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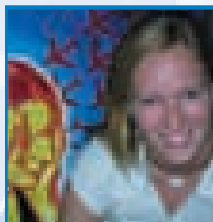
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COVER ART

"Cinco" by Elizabeth Wiltshire

Elizabeth Wiltshire, who is studying visual arts and media studies at the University of Western Ontario, enjoys working in many different media, including oils, acrylics, watercolours, and charcoal. She is currently focusing on digital photography, graphic and web design.

Recently she has been experimenting with graphite portraits, which have been commissioned and sold to numerous local collectors.

"Cinco", an excellent example of Elizabeth's love of mixed media, was originally designed using digital photography and Adobe Illustrator. She then took the computer-aided design and painted it on a canvas, giving her style a distinctively modern feel.

Elizabeth's art is even more intriguing due to the fact that she struggles with colour blindness and, although she can see colour, she has difficulty in differentiating shades. For this reason she always uses bright colours and experiments with non-traditional colour palettes.

Elizabeth is excited to start her career in advertising and graphic design upon graduation next spring. To see more of her work, including web pages, drawings, painting, and digital photography, contact her at lizwiltshire@hotmail.com.



Tasmania

Rivers, Mountains, and Great Food

Article and photos by Craig and Joanne Gambarotto-McKay

Tasmania offers natural beauty, a fascinating history, sophisticated cuisine, and well-crafted wines.

We began our visit of Tasmania in the South. Hobart, the capital of Tasmania and the second oldest city in Australia, is located at the mouth of the Derwent River, has a sheltered harbour that now is the end point of the Sidney-to-Hobart Yacht Race, and in colonial days was the gateway to Tasmania. The old warehouses of the constitution dock area have been turned into trendy restaurants and outlets for antiques and artisan crafts. Every Saturday the Salamanca Place hosts a huge outdoor market where one can find local fruit, preserves, honey, carved wood, arts, and crafts.

Hobart is compact and extremely easy to access. Mount Wellington dramatically rises 1,271 metres and dominates the western horizon. Driving to the summit provides a wonderful view of Hobart and the estuary.

Tasmania began as a penal colony; it was as far as one could be from Great Britain. It was regarded as the end of the world. Today it is an

amalgamation of remarkable history, jealously guarded wilderness preserves and innovative cuisine.

Many of the stone bridges and historic buildings throughout Tasmania were built by convict labour and convict craftsmen. A drive through the state encounters many interesting historical towns. An ornate stone bridge at Ross is especially attractive.

But the penal settlement at Port Arthur merits a full day's visit. Port Arthur was established in 1803, and continued in operation until the late 1870s. More than 12,000 men lived, and in many cases died, in what was the harshest centre of incarceration of the entire British Empire.

The work was hard, but the treatment of the prisoners was the more frightful aspect of the prison. We were shown the isolation cells and the bizarre clothing and chapel. All were designed to maximize the isolation of the prisoners and to intensify the psychological pressures. We unfortunately see the same techniques in present use at the U.S. "prison camp" at the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay.

The site has been partially restored and local guides lead tours through the various buildings throughout the 100-acre grounds. They've done a good job of assembling artifacts and documents from the period to provide a flavour of what prison life would have been like for these prisoners.

To the west of Hobart lies the Huon Valley. The region combines natural beauty with fascinating wildlife (such as the fairy penguins of Bruny Island), production of local cherries and apples, and woodcarving using the exotic woods that grow here. On our drive down the east coast from Launceston we met an echidna. They are said to be found throughout Australia, but this was only the second we saw in the wild. They look a little like what the Europeans call a hedgehog. Their bodies are covered with coarse hairy spikes. They have small ears and snouts that they use for poking into holes and turning over rocks to search for termites and ants. Like the platypus, they are an egg-laying mammal.

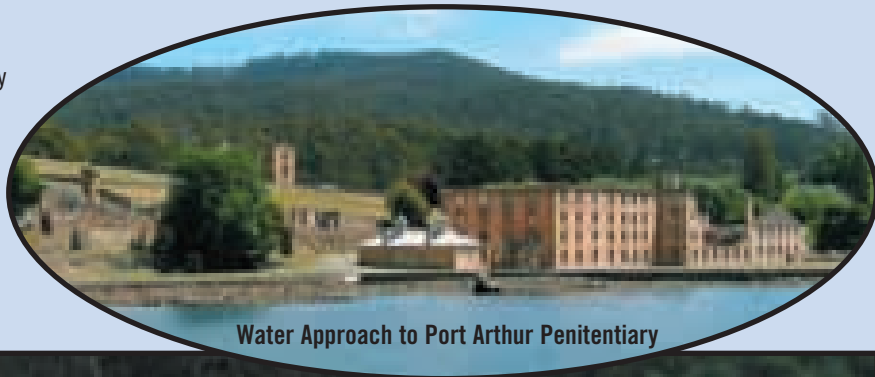
The Tahume Air Walk is a tour of the forest 30 metres above the ground on a catwalk, which leads out to a cantilevered extension, which hangs out into the forest. Here, deep in acres of protected wilderness, we found enormous trees of great age, well protected and preserved.

We followed this with a thrilling jet boat ride, which took us surprisingly near rocks and through rapids at high speed. It also provided stops along the river that brought us up close to local growth such as the Huon Pine that provides such a fine wood for boat building. We saw a locally built lap strake dingy that I longed to bring back to Canada.

The people were welcoming and helpful. When we arrived at a combination antique store/café during the awkward period (after lunch and before dinner) the manager conferred with the kitchen and provided us with a very eclectic, but extremely enjoyable meal. A local gas station attendant took time and interest in ensuring that we saw the most interesting sites along our intended route of travel. Our hosts (we stayed with a local couple in the Huon Valley) could not have been more charming.

The Huon Valley is part of the southern Tasmanian wine region. Of those we visited we were most impressed by Home Hill Winery/Restaurant. The Chardonnay and Pinot Noir is complex and flavourful. The restaurant and winery décor is hard edged and open concept. The walls are beckoning windows that provide invigorating views of the surrounding vineyards.

The Tamar Valley, at the north of Tasmania, has a number of wineries and the fine restaurants which seem to spring up where good wine is found. The most impressive meal we had was at "Fee and Me" located in a



Water Approach to Port Arthur Penitentiary

Jet Boating on the Huon River





Haute Cuisine al "Fee and Me"

tastefully decorated historic house in Launceston, Tasmania's largest city. The presentation was exquisite, the service impeccable, and the quality of the cuisine was extraordinary.

Photo Opposite: An example of the presentation at "Fee and Me"

The Piper Brook winery has a restaurant on site that is outstanding. We made reservations for lunch at Daniel Alps at Strathlynn a month in advance and were rewarded with prime seating. It has been our experience that planning dining experiences, and reserving as far as possible in advance, enhances the pleasure of the moment.

The location of the restaurant is extraordinary. Certainly the fact that one can sit outside in warm weather and enjoy the cuisine with a view over the vineyards enhances the experience. The restaurant is independent of the winery, but they do complement each other.

They say that if you eat above the ground floor you're paying for the view, but in this case the food itself was a sight to behold and the experience of eating surrounded by the vines from which the Piper Brook wines we enjoyed came. Though they are seldom seen outside Australia, the Tamar Valley produces excellent 'methode champenoise' wines.

The wines were as good as the food. Both in the north, and near Hobart, we tasted some luscious Pinot Noir and outstanding Sauvignon Blanc. Tasmania does not produce the jammy Shiraz of the mainland Australia wineries, but we found some seriously good Cabernet Sauvignon here.

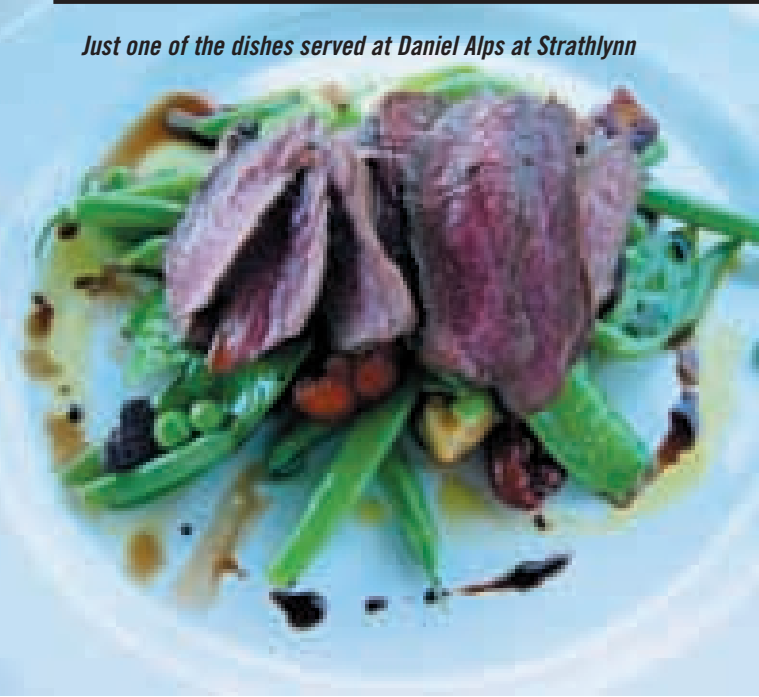
Much of the enjoyment of our visit to Tasmania came from the simple pleasure of driving the country roads at a leisurely pace and stopping at the attractions, natural, historical, and culinary, which we encountered.

