillet of pork, roasted Romano pepper and shallots or Pan-fried venison steak, with a gorgonzola and port sauce with artichokes and peas, spinach croquette. The pork fillet looked and was pronounced tender and juicy and my venison was also perfectly cooked with a smooth rich sauce but I didn't care a lot for the spinach croquette. The wine a Negroamaro del Salento 2006, Masseria Altemura was superb. It had softened beautifully with age and was warm and fruity with spicy undertones.

Dessert, a Layered compote of Apple & Rhubarb with mascarpone cream and toasted almonds was followed by coffee.

Ruchetta is always worth a visit as long as Gianni is at the stoves. Excellent value at £41 a head.

Pam Brunning, Chairman

around the branches - Zürich



Swedish Pea Soup and Arrack

Those of you who joined us here last year for our Zürich Great Weekend will know that this Swiss branch of IW&FS is very international, with members who originate from all corners of the globe. We sometimes like to share our **homeland traditions with others, and that's just what members Elina and Göran did** when they invited us all to a Thursday Swedish Pea Soup evening. Elina and Göran explained to us that Thursday pea soup in Sweden is common in restaurants and households, and is an unpretentious part of social life. It became a tradition in Sweden in the Middle Ages and stems from the Friday fasting historically observed by the Roman Catholic Church.

Thursdays had a somewhat festive aura and peas were considered a luxury item. Pork was a common meat available in most homes and salted pork became a natural addition to the hearty *ärtsoppa* (EHRT-soh-puh) that was intended to see people through the day of fasting. Even when there were no longer religious restrictions on what could be eaten when, pea soup on

Thursday had become entrenched in the culture.

Our generous hosts greeted us with some delectable appetizers, including Kalix löjrom (a lovely mild tasting roe harvested specifically from vendace fish in the Bothnian Bay archipelago of the Baltic Sea in northern Sweden) and, a new delicacy to most of us, smoked reindeer.

The main course was a delicious Swedish yellow pea soup with pork, a variety of crispbreads and Västerbotten cheese. The **cheese is a hard cow's milk cheese, with a firm, granular texture. It is reasonably strong, with a taste somewhat similar to Parmesan-**quite salty but with more bitter notes. Many Swedish people consider it the king of cheese.

An interesting complement to the pea soup tradition cropped up in the 1800s when warm punsch started being served along with the soup. Arrack, a strong liquor, was originally imported from Java and became the base ingredient for making punsch. Ours was a delicious Roslags Punsch from Norrtälje Bränneri, a blend of the finest arrack from Batavia, ecologically grown plums and honey, with flavours of vanilla and citrus.

We rounded off with homemade pancakes, lingonberry jam and cream, chocolate pralines (in that very Swedish way, the flavours were cloudberry, lingonberry and blueberry) and more punsch, this time served ice cold with the coffee.

Some of us wished it could be Thursday every day!

Menu

Appetizers:

Small croustades with smoked salmon, Kalix löjrom and Skagenröra (shrimps in sour cream)

Huså crisp bits with smoked reindeer and horseradish cream.

Champagne Henry Goutorbe Cuvée Prestige Premier Cru

Champagne Jean-Yves de Carlini Premier Cru Extra Brut

Main course:

Swedish Yellow pea soup with pork

Crispbreads and Västerbotten cheese

Tuborg Gold label lager

Peter Lehmann Wildcard unoaked Chardonnay 2011

Pankraz Pinot Noir 2009 Prestige Barrique, Staatskellerei Zürich

Warm Roslags Punsch (Arrack) from Norrtälje

Dessert:

Homemade pancakes with homemade lingonberry jam and whipped cream

Coffee with ice cold Roslags Punsch

Chocolate pralines from Aare Chocklad.

Christine Gilbert



around the branches - Leicester



Winter Events in 2013

John Nisbet arranged a visit to the King's Arms at Wing in Rutland for dinner on the 7th of February. It was a cold, wet evening so we were cheered by a glass of mulled wine on arrival. We were rather squashed into a small area between our tables with cheerful waitresses wending their way between us to serve other diners so it was difficult to circulate. However we were soon comfortably seated and the service was good.

For starters we chose between scallops with crisp pancetta, and cauliflower puree decorated with egg yolk or smoked trout paté with soused cucumber and a red onion dressing or carpaccio of sirloin with rocket salad and herb pesto. With this we enjoyed loaves of home-baked sourdough bread while we drank a Chilean Sauvignon Blanc Grande Hazienda 2012. All the starters were much appreciated.

For mains there was sea bass with a wild mushroom and parmesan risotto, or tournedos of hare with butternut puree, beetroot and elderberry

glace or guinea fowl with parsnip puree, roasted chestnuts and herb crème. I chose hare and was rather disappointed as it hadn't been hung and tasted like beef. Afterwards the chef said it had been difficult to obtain but someone had been out and shot some just in time! We drank an Argentinian red – **L'opi aka Rodolfo Sadler Malbec Mendoza 2012** - excellent in spite of its youth.

Puds were vanilla crème brûlée, sticky toffee pudding or a trio of chocolates, which consisted of Gateau Marceau, brownie and intense chocolate sorbet. Some enjoyed the local cheese board, a Bosworth Ash, Cotehill Blue and Lincolnshire Poacher. We paid £45 for a very good meal.

On the 7th of March we had our AGM at the Leicestershire Golf Club. We were welcomed by a glass of sparkling Veuve Chapelle from the Loire. We had rather a traumatic EGM in January when the Chairman, Treasurer and Vice Chairman resigned as they felt that the fees we paid to International were excessive. However discussion was fairly amicable and we still have 35 members continuing in our branch. At the AGM, arranged by the old Treasurer and Chairman, all was resolved and forgiven. Mary Hind took over as Chairman and we have good new officers and a keen committee.

After the meeting we enjoyed an excellent dinner. The first course was a smoked salmon and avocado tortilla stack – superb and unusual. The roast fillet of beef was superb and served with almond potatoes, a mushroom filo basket and Madeira sauce. Dessert was a delicious lemon and lime posset with homemade shortbread fingers. Coffee and mints followed. We drank a Sancerre Vignerons a Crexancy 2007 and an Ochoa Tempranillo Crianza Navarra. Gaynor Riley, the chef, is excellent and due to her cooking the golf club meals are becoming much sought after in Leicester with many organizations booking the venue for special events.

Mary Jewell

around the branches - Merseyside & Mid Cheshire

The Marsh Cat, Parkgate

The Marsh Cat serves excellent food and is very good value and as Jeanette and Gordon had enjoyed many meals at the establishment we took their advice and were more than delighted.

The owners are most professional and made every effort to make sure that an enjoyable afternoon was spent by over 40 members from our branch and Manchester branch.

The name of Marsh Cat is derived from a true/legendary story of a Black Cat who stowed away, traveling around the world on one of the many vessels which sailed from the port of Parkgate. Legend has it that the Black Cat's ghost, now roams the hostelrys of the village foraging for scraps. During the years when the port was operational, Parkgate was frequented by two

distinguished visitors. One lady who used the local hostelrys was Lady Hamilton, born in Ness and the mistress of Lord Nelson and the other was Handel who completed the 'Messiah' there before sailing to Dublin in 1742 where the first performance of his work took place.

After the Dee silted up the main port became Liverpool and Parkgate became a famous sea-side resort where the renowned Parkgate Shrimps became the delicacy of the day.

The beautiful Mostyn School became the educational centre of choice for the children of the Duke of Westminster and since 1973, Parkgate has been designated as a Conservation Area and a favourite place for birdwatching and to finish off your day, enjoy a delicious meal at the Marsh Cat!

MARSH CAT ~ PARKGATE MENU

Aperitif ~ Cava - Rabetllat I Vidal

Pumpkin, coconut & lemongrass soup with roasted coconut Or Thai Seafood Salad with a light lime & chili dressing

Pan roasted Pork Fillet set on creamed corn mash potato, served with a light creamy Dijon sauce Or Salmon Nicole - Salmon fillet wrapped with smoked salmon poached and served with a prawn, brandy and chive cream

Chocolate Duet - White chocolate & raspberry Cheesecake with chocolate Brownie & chocolate sauce

Coffee/Tea Verdelho - Stonefish, Hunter Valley - **Australia Carmenere "Perdiz"** - Aves del Sur - Chile

Val Brookfield

(This fascinating pub is now on the market for £55,000, reduced from £70,000 a snip, if anyone is interested! - Ed.)





Society Events for 2013

On the next three pages you will find
An event to interest most tastes.