By trying to see everything during a visit one can end up hurrying and miss the best. So, we limited our travel to allow time to enjoy what we did visit. We traveled to the south, north, and eastern coast of Tasmania, and we look forward to a second visit to tour the Great West Tiers and cruise the Gordon River. [e](#)



The view from our table at Daniel Alps at Strathlynn (Piper Brook)

Just one of the dishes served at Daniel Alps at Strathlynn



Craig and JoAnne Gambarotto-McKay spend part of each year in Spain. There and abroad they search for and enjoy fine wines and cuisine. Craig has published also under the pen name James W. Marsh.



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vinitaly 2005

INTERNATIONAL WINE EXHIBITION

Article and photos by W.C. Enoteca

The latest edition of this international exhibition, held in Verona, Italy, is being hailed as one of the best ever.

The five day exhibition hosted more than 4,200 exhibitors from 30 countries who presented their products to over 140,000 visitors who came from 92 countries. Not only was there a growth in representation of international operators, but the Exhibition Centre was expanded by 10,000 square metres, bringing the total show area to over 74,000 square metres.

This exhibition is one of the most important events for the Italian wine community, the primary function of which is to bring Italian wine into the international spotlight. Profits for Italian wine exports have seen an upward trend in the past year, with more than half of their products going to Germany and the U.S. This means that there is a vast untapped market in countries such as Russia, Hungary and China where wine consumption is on the rise.

In addition to tasting the thousands of wines, the exhibition itself, and networking, the visitors had an opportunity to attend various seminars. One session, *'The boom on the Chinese Market: 131% in one year'*, dealt with ways on how to capitalize on the emerging Chinese market. Although drinking wine in China only represents 1% of total alcohol consumption, wine imports to China are increasing by 30% per year. In 2004, China imported 500,000 cases of wine (80,000 from Italy alone) that translates to 4.5 million litres. It was suggested that efforts for breaking into the Chinese market

focus on China's epicenters (Shanghai, Canton, and Hong Kong), where a high standard of living is enjoyed. Also, since the Chinese dislike cold or bubbly drinks, such as champagne or sparkling wine, it would make sense to cater to the

higher demand for red wines. It should be noted that in 2002 China produced 33 million cases of wine, including icewine, and the government continues to believe and invest in this sector. Once the quality of the wine improves, China may become a contender on the world "icewine" stage.

Honouring Veronelli and Pope John Paul II

This latest Vinitaly edition was undoubtedly a success. But it was also a poignant one. Vinitaly 2005 was dedicated to the late Luigi Veronelli, who devised the most famous rating system for Italian wines. Organizers, saddened by the death of Pope John Paul II while Vinitaly was taking place, honoured the pontiff by broadcasting the funeral on April 8th and observing a moment of silence at 12 noon.

Those who are interested in attending next year's Vinitaly should mark their calendars for April 6-10, 2006. Other future Vinitaly events include: Vinitaly US - October 2005; Vinitaly China - November 2005; and, for the first time, Vinitaly India, scheduled for January 2006.

For more information on Vinitaly, or list a of winning wines, visit www.vinitaly.com.



Trentino Grappa Display at Vinitaly 2005



Enolitech/Sol Exhibition

Vinitaly also saw a successful 'marriage' of the two main products of the Mediterranean diet: wine and olive oil. *Enolitech*, the 8th International Exhibition of Technology for Wine-Growing, Oenology/Olive-Growing and Olive Oil Production, and *SOL*, the 11th Exhibition of Virgin and Extra-Virgin Olive Oil, were held concurrently with Vinitaly. Enolitech witnessed more than 230 exhibitors who showcased their products in a total 10,800 square metres of space. This year SOL moved to new headquarters, with a 16,000 square-metre area reserved exclusively for the event that attracted more than

Fermentations:

Bag-a-Cork

Recycling Program

by Edward Finstein

Ever wonder what happens to all those corks extracted from wine bottles at restaurants, bars, hotels, wineries, wine shows and at home? Most go into the garbage and end up becoming landfill. It is estimated that 100 million corks are discarded in Ontario alone, each year. That translates into well over 2,500 cubic metres of landfill space from this material. Expand that across the country and the quantity of corks and volume of landfill is astronomical. Cork happens to be an amazing natural material that is 100% reusable and recyclable. Other than for wine, cork is used in thousands of different applications. While only top quality cork is used to make stoppers for vino, lower grade cork, cork waste and recycled corks are used to make everything from soles for shoes, fishing rods and notice boards to place mats, coasters, flooring and insulation, to name a few.

What if something could be done to avoid corks from becoming part of landfill, make money and help a worthy cause, all at the same time? Would that not make practical, environmental and economical sense? You bet your swizzle stick it would! Enter the "Bag-a-Cork Recycling Program" in Ontario. Founding members, Iron Gate Cellarage/Vin de Garde Club, the Girl Guides of Ontario, the Canadian Association of Sommeliers and Restaurants and the Jelinek Cork Group have devised a program, the first of its kind in North America, to do just that.

Launched in Ontario last February, this Cork Recycling Program is designed to raise money for Girl Guides. How the program works is as follows. Recycling Bins are set up at affiliate locations around the Greater Toronto Area and expanding throughout the province. Affiliates include restaurants, retail outlets, wine retail locations, supermarkets, wineries and vineyards, hotels, etc. At each bin, there are bags available that can be taken home and filled with discarded corks. When the bag is full, it is returned to any affiliate location where bins are located, emptied into a recycling bin and the process started over again. Periodically, the Girl Guides collect the cork from each recycled bin at affiliate locations. These corks are then brought to a central sorting facility where the Guides sort them to ensure that only "natural" cork is brought to the recycling center. Once completed, Jelinek Cork recycles the cork and sells it to the North



American Cork industry to create cork-related products. All revenues go directly to the Girl Guides to support their organization across the province.

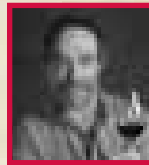
So far, the program has been hugely successful in the GTA and growing rapidly in Ontario. However, it should most definitely be expanded across the entire country and Girl Guides of Canada should benefit.

How can the public help? Simple! If you live in Ontario, start collecting all your corks from wine bottles of all types and drop them off in the appropriate bins at affiliate drop-off centres. No plastic or screw caps please as these are not recyclable and reusable! Patronize supporting restaurants and retail outlets and let them know that you support the program. These establishments carry a sticker in their windows stating that they support the Bag-a-Cork Program. Please check out the official Bag-a-Cork website to find the location of the recycling bins nearest you. Furthermore, convince your favourite dining establishment to come on board and Bag-a-Cork, as well. As for restaurants, bars, hotels, retail outlets, wineries, clubs, etc., you can help by becoming an affiliate member and allowing a recycling bin to be set up at your location. Then you can proudly display the sticker in your window. Contact the Bag-a-Cork Recycling Program today through their website to get started. Even if you are not an affiliate but have collected a large quantity of cork, the Girl Guides will arrange to pick them up at your location. All you have to do is call or e-mail.

For those of you who live outside Ontario and want to help, here's what to do. Although by the time this goes to press, preparations for the program may already be under way in your province, contact the Bag-a-Cork Recycling Program through their website and inquire how you can set up a branch where you live.

I'm proud to say that I am a staunch supporter of this program and I encourage each and every one of you to follow suit. Remember, recycling starts with awareness. If we all do our part we can help the planet and raise money for a great cause. It's a WIN/WIN situation.

For details on the Bag-a-Cork Recycling Program or to get involved, visit their official website at www.bag-a-cork.org.



The Wine Doctor <www.winedoctor.ca> is **Edward Finstein**, co-host of "Vine and Dine" TV show, wine writer, educator, international wine judge, consultant and author of 'Ask the Wine Doctor', published by McClelland & Stewart.

A personally-signed copy of my award-winning wine book, "Ask the Wine Doctor" (McClelland & Stewart) is available through my office. GIFT CERTIFICATES ALWAYS AVAILABLE. Private & Corporate Tastings available upon request.

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Venturesome Vegetarian Cooking

Whether you are a vegetarian, or not, you are bound to love these healthy recipes that are kindly provided with the permission of the author J.M Hirsch and Michelle Hirsch and publisher Surrey Books, Chicago. The colourful photos are by Larry Crowe. This easy to read, and easy to follow cookbook also includes helpful hints.

The recipes are yours to enjoy, especially on a hot summer day. Bon appetit!

California Sushi Rolls

We are sushi addicts. We'll eat just about anything you care to wrap in rice and nori (tempura-fried sweet potato is particularly popular), but California rolls are among our favourites.

For the rice:

1 cup	white sushi rice
1 1/3 cups	water
1/4 cup	seasoned rice vinegar

Place the rice in a mesh strainer and rinse under cold water until it runs clear. Leave the rice in the strainer and drain 1 hour.

Transfer the rice to a small saucepan. Add the water and bring to a boil over a medium-high flame. Cover and reduce the heat to low. Simmer 14 minutes without removing the cover.

Remove the pan from the heat and uncover. Drape a dish towel over the pan, then replace the cover. Let the rice stand 20 minutes. This step is important for achieving the proper moisture content for the rice.

Transfer the rice to a shallow dish and add vinegar. Use a wooden spoon to toss the rice with the vinegar until well mixed. Make sushi while rice is still slightly warm.



For the sushi roll:

2 tbsps.	sesame seeds
4 sheets	nori seaweed
	Wasabi paste
1	carrot, cut into thin matchsticks
1	small cucumber (about 4 inches), peeled, seeded and cut into thin strips
4 ounces	baked, seasoned tofu, cut into thin strips similar to the cucumber
1	avocado, peeled, pitted and cut into thin strips

Place the sesame seed in a dry skillet and cook over a medium flame 3-4 minutes or until seeds are just lightly browned. Set aside.

Place a sheet of nori seaweed, shiny side down, on a bamboo mat or smooth cutting board. Dip both hands in a bowl of water.

Using your fingers, spread about 1/4 of the rice evenly over the nori, leaving a 3/4-inch strip bare along the far edge.

Spread a pinch of wasabi across the center of the rice. Sprinkle the rice with sesame seeds, then arrange several strips each of carrot, cucumber, tofu and avocado along the line of wasabi. The fillings should extend to both sides of the nori.

Use your index fingers and thumbs to pick up the edge of the bamboo mat (if not using a mat, grasp the nori) closest to you. Place your remaining fingers over the fillings to hold them in place. Roll forward, tightly wrapping the rice and nori around the fillings.

Roll until you reach the 3/4-inch strip of bare nori. Lightly wet several fingers with water and run them across the uncovered nori. Continue rolling, pressing the moistened strip for nori against the roll to seal it.

Unroll the bamboo mat and place the roll on a cutting board, seam side down. Wet a serrated knife with water and cut the roll into 6 even pieces. Repeat for remaining rolls.

Start to finish: 2 hours (25 minutes active).

Makes 4 rolls (or 24 pieces), appetizers for 4-6, or a main course for 2

Tip: One of the hardest parts of preparing good sushi at home is cooking the rice. We use a recipe perfected by the least likely of sushi chefs - Dad (a Jewish electrical engineer). It works without fail. Be sure to use sushi rice for this recipe. Short-grain brown rice can be used, but it won't taste quite the same as restaurant sushi.

Other good sushi fillings include sliced Portobello mushrooms, strips of roasted red pepper, steamed kale, refried beans and roasted or steamed sweet potatoes.

For something different, replace the wasabi inside the roll with peanut butter and the fillings with strips of seasoned, cooked tempeh.



Breakfast Fruit Smoothie

A heavy breakfast can weigh you down, especially if you hit the gym before heading to work. Try a thick, fruity smoothie instead for a filling but light start.

1	frozen banana
1/2 cup	frozen berries
	Scant pinch sea salt
1/2 tsp.	lemon juice
6 ounces	soft, silken tofu or 1 scoop soy protein powder
3/4 cup	vanilla soy or rice milk

Combine all ingredients in a blender. Process until smooth, about 30 seconds to 1 minute.

Start to finish: 5 minutes. Makes 1 serving

Tip: Though fresh fruit is great in smoothies, we prefer frozen. This gives the drink a thicker, more satisfying body. We especially like frozen bananas, which we peel and freeze in storage bags.

For the berries, blueberries and strawberries are best. Raspberries taste great but the seeds bother some people.

The salt and lemon juice play an important role in heightening the other flavours.



Panzanella (Tomato and Bread Salad)

The Italians really know salads. This healthy combination of bread, tomatoes and olive oil shames those limp iceberg wrecks so many restaurants try to pass off as salad. This also is a great way to use day-old bread.

1 pound	very ripe tomatoes (Roma are excellent)
	Kosher salt or coarse sea salt
1 pound	day-old bread, cut into 1-inch cubes
1/2 cup	extra-virgin olive oil
4 tbsps.	balsamic vinegar
1	red onion, diced
2 tbsps.	capers
10	fresh basil leaves, cut into ribbons
2 tsps.	chopped fresh oregano leaves
1 tbsp.	chopped fresh parsley
	Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Cut the tomatoes into small chunks and place in a mesh strainer over the sink or a large bowl. Add 1 tablespoon of salt and gently work through with your fingers. Drain the tomatoes about 10 minutes.

Place the bread cubes in a large bowl.

In another bowl, whisk together the oil and vinegar. Add the onions, capers, tomatoes and half the herbs. Toss to combine and let stand 10 minutes.

Add the tomato mixtures to the bread. Add the remaining herbs and toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper.

Start to finish: 30 minutes. Makes 4 servings

Tip: Use a white country-style bread. Avoid anything sliced or soft. The bread also should be fairly simple - nothing with excessive seeds or any fruits.

For variation, substitute 4 tablespoons diced Kalamata olives for the capers.

Don't make this salad more than 30 minutes ahead of time, as the bread will become too soggy. You can prepare the bread cubes and tomato mixture early, but wait to combine them until just before serving.

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Baked Breaded Eggplant with Sweet Tomato Sauce

Breaded eggplant is delicious. But usually it is coated with egg, fried and then slathered with melted cheese. This version removes the animal products and significantly reduces the fat.

1	12-ounce package soft, silken tofu
6 tbsps.	extra-virgin olive oil
3 cups	dry seasoned breadcrumbs
1	large eggplant, peeled and sliced into 1/3-inch thick rounds
1	medium yellow onion, diced
2 pounds	tomatoes, coarsely chopped, with juices
1 tbsps.	hot pepper sauce
1/3 cup	maple syrup
1 tsp.	sea salt
1 tsp.	freshly ground black pepper
1/2 tsp.	celery seed

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Combine the tofu and 2 tablespoons oil in a blender or food processor and purée until smooth. Transfer the mixture to a wide, shallow bowl. Pour the breadcrumbs into a similar bowl. Use another 2 tablespoons of oil to liberally coat a baking sheet.

Dredge the eggplant slices through the tofu mixture so that both sides are lightly coated. One at a time, set each slice in the bowl of breadcrumbs, first on one side, then on the other, to cover the slice completely. Shake off extra crumbs. Place the eggplant slices on the baking sheet.

Bake 45 minutes or until crispy and just beginning to brown.

Meanwhile, make the sauce by combining the remaining oil and the diced onion in a deep skillet. Sauté over a medium-high flame 6 minutes or until onion becomes translucent.

Add remaining ingredients and simmer 15 minutes.

To serve, place two or three slices of eggplant on a plate and top generously with sauce. Sprinkle soy Parmesan on top, if desired.

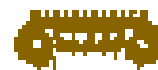


Start to finish: 1 hour. Makes 4 servings

Tip: The easiest way to peel an eggplant is to cut off the ends so it can stand upright. Then use a paring knife or peeler to carefully cut the skin away from the flesh.

To prevent raw eggplant slices from browning while you work, keep them in a bowl of lightly salted water. You may need a small plate to weigh them down under the water.

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Orecchiette con Cime di Rapa (Orecchiette Pasta with Savory Greens)

We learned this classic Tuscan dish from a wonderful Italian cook while in Italy. It coats hearty pasta with a tangy 'cheese' sauce and wilted greens. Just about any hardy leafy green goes well in this recipe. The original uses turnip and radish greens, but we prefer kale and spinach. Collards and chard also are good.

3/4 pound	orecchiette pasta
1.4cup	extra-virgin olive oil
2 tbsps.	capers, crushed with a fork
1 tbsp.	red pepper flakes
1/2 pound	bunch of kale, stalks removed, leaves cut into thin ribbons
1/2 cup	soy Parmesan cheese

Bring a large stockpot of lightly salted water to a rolling boil and cook orecchiette until tender, about 8 minutes. Drain and set aside. While the pasta cooks, combine the oil, capers and red pepper flakes in a large, deep skillet. Mash the capers with a fork and sauté over a medium-high flame 3-4 minutes.

Add the kale and reduce the heat to medium. Sauté 3 minutes or just until kale wilts. Add the pasta and toss.

Add the soy Parmesan cheese and toss to combine. If pasta is too dry, add several tablespoons of broth, water or additional oil.

Start to finish: 30 minutes. Makes 4 servings

Tip: As an alternative to soy Parmesan cheese, combine 2 slices of well-toasted bread, 1 tablespoon of nutritional yeast flakes and 1 tablespoon of vegetable broth or water in a food processor. Pulse until crumbs form. Sprinkle the mixture as you would grated Parmesan cheese.



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Frozen Fudge Pops

The switch to a dairy-free diet too often means ultimate summer comfort foods such as ice cream and fudge pops are either off-limits or replaced with icy, tasteless variations. But a little effort and a bit of tofu (even against our better judgment) can make creamy frozen treats as good as the real thing.

- 1 12-ounce package soft, silken tofu
- 3 tbsps. cocoa powder
- 3 tbsps. maple syrup
- 1-1/2 cups dark or non-dairy chocolate chips

Process the tofu in a food processor until smooth, about 1 minute. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and purée another minute. The tofu should look creamy smooth, like yogurt.