A Special Photography Seminar for EAC Members

Have you ever looked at the photographs of IWFS events and wondered whether something different, something more vibrant, something less boring was possible. Or have you tried to take photographs of food and wine events, and been disappointed with the results? In this increasingly visual culture good photographs are a vital means of communication with potential members particularly via our website. The lighting conditions are often challenging, and mastering the technical details is important. What makes a good picture of a typical IWFS event and how do you take them in the available lighting – to flash or not to flash is that the question? Indeed, is good food photography really possible without specialised equipment, a small army of stylists, and all the other things that go with a professional photo-shoot?.

With this in mind, the EAC has asked Brian Worley of p4pictures to run a Photography Seminar for members interested in improving their photography skills, particularly in the often difficult circumstances of IWFS events. It will take place in The Library of The Oriental Club, Stratford House, Stratford Place, London, W1C 1ES, from 1300 to 1600 on 12th November 2013. A sandwich lunch will be provided from 12.30. This is the same day as the John Avery Dinner at The Vintner's Hall. So, if you are coming to London for that event, why not catch an earlier train and join us. Stratford Place is off Oxford Street opposite Bond Street Tube Station (tucked in behind the Crossrail building site as we go to press).

Brian worked for Canon Cameras for several years and now, with a colleague, runs their EOS network providing help and advice for users of Canon EOS SLRs. But he is not just a Canon specialist. He has had experience of a wide variety of other manufacturers, and compact cameras as well as SLRs. As long as you bring a camera with you – this is going to be a hands-on event – it doesn't matter what it is. He is even happy to accept mobile phones. He will be bringing a digital projector so you will be able to see and critique any photographs you may take during the seminar.

Improving the images on our website and in our publications is very much in the organisation's best interests, so the EAC is subsidising this event. The cost to members will be just £15.00 a head. Numbers are very limited so please email John Nicholas at johnsnicholas@aol.com to reserve your place. John will email confirmation on a first come first served basis and will request payment preferably by bank transfer or by cheque within 14 days. If you cannot email, then phone John on his mobile +44 79 753 68 81 or Stephanie Shepherd on 01276 65900.

I am very grateful to Stephanie for organising this event. It will be of great use to all of us that produce photos for Food & Wine and our website. I know I struggle these days with all the modern technology. Conversely, having a fairly artistic eye I have very set ideas of the type of images I like. I was criticised recently for a photo showing the backs of peoples heads. What is wrong with backs of heads I ask? Look at the images below, two excellent photos taken by one of my keenest contributors Derek Fletcher. The one on the left shows the company, we can say 'so and so was there' but it doesn't tell us much about the event. The one on the right tells me what they are watching who is addressing the company



and that the event is a demonstration.

Save showing off the latest dentistry for your wedding photos. They say, 'every picture tells a story', but some much more than others!

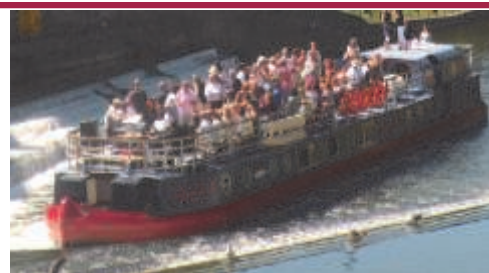
Editor



'All Aboard that's coming aboard!'

We still have a few places left on the Avon River Boat trip in Bath on
Wednesday 5 June.

We will embark on the 'Penny Lane' between 11:45am and 12 noon Whilst on board we will enjoy a wine tasting tutored by Mimi Avery. She plans to take us through six interesting wines from the company's range. We then moor for about an hour and enjoy a 2 course buffet meal, then return to the North Parade



John Avery Memorial Dinner, The Society AGM & André Simon Lecture 80th Anniversary Lunch 12th & 13th November 2013

Tuesday 12 November 2013

Dinner at the Vintners' Hall,

Upper Thames Street, London, EC4V 3BG

A dinner in honour of our late President, John Avery MW. John, who died on 23 March 2012, served on the Council for many years and was Chairman of Council from 1996 to 2000. This dinner will be an opportunity for members for the Society to gather together and remember him in the convivial and joyous way which he would have expected.