Add the cocoa and purée another minute. Scrape down the sides and repeat. Add the maple syrup and purée 1 minute. Scrape down the sides and repeat.

Bring several cups of water to a boil on the bottom half of a double boiler. Add the chocolate chips to the upper part of the boiler. Remove from the heat. Stir until the chips melt, about 2 minutes.

Pour the melted chocolate into the food processor and purée 3 minutes, scraping down the sides of the processor bowl a few times. Pour the mixture into the molds and top with sticks or handles. Freeze about 3 hours.

Start to finish: 3 hours (10 minutes active).
 Makes 6 servings (depending on size of molds)

Tip: It is very important to use soft, silken tofu. Other grades of tofu won't purée completely, no matter how long they're mixed.

Inexpensive frozen pop molds are easy to find. But getting the pops out of them can be a challenge. Run the mold under warm water a few seconds to loosen the pop. 📧



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Wine Burys

by Barbara D. Ritchie

The warm days of summer bring to mind light, refreshing wines that complement a wide range of outdoor and picnic fare. To be well prepared you should stock wines suitable for spicy barbecued foods and antipasti dishes. Here are some suggestions.

For a sparkling wine, look to one of Austria's top producers, Schlumberger, from the Thermen region south of Vienna. Their Blanc de Blancs Brut Sekt 'Methode Traditional' offers a delicate perlage (seam of bubbles). With grapefruit peel and ripe apple scents underpinned by yeasty tones, it has a zesty acidity that makes for a lovely aperitif wine. Sip it at an outdoor event around the pool with assorted cold cuts and mild cheeses, while you fire up the barbecue for a seafood and grilled vegetable dinner complemented by a cold penne and arugula salad.

Mount Eyre 'Neptune' Sparkling Semillon 2002 from Australia's Hunter Valley in New South Wales is unique because this varietal is typically made as a still wine, often part of a blend. Showing a light lemon colour, it offers a brisk lemon/lime citrus character with a frothy mouthfeel. Attractive yeasty, bread notes are well integrated in the rich sweet melon flavours that are touched with some gooseberry and hay. Winemaker C.P. Lin is credited not only for his winemaking ability, but also his translation of the Oxford Companion to Wine into Braille, spurred on by the fact that he is also blind. This wine would match superbly with rich appetizers of smoked trout served on a bed of wilted rapini, chilled gazpachio soup sprinkled with roasted garlic bits, and warm cheddar cheese/corn bread flavoured with jalapeno peppers drizzled with cilantro olive oil.

Two Tone Farm Chardonnay 2002 from Beringer in the Napa Valley, is made in a Burgundian style, yet it displays strong Californian characters. Lemon yellow, with distinctive notes of ripe apricot, sweet apples, and a gentle streak of oak, this wine straddles both worlds. It works beautifully with skewers of grilled scampi and monkfish cubes on a salad of heirloom tomatoes, chipotle mushrooms and toasted pecans tossed in a basil vinaigrette. In keeping with the current trend, it is bottled under screwcap. No corked wine here!

A winning Chilean wine is Paso de Luz Reserva Chardonnay 2004 from the cool climate Casablanca Valley north of Santiago. A collaboration between two famous winemakers, Michel Laroche of France's Chablis region and Jorge Coderch of Valdivieso in Chile, this wine is a brilliant example of Old World winemaking in keeping with the New World style. Lush and full of ripe apples, spiced pears with undertones of citrus, the oak influence comes through with vanilla and cedar flavours in the finish. Designed to please a wide range of tastes, this wine fits the bill, financially and figuratively. Pour a glass with hors d'oeuvres of cherry tomatoes stuffed with herbed cheese, salmon tartare served on toast points, and shrimp spring rolls with a sweet mango sauce.



Austria's vineyards produce top quality Sekt Sparkling wines.

Looking for something truly unique? Try a first ever entry into our market, Sharpe Hill Vineyard Chardonnay 2001 from Pomfret, Connecticut in the U.S. Ranked as the best in the state, the winery's vineyards are located in the northeast, where microclimate conditions are best suited to Chardonnay and Cabernet Franc varietals. It goes well with flavoursome fare such as fresh goat cheese wrapped in vine leaves topped with roasted slivered pistachio nuts, or warm Hudson River foie gras on garlic rubbed toasted sourdough bread, drizzled with a lemon aioli and a splash of aged balsamic vinegar.

Château Cessarar 2001 AOC Minervois La Liviniere from Jean-Yves & Pierre-Andre Ournac offers enticing flavours of ripe blueberries, prunes and Bing cherries. Hints of animal, licorice and leather notes bring to mind 'garrigue' or underbrush from the limestone hills of the Mediterranean, typical of quality wines from this area.

From Australia's Victoria region comes Brumby Wines Chardonnay 2003. Stuart and Liz Brumby chose to abandon the bulk wine industry in 2001 to start their own boutique winery. The label depicts Australia's 'Brumby' wild horse breed, which happens to coincide with their name. Upfront Anjou and Bartlett pear scents greet the nose. Sweet, gentle flavours of ripe pears and apples follow through on the taste. This is a wine to enjoy while preparing a dinner of grilled scallops with a lemongrass wine sauce, followed by pan-seared orange roughly topped with toasted pistachio nuts and a side of steamed baby new potatoes tossed in a basil olive oil dressing.

Miguel Torres of Spain's Catalunya district in the north launched their 'Nerola' line of wines with the 2001 vintage. Brainchild of the 4th generation daughter of Miquel Torres, these are her first wine creations. Designed to be drinkable in their youth with lighthearted fare, they show an exuberance of fruits and freshness that are consumer friendly and suit a wide range of dishes. 'Nerola' Xarello/Garnacha DO 2003 is just that. Brimming with ripe berry fruits of strawberries and red currants touched with some cranberry flavours, it is best enjoyed slightly chilled to bring out the perfumy character. 'Nerola' Syrah/Monastrell 2002, with its core of sweet cherries and red licorice notes is underpinned by nuances of spice, cedar and mocha derived from 12 months of aging in Nevers and Alliers French oak. Both wines are perfectly suited to spicy foods such as gourmet pizzas, buffalo wings, and a pot of chili served with toasted garlic bread. Yum!


Silver Stone Cabernet Sauvignon from California's Napa Valley is new to our wine market. Winemaker and owner Dan Klerk spent two decades creating wines on the east coast of the U.S. before joining Kendall Jackson in 1998. Here, his talents as a meticulous and dedicated artisan were recognized. The 2001 version is a prime example. Displaying a beautiful inky dark purple colour, it has an



appealing bouquet of ripe blackberries. Bing cherries and red Delicious apples interweave with ripe tannins amid delicate cedar and vanilla flavours on the palate. Try it with venison steaks and wilted rapini topped with roasted garlic and red peppers.

Rosenblum Cellars Single Vineyard 'Continente' Zinfandel 2003 from the San Francisco Bay region represents one of the top of their line. Ever since Dr. Kent Rosenblum transformed his winemaking hobby into a full-time effort, he has won accolades worldwide for his Zinfandels. Immediate aromas of sweet cherries, strawberries, coffee, mocha, and bitter chocolate leap from the glass and flow through onto the palate. This wine classifies as another huge Californian blockbuster, with a whopping 15.3% alcohol content that does not show in the taste. Pair it with emu steaks topped with grilled onions and thyme infused olive oil, or lamb stew flavoured with garlic and wine, served with a side of creamed parsnips and carrots.

Akroomi Blackbutt 2001 from West Australia (Vintages Classics Catalogue) is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Malbec. Deep garnet in colour, it offers a complex bouquet of dark berry fruits, sweet cherries and red apple skin that carries through in the taste. Add some ripe tannins, with notes of mocha, black pepper and cedar, derived from 28 months of barrel aging in new French oak, and you have an obvious match with savoury dishes. Try it with grilled squab topped with a ragout of porcini mushrooms and cranberry sauce, or venison medallions flavoured with juniper berries and sage reduction, served on a bed of cubed roasted root vegetables.

For a dessert wine, look to Greece's 'Anthemis', a sweet example from the Samos Cooperative on the eastern island of Samos, Greek for 'altitude'. Made from the White Muscat grape, this is the only varietal grown on the island, and some 70% of its production is exported to France. Aged for five years in barrels, this delicious wine has orange peels and spice, with a sweet raisin finish. Enjoy it well-chilled straight up, poured over ice or, for a decadent finish to a meal, match it with fresh figs poached in the same wine, topped with a sabayon and toasted hazelnuts. 



Barbara Ritchie is a wine writer and lecturer. Having travelled extensively throughout the main wine-growing regions of the world with her twin sister Ann, she regularly conducts wine seminars for major corporations and restaurant groups, while also participating in various wine judging panels worldwide, including Intervin. Her judging experience includes a session at Italy's prestigious "Banco d'Assaggio", held each year at Lungarotti's Le Tre Vaselle in Umbria, to assess wines from throughout Italy.

Inside the Shenandoah Cavern

Virginia is for *Wine* Lovers

Article and photos by Anna Cavaliere

Virginia, the southernmost of the mid-Atlantic states is flanked by West Virginia and Maryland to the north; the Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay on the east; North Carolina and Tennessee to the south; with Kentucky standing by on the west. Known as the Commonwealth of Virginia (after Elizabeth I, the 'Virgin Queen'), it has also been known as the 'Old Dominion'.

What might be lesser known, however, is that Virginia is home to over 80 wineries, an industry that is experiencing some pretty impressive growth. Passing through the Shenandoah Valley this past year we happened to come across the Shenandoah Vineyards, located on 3659 South Ox Road in Edinburg. Founded in 1976, this winery is the oldest in the Shenandoah Valley, and the fourth oldest in the state. Consumers can pop in for a tasting that may include a variety of intriguing fruit wines as well as high-in-demand classic wines such as Chardonnay, Riesling, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Chambourcin, to name just a few. Special events take place throughout the year, including the upcoming Annual Country Cookout on July 9th; the Harvest Festival on September 10; and the Fall Celebration and Progressive Dinner on October 30th. To obtain more information, call 540 984-8699 or email - shenvine@shentel.net.

For the serious wine aficionados, there is a version of the Napa Wine Trail just under an hour's drive from Washington, D.C. *The Blue Ridge WineWay*, comprising ten of the state's premier wineries, is the perfect day trip or weekend escape package. You can obtain more details by visiting www.BlueRidgeWineWay.com or by calling 1-800-820-1021.

Want to visit Virginia wine country in safety, comfort and style? Then contact the experts who provide tours to most of the wineries by limousine or coach - *Virginia Wine Country Limousine & Coach Tours* - by going to their web site: www.VirginiaWineCountryTours.com, or call 540 622-2505.

Looking for bargains? If you visit the *Ingleside Vineyards* on a Tuesday you will receive 20% off all wine purchases (no other discounts apply). For more information call 804 224-8687.

Lastly, for a definitive guide to Virginia wines visit the www.virginiawines.org website. Note: Although they're thinking about it, unfortunately at this time Virginia wines cannot be purchased out of state.

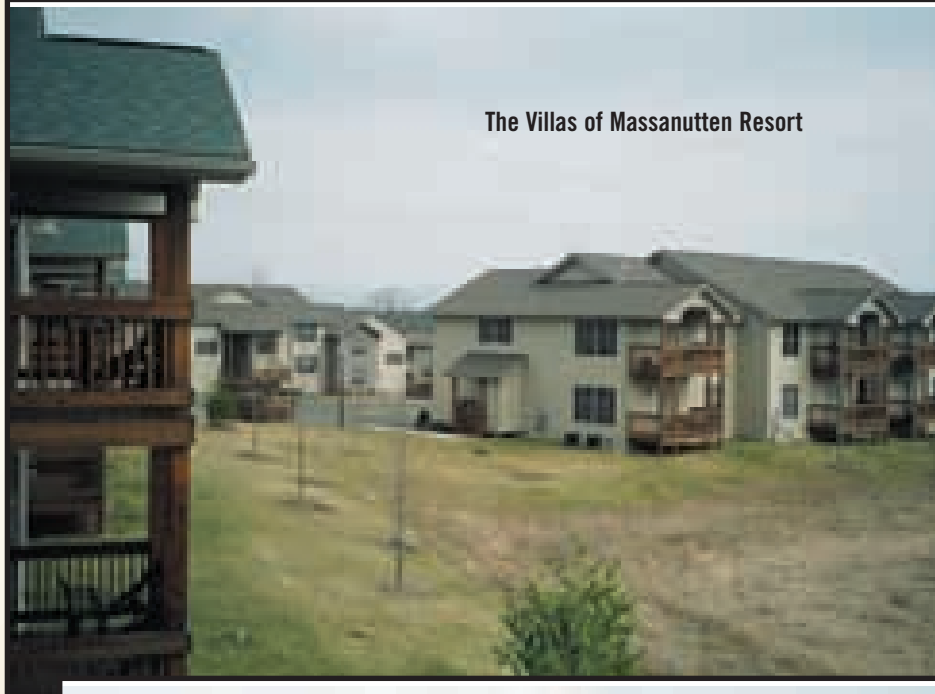
THINGS TO SEE AND DO

One can't be drinking wine all day. Although one could try, I suppose, if you're not driving. But, if you are traveling with friends or family, why not plan a stay at the well-appointed villas of Massanutten Resort? Daily year-round activities, that change seasonally, are designed with both young and old in mind. Indoor and outdoor pools, as well as a golf course make this property very attractive no matter what you plan to do on your vacation. For the more adventurous, the facility also offers its guests canoe, kayak and river tubing outings.

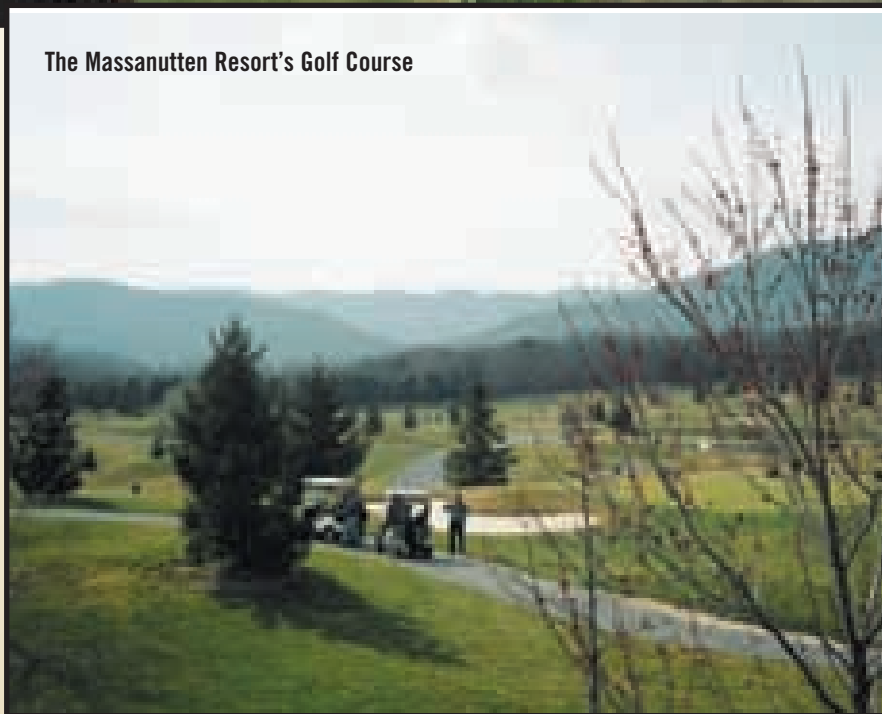
New on the horizon for Massanutten is the 42,000 sq. ft. indoor and 88,000 sq. ft. outdoor Water Park that is scheduled to be launched this summer. Located off Resort Drive, near the resort's entrance at U.S. Route 33, this recreational facility will feature a 45 ft. tall, four lane racing slide and a wave pool that will create one to six ft. waves. Surfers who cannot get to California or Hawaii can experience the simulated thrill of surfing a wave on the 'Flow Ryder'. For the younger set, a specially-designated area of slides and play features will be available. If spectator sports are more to your liking, you can view all the activities of the water park from the relaxing vantage point of the lounge and its floor to ceiling glass wall.

Those who like to keep their feet planted firmly on the ground can take advantage of comfortable motor coach travel to nearby Washington, D.C. The tours depart early every Wednesday morning and return in late evening, after visiting such sites as the Arlington National Cemetery, Supreme