John was a Master of The Vintners' Company, which is one of the twelve great Livery Companies of the City of London. This makes The Company Hall a uniquely appropriate setting for this memorial dinner. The Company received its Royal Charter in 1363 and The Hall is still to be found on a site first acquired in 1446. The early Hall was lost in the Great Fire of London, but it was swiftly re-built and parts of the building survive from this reconstruction of 1671. Not generally open

to members of the public, but made available to IWFS with the kind permission of the Court of the Company, the Hall will provide a superb setting for this dinner. It is hoped that the current Master of the Company will attend.

The wines will be sourced by John's daughter, Mimi and it is planned that both Mimi and her mother Sarah will attend. The food will be provided by Searcys, a long established city caterer.

The Vintners' Company has indicated that a few bedrooms will be available on the night of the event from £60 plus VAT per room per night. If you are interested in a room then please contact the Company Administrator on 0207 236 1863.

Reception: 7pm - Dinner: 7.30pm

Dress: Black Tie

Cost: £125.00 per person

Wednesday 13th November 2013

10.30 am

The Society's Annual General Meeting

followed by

The Andre Simon Lecture

The In & Out Club, 4 St. James' Square, London, SW1Y 4JU

The Society's AGM will take place at The In and Out Club, at 10.30am, all are welcome. This will be followed by the Annual Andre Simon lecture which will be presented by Michael Broadbent M.W. who has served as both Chairman of Council and as the Society's Honorary President.

We will then make our way to The Langham Hotel for special four-course lunch to celebrate the Society's 80th anniversary. ➡

Wednesday 13th November 2013
Luncheon at 'Roux at the Landau'

The Langham Hotel 1C Portland Place, London, W1B 1JA.

The Langham is the oldest of the London grand hotels. The Landau, the hotel's main restaurant, a striking oval-shaped room with windows overlooking All Souls church, has been under the umbrella of Albert Roux and his son Michel Roux Jr for over two years. Head chef is Chris King, a young, extremely talented Roux protégé who previously worked at Le Gavroche for five years before moving to Per Se in New York and then to Roux at Parliament Square as sous-chef. His creative cooking bears the Roux stamp of quality, using light saucing that brings out the quality of the fresh produce. The wine list also has the Roux touch, and Sommelier Daniele Ricci is a master at food and wine matching. Service, led by ex-Savoy veteran maître d' Franco Becci, is impeccable.

Albert and Cheryl Roux, members of the St James's Branch, have already confirmed their attendance at what promises to be a fitting finale to our Society's 80th celebrations.



Reception: 12.30pm Lunch: 1pm

Dress: Lounge Suit

Cost: £110.00 per person

BOOKING DETAILS

To book either the dinner or the lunch, please email the Assistant EAC Treasurer John Nicholas at johnsnicholas@aol.com with the following information:

Your full name, address, phone number and the name of your Branch, details of the event or events for which you wish to book, and the full names of others in your party.

Please also indicate the preferred form of name for place settings etc.

We would prefer payment by electronic transfer in GBP (£sterling); if you wish to pay by credit card please contact John either by email or telephone: (00) 41 79 753 68 81. **Payments by credit card will incur a 3% surcharge.**

For payments in GBP:

Bank: NatWest Branch: Norwich City Office Sort Code: 60-15-31

Account Number: 68005652 Account Name: IWFS-EAC

IBAN: GB 33 NWBK 6015 3168 0056 52

BIC: NWBK GB2L

Please include the reference: 'Avery Dinner & or 80th Lunch' - *(delete as appropriate if only booking one event)*

If you prefer to book by post, please send the same information with your cheque to the address below:

Mr. J. S. Nicholas (for IWFS EAC)

c/o Mrs. G. S. Moore,

33 Aldworth Avenue

Wantage. Oxfordshire.