The Villas of Massanutten Resort



The Massanutten Resort's Golf Course



View of Washington, D.C. from Arlington Cemetery



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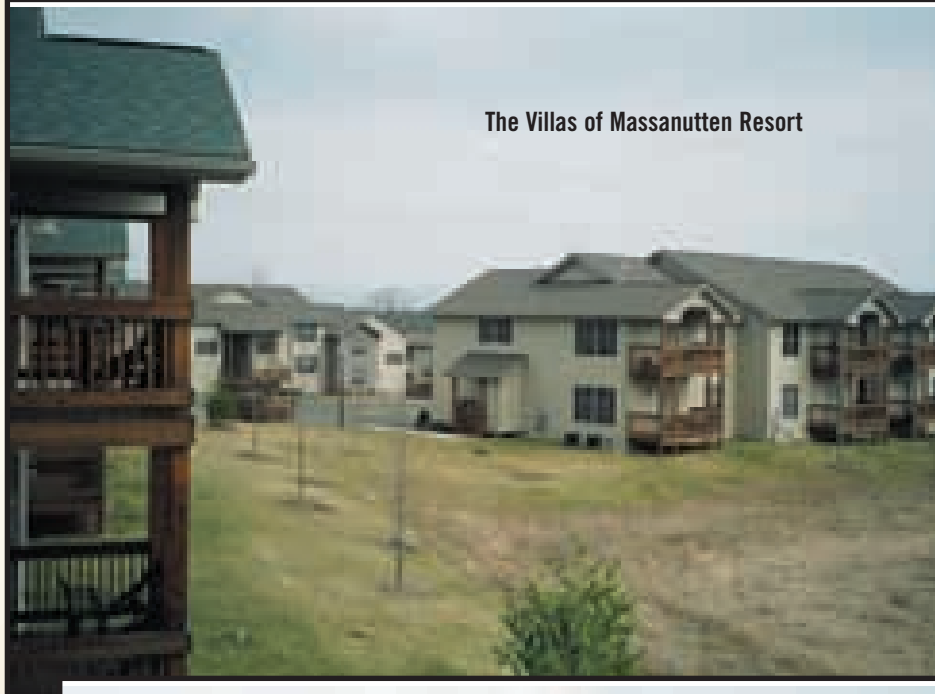
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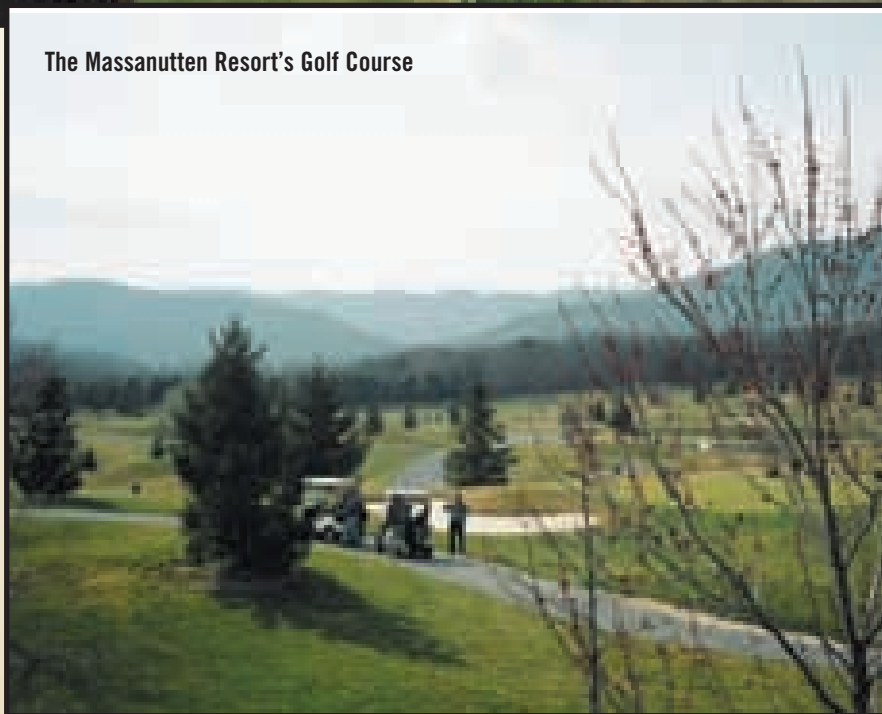
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The Villas of Massanutten Resort



The Massanutten Resort's Golf Course



View of Washington, D.C. from Arlington Cemetery




Capitol Hill



Court, Library of Congress, Jefferson Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, to name just a few.

Awesome underground experiences also await the unsuspecting traveler who can view the beautiful formations in the Shenandoah Caverns and its 17 rooms, some of which are 10 stories high. The only cavern in Virginia that has elevator service, it is located on I-81, Exit 269 in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley, and also near the Shenandoah National Park, other historic sites, as well as antique and specialty shops.

An added bonus is that admission to the cavern also includes *American Celebration on Parade* and *Main Street of Yesteryear*. The 'Parade' is a collection of spectacular floats, props, and stage settings that range from the Rose parade to presidential inaugurals. For more details and admission prices, visit www.shenandoahcaverns.com or call 1-888-4Cavern.

Even though we only scratched the surface of Virginia's boundless attractions, what we saw and experienced was very much to our liking. In your future travels, be sure to include a stop in Virginia. You'll be glad you did! 



A young shopper, in the souvenir shop at entrance of the Shenandoah Caverns



Anna Cavaliere, Editor/Writer
Editor/Writer since 1992 for *Enoteca Wine & Food Magazine* (now *Elite Wine, Food & Travel*), Anna Cavaliere has reported on wine and food events from many of the world's wine

regions: Australia, New Zealand, Portugal, France, Spain, Malta, Greece, Italy, U.S. and Canada. A member of the International Federation of Wine and Spirits Journalists and Writers (F.I.J.E.V.), Anna feels particularly fortunate that she can write about her three passions: wine, food, and travel.

Right and Below: Interior shots of Shenandoah Caverns'



Your Meals Glitter With Edible Gold

By Anna Cavaliere

Adding gold to food and beverages began in the East centuries ago, where it was a symbol of riches and a show of respect for a special guest.

Now, before you start worrying about what such decoration might do to your digestive system if ingested, there are a few facts that you should know. Gold is an inert metal that easily passes through the intestine; in fact, gold has been used since antiquity in the preparation of medication to treat the digestive system. Today, it is still very much a part of the Chinese and Indian medicine scene, and used in homeopathy because of its properties related to the inner organs such as the heart, stomach and uterus.

“The facts, just the facts”

In the 15th century, gold was used worldwide for medicinal reasons, although the use became so excessive in Padua, Italy that the politicians were forced to advise citizens not to serve gold on more than two courses during a wedding feast. In the Renaissance period, it was common for Venetians to serve a sweet covered in gold at the end of a meal in order to strengthen the heart and prevent rheumatism. The Elizabethans graced their tables with pomegranates, oranges and grapes dusted with gold. In Milan, during the Visconti reign, gold and spices were blended with “unpleasant things” that needed to be swallowed (a different take on the old saying that “a spoonful of sugar makes the medicine go down”, albeit a more expensive one!).

Today, in Japan’s city of Nara, visitors can order coffee made from Evian water heated in a gold kettle, poured through freshly ground Jamaican Blue Mountain coffee, dusted with gold and served in a gold plated Royal Minton china cup, for a mere \$350 a cup. Oro Fino’s 23 karat Genuine Edible Gold products, produced under strict quality control standards by FRM Food in Pavia, Italy, are now available for a lot less than this cup of java. Not only professional bakers, chefs, bartenders and home chefs but all culinary enthusiasts can afford to indulge their fantasies.

The decoration comes in various shapes: ‘*Sprinkles*’ (shavings), arrive in a practical shaker for easy sprinkling directly onto food or for a hint of glitter over your favourite cocktail. ‘*Petals*’, that are to be picked up with the tweezers and toothpick that are provided, are ideal for decorating tarts, sweets and sushi. ‘*Sheets*’ can be used on almost any kind of food, but are best handled with cotton gloves or wooden tweezers since they will stick to your hands when touched.

Hint: Be sure to store Edible Gold in a dry place, and never let it come in contact with humidity or steam. All the 23K gold products can be frozen or heated (up to 250° C or 480°F) without affecting the shape or shine.

Just think, now when somebody says you have a “heart of gold”, it may very well be true!! 🍯

To learn all about Oro Fino’s Genuine 23K Edible Gold products, e-mail: razonia@razoniapr.com.



Photos courtesy of FRM Foods

CHEF ANTONIO ON EDIBLE GOLD

Oro Fino’s new product line of edible gold is grand sophistication at its finest, and screams for creative uses in the kitchen. I promptly put the product to the test at a recent trade show in Toronto, when I sprinkled some over Crème Brulee that I had topped with a few crushed raw pistachios. The result was a stunning feast for both the eyes and the palate. Needless to say I sold out even before the show ended.

The “Petals”, larger in size, are extremely delicate and must be placed on the food with what look like mini bamboo chopsticks, that are provided. For a bridal shower, I showcased these wonderful pieces on a decadent dessert: a crepe tower, topped with brandied strawberry sauce, shaved Belgian dark chocolate and vanilla infused whipped cream. To complete the effect, I placed three golden leaves atop the cream for a truly royal dessert that was promptly enjoyed by the ecstatic guests.

If you want to add a “WOW” factor to your next function, go the extra mile. Treat your guests like royalty - shower them in Gold!

The Wine Line

by Barbara D. Ritchie

Bernie Hickin, Senior Winemaker for Jacob's Creek Delivers the Company's Message - Australia's Top Drop

Bernie Hickin, senior winemaker for South Australia's Jacob's Creek (part of the large Orlando Wyndham group) presented 10 wines from their diverse portfolio this spring, in conjunction with their agent Pernod Ricard Canada. These were specifically chosen to illustrate the company's philosophy and the four tiers they produce, with price points that reflect excellent value for the caliber of each.

Jacob's Creek has a straightforward philosophy which was well demonstrated by this tasting. Bernie summed it up as 'Over delivery for the price'. This means that their wines are immediately approachable because of the emphasis on ripe fruit, yet offer subtle complexity that elevates them to a level where their ageworthiness is also evident. It all comes about by a well-calculated application of vinification techniques. This includes the length of time freshly crushed grapes spend in contact with the skin to extract colour, tannins and phenols. They also employ calculated degrees of malolactic fermentation which are specifically gauged according to each vintage and the sugar versus acid ratio of the wine juice. This, in tandem with judicious oak handling of both the barrel fermentation and barrel aging, makes for impressive wines that capture the attention of the palate and senses - all at affordable price points.

The four tiers include their entry level Core wines which are available on the LCBO General List, and the Reserve, Limited Release, and Heritage lines. The latter includes their new Centenary Hill wines.

In an industry where a spate of takeovers has intensified the competition, it is becoming increasingly difficult to create quality wines that truly reflect their own 'terroir' at such price points. This makes Jacob's Creek wines stand out in their field.

The tasting began with their premium sparkling Chardonnay (75%)/Pinot Noir (25%) (\$13.45) NV (non-vintage). Made in the traditional 'methode champenoise', where the secondary fermentation takes place in the bottle, it has a delicate mousse (bubbles), with a scent of citrus and green melon, and some strawberry notes from the Pinot Noir. Made in a Blanc de Blancs style, with the emphasis placed on preservation of the fruit, it has a creamy mouth feel derived from full malolactic fermentation, with hints of freshly baked bread on the finish.

Their Shiraz Rose 2004 (\$12.45) has a lovely strawberry/rose petal colour, with enticing aromas of raspberries and black cherries. Ripe fruits give the impression of some sweetness on the palate, although it is bone dry.

Soft and delicate, it shows vibrant fresh fruit flavours with hints of spice on the finish. Jacob's Creek Chardonnay 2004 (\$10.45) offers delicate aromas of pear and peach touched with a hint of citrus. Spiced pears follow through with buttery notes and a hint of oak on the soft finish.

The 2002 vintage came from a relatively cool year, giving good acidity and less ripeness to the grapes. A more elegant, Burgundian style of wines resulted, compared with the full-blown ripe examples of warmer years. This was evident in all their wines from this vintage.

Reserve Chardonnay 2002 (approx. \$16.00) is from their next tier. Showing a golden yellow hue, the grapes are sourced mostly from the Padthaway area, with lots from the McLaren Vale and Adelaide Hills. Fully barrel-fermented and aged in French oak, of which is new, it offers sweet peach, pear and melon fruits with vanilla and spice. Their Limited Release Chardonnay 2002 (approx. \$30.00) has rich, ripe flavours of citrus, melon, pear and vanilla, with nuances of cedar and smoke in the nose that replay on the palate. Creamy and smooth, it leaves a warm, lingering impression in the finish.

Their entry-level red is Shiraz (60%)/Cabernet Sauvignon (40%) 2002 (\$11.95). Cherry/plum purple in colour, it offers enticing scents of sweet cherries, red apple skin and dark plums with subtle oak and spice notes. Soft and appealing, this is a versatile wine, suitable for a wide range of fun, uncomplicated dishes and barbecued meats.

Jacob's Creek Shiraz 2002 (\$11.95) is made from grapes sourced in the Langhorne Creek, McLaren Vale and Padthaway areas. It displays an intense ruby red colour with black pepper and coffee notes in the fruit-driven taste. Their Reserve Shiraz 2002 (\$18.95) has a forward bouquet of ripe dark cherries, plums and pepper intermingled with mocha, smoke and saddle leather, and a touch of eucalyptus. Try it with grilled veal chops or rack of lamb. Their Limited Release Shiraz (60%)/Cabernet Sauvignon (40%) 1999 shows the wonderful aging potential of these reds. Beneath its deep colour, this wine reveals a powerful bouquet of cassis and blackcurrant, with chocolate and coffee on the back palate. The fruit is derived from the iron-rich red Terra Rossa soils of the Coonawarra region that lie on top of a bed of limestone, giving the wine an intense mineral note, with herbal undertones.

The grande finale was their Orlando 'Centenary Hill' Shiraz 1997, made entirely from Barossa Valley fruit. It expresses itself in the mouth as a silky, smooth and concentrated wine with delicate, soft tannins and great length.

True to their word, Jacob's Creek delivers a top drop!

The 7th Annual Fetzer Vineyards Appetizer Challenge at Toronto's Santé Wine & Food Festival

Fetzer Vineyard's gala evening launched the Santé Wine & Food Festival held each May in Toronto's Bloor-Yorkville area. In the Fetzer Vineyard's Appetizer Challenge, local restaurants compete for the dish that best matches the featured Fetzer wine – Fetzer Gewurztraminer 2003 this year. A panel of food and wine judges selected the 10 finalists whose dishes were presented at the gala evening. Two winners emerged from the festivities, the judges' selection and the 'People's Choice Award', making it a particularly fun, interactive evening for guests. Fetzer donated wines for the evening, sampling a full range of their wines this year. It is a night you will want to diarize for your 2006 calendar.

If you are visiting California's Sonoma County, head north to Mendocino County to visit the Fetzer Winery. If you opt for the bed & breakfast programme at their top-notch visitor facility, you will be in for a charming experience. Start off with a wine tasting in their edible garden, followed by a dip in their pool before you settle in for the night in a room overlooking their vineyards. Breakfast in the courtyard with brewed coffee and fresh baked pastries in a country setting adds to the ambience. Drop into their special wine shop for a Fetzer tasting before you leave.

For more information on Fetzer Vineyards, contact their agent, Charton & Hobbs.

Oregon's Sokol Blosser Winery

Oregon has been dubbed the 'Burgundy' of North America, because its long, cool growing season and high rainfall are ideally suited to the growing of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay varietals. The similar climatic condition of these two regions is what attracted the Drouhin family of Burgundian fame. Their 1987 sizeable purchase of vineyards in the North Willamette Valley put Oregon on the wine map – and with good reason. Oregon turns out some stellar wines, but they do not often find their way into our market. Most wineries are small, family-owned operations, with fewer than 35 acres of vineyards. The majority of Oregon wines are consumed locally, with little left over for the export market.

Sokol Blosser is one of the few Oregon labels that appear on Canadian shelves. Robert Drouhin originally bought 100 acres directly across the street from Sokol Blosser, a winery whose vines were first planted almost 27 years before, in 1971. Pinot Noir, Sokol Blosser's specialty, is planted on 53 acres, with another seven acres dedicated to Pinot Gris. This organic winery joined the trend towards biodynamic production beginning with their 2004 vintage, taking organic farming to another level. Where organic proponents see farming as part of the ecosystem, biodynamic producers take it a step further and see it as part of the cosmos. That means they take into account moon phases and the impact they create on the soil. They also adjust all aspects of their planting, vineyard management, and vinification efforts according to these natural forces.


Sokol Blosser's focus on producing quality wines includes planting with 5 to 7 inch spacing of the vines, allowing grass to grow between the rows to revitalize the soil. They favour French oak with a medium plus toast to age their wines. A unique aspect of their winery is an underground barrel cellar covered with a garden of wild flowers planted in three feet of soil.

Susan Sokol Blosser and her son Alex presented samples from among their wines this spring at a tasting hosted by Peter Mielzynski Agencies.



Photo courtesy of Sokol Blosser

Their Pinot Gris Dundee Hills 2003 is made from grapes grown on the rich red Jory soil of the Dundee Hills. Citrus, tangerine, spiced pear and mineral flavours sing on the palate, making for a delightful aperitif. Sokol Blosser 'Evolution' 8th Edition is a non-vintage blend using an intriguing mix of Riesling, Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer, Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris, Muscat, Semillon, Muller Thurgau and Sylvaner. A true oddity worth searching out, it is presented in an eye-catching package. Sporting some residual sugar, this wine is a journey in the glass. Expect to find scents and flavours of citrus, lychee, pear, peach, Muscat grapes, lime peel, apple sauce and ripe melon. Extremely food friendly, it enhances anything from cold pasta seafood salads to pork chops with apple chutney, and complements fresh mimosa fruit salads for a light summer meal.

Their 2002 Pinot Noir Estate Dundee Hills is a blend of 40% old vines (25 and 30 year-old) and 60% of four year-old vines. A fruit forward wine with big tannins, blackberries and black cherry dominate the palate, with earthy undertones in the lingering finish. Sokol Blosser Old Vineyard Block Pinot Noir 2001 comes from their first vines of this varietal. The leaner aspect of this vintage is reflected in the subdued colours and restrained fruit flavours in the glass. Delicate and elegant, this wine is classic Burgundian in style. It starts small, but evolves with a core of mushrooms and barnyard nuances that carry on long after the first taste. 