OX12 7EJ. UK

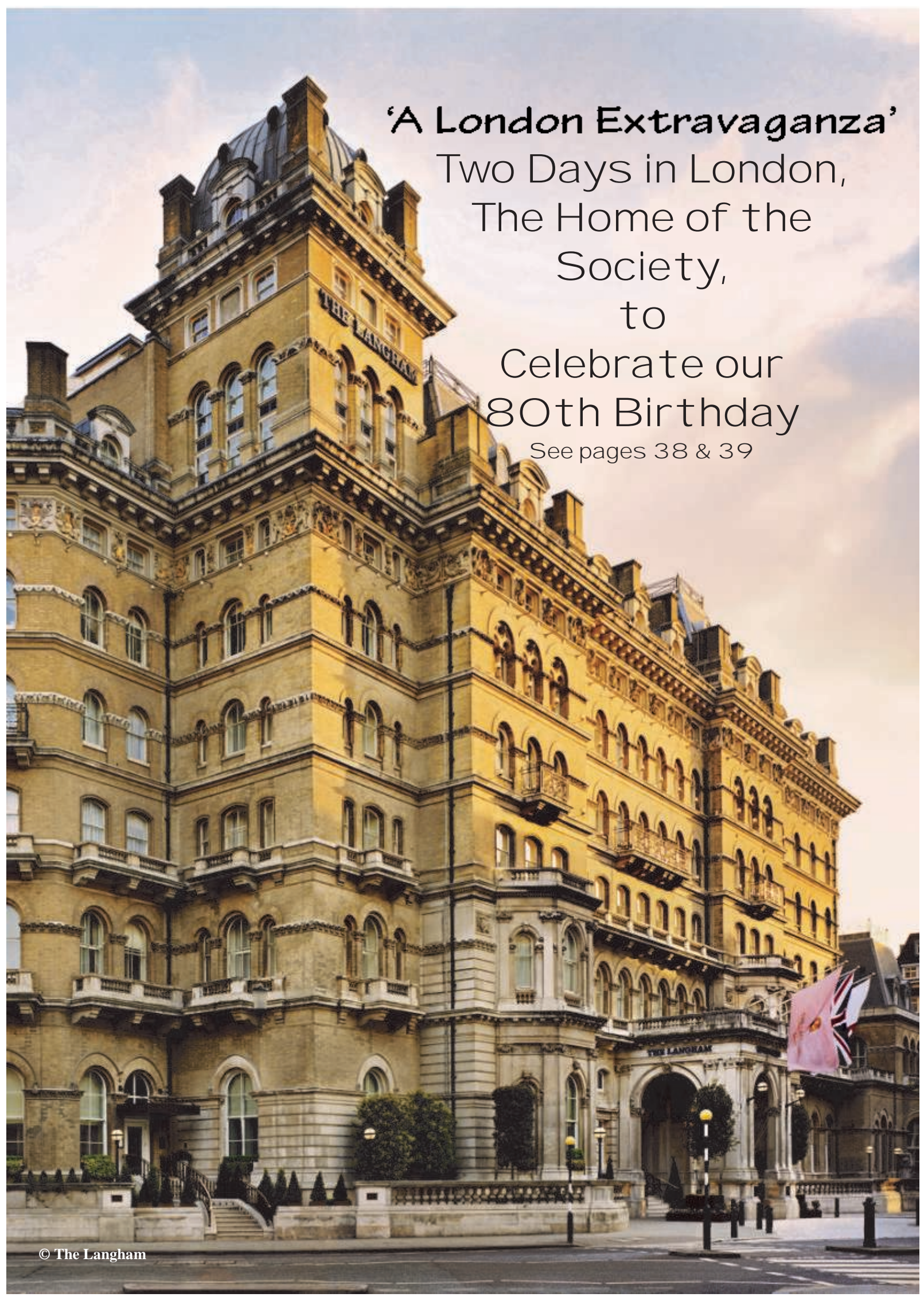
Cancellation Policy:

Members have a 14 day cooling off period from receipt of payment during which time they can receive a full refund.

After that there will be no refunds unless places can be filled. You are advised to have full insurance to cover cancellation.

If you plan to attend the **Society's AGM** please notify Andrea Warren at sec@iwfs.org **International Secretariat, IWFS, 4 St James's Square, London. SW1Y 4JU UK.** This will help her to ensure we have enough seating for this event. Formal notification of the AGM will be sent to members in due course.

Please note that, on the afternoon Tuesday 12th November at 1pm, the EAC are holding a Photography Seminar at the Oriental Club for members wishing to improve their photography skills for Food & Wine submissions. Please see page 37 for full details.

A photograph of The Langham Hotel in London, a grand Victorian-era building with a prominent corner tower and a dome. The building is made of light-colored stone and features many arched windows and balconies. The name 'THE LANGHAM' is visible on the building's facade. The sky is a soft, hazy blue.

‘A London Extravaganza’

Two Days in London,
The Home of the
Society,
to

Celebrate our
80th Birthday

See pages 38 & 39