"Coffee with Great Taste"

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Fiesta

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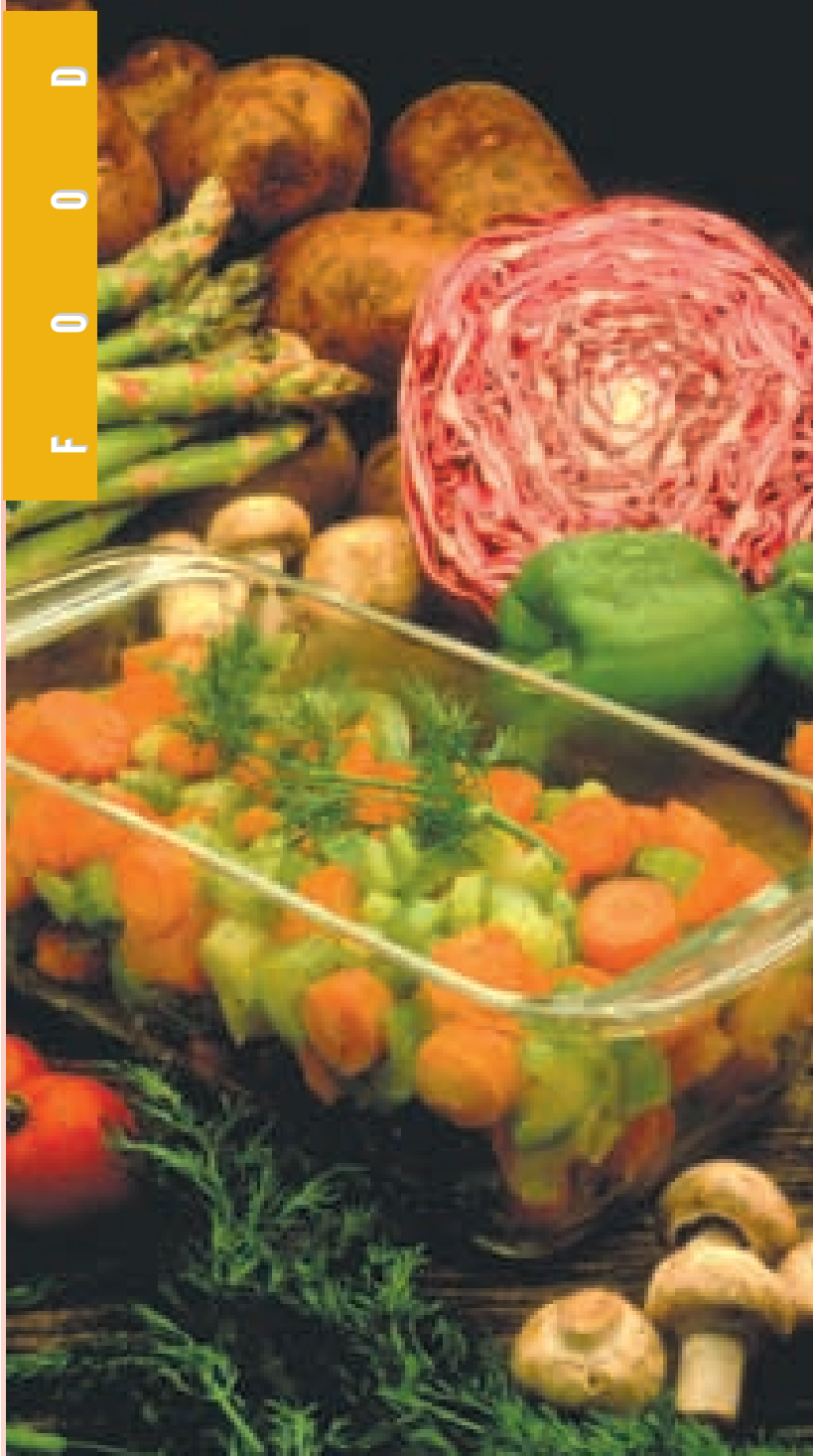


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Eating Well Through Cancer

By Holly Clegg and Gerald Miletello, M.D.

Holly Clegg emphasizes in her notes that ‘anyone who enjoys a healthier approach to cooking, with or without a health problem, will also enjoy this book’. I agree.

In their cookbook *“Eating Well Through Cancer”* the quick recipes, which include the *‘super foods’* that help fight cancer, also incorporate all the familiar and favourite foods and drinks that will assist in managing some of the side-effects of chemotherapy. The recipes are all low in fat and healthy, and are for everyone - not only the cancer patient.

The book is written in easy to understand terms and utilizes foods that can be easily tolerated by the person undergoing treatment, and the recipes are also tasty enough to be enjoyed by the whole family. The *Caregiver* chapter is a big boon for caregivers, family and friends and, because the book is co-authored by an oncologist, it also provides vital information during such a stressful time. Once the joy of eating returns, the *Healthy Eating Post Treatment* chapter will look at a long term healthier lifestyle. *Menus* and the *Recipe Cross Reference List* is a very valuable source of information for meal planning.

There are no fancy pictures, but the recipes speak louder than photos and each recipe itemizes per serving nutritional information, diabetic exchange, as well as doctor’s notes.

The recipes on the opposite page are reprinted with the kind permission of the authors. Let’s face it, cancer is not going away any time soon, and we all know at least one person who is undergoing therapy. To purchase a copy, contact the Canadian distributor by e-mailing anna@elitewinefoodtravel.com.

A.C.



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WATERMELON SLUSH

Great source of potassium and Vitamin C

1 cup	ice
3 cups	watermelon chunks
2 tbsp.	honey

Blend all ingredients in a blender or food processor. Makes 2 servings.

Doc's Notes: For cancer patient, watermelon seems to be the most tolerated fruit. It's light, cool, refreshing and goes down easy.

Diabetic Exchanges: 1 fruit, 1 other carb



ARTICHOKE SOUP

A few cans thrown in the food processor makes a wonderful creamy creation.

3 (14 oz.) cans	artichoke hearts, drained
3 (10-3/4 oz.) cans	fat-free cream of mushroom soup
1 cup	skim milk
2 cups	canned, fat-free chicken broth
1/2 cup	dry white wine, optional

Place artichokes in a food processor and purée. Combine remaining ingredients in a bowl and add to processor. Blend until well combined. Transfer to a pot and heat over low heat to serve. Makes 6 to 8 servings

Doc's Notes: This can be served at room temperature. Artichokes are high in Vitamin C, folacin, magnesium, phosphorus and potassium. Artichokes offer a health protective substance called silymarin, which may play a role in cancer prevention.

Diabetic Exchanges: 0.5 starch, 0.5 vegetable, 0.5 fat



LINGUINE FLORENTINE

This simply seasoned dish proved to be a light but satisfying dinner

2 tbsp.	olive oil
1 tsp.	minced garlic
1	large bunch fresh spinach (5 to 6 cups), stemmed and washed
1 (12 oz.) can	evaporated skimmed milk
	salt and pepper to taste
1 (16 oz.)	package linguine
1/3 cup	grated Parmesan cheese

In a large skillet, heat the oil and add the garlic and spinach. Cover and cook until the spinach is wilted, about 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the milk and season to taste. Meanwhile, prepare the pasta according to package directions; drain. Toss with the spinach in the skillet and sprinkle with the cheese. Makes 6 servings.

Doc's Notes: Add baked or grilled fish on the side and you have a wonderful meal! Cooked veggies are fine when white blood cell count is low.

Diabetic Exchanges: 4 starch, 0.5 skim milk, 1 fat



SURPRISE ROLLS

Here's a high-carb breakfast to keep those calories and energy in you.

3 tbsp.	light brown sugar
1 tsp.	ground cinnamon
1 (8 oz.)	can reduced-fat crescent dinner rolls
8	large marshmallows
2 tbsp.	margarine, melted

Preheat oven to 375°F. Coat 8 muffin cups in a muffin tin with non-stick cooking spray. In a small bowl, mix together the brown sugar and cinnamon; set aside.

Separate the dough into triangles and lay flat on a work surface. Dip marshmallows in the melted margarine and roll in the sugar mixture. Wrap one triangle around each marshmallow and pinch the dough together.

Place each one in a muffin tin. Drizzle any extra margarine over the top of the rolls in the pan. Bake for 8 to 12 minutes, or until done. Makes 8 rolls.

Doc's notes: A roll with an apple or banana will get you going. Very light and easy on the stomach.

Diabetic Exchanges: 1 star, 0.5 other carb., 1 fat



ALMOST BETTER THAN SEX CAKE

The name says it all when you have a sweet tooth, and this is such an easy recipe. Keep ingredients in pantry to prepare anytime.

1 (18-1/4 oz.)	box reduced-fat yellow cake mix
1/2 cup	skim milk
1/4 cup	water
1/3 cup	canola oil
2	large eggs
2	large egg whites
1 cup	non-fat plain yogurt
1 (4 serving)	box instant vanilla pudding
1 (4-oz)	bar German chocolate, grated
1/3 cup	semi-sweet chocolate chips
1/3 cup	chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 350°F. Combine all ingredients except chocolate chips and pecans in a large mixing bowl. Beat slightly, only until mixture is combined. Stir in chocolate chips and pecans. Pour batter into a 10-inch fluted Bundt pan coated with non-stick cooking spray and dusted with flour. Bake for 50 to 55 minutes. Do not overbake. Makes 20 servings.

Doc's Notes: Chocolate is an antioxidant

Diabetic Exchanges: 2 other carb., 2 fat 🍷

News & Views

FOOD

CELEBRITY COOKBOOK FOR AIDS CHARITIES

AIDS continues to be a major epidemic, and the need for caring philanthropic individuals to assist in the cause has never been greater. Lisa Ann Carrington, author of *Celebrity Cookbook*, understands this and has spent all her time over the last four years to organize and create this 'cookbook with a cause'. With more than 100 recipes by and photographs of celebrities, sports stars, famous personalities, artists and renowned chefs, this entertaining book is a great resource. It sells for \$30.00 US, and can be ordered from www.BonAppetitwithCelebrities.com. The National Aids Fund is one of America's largest philanthropic organizations. Readers can find out more about this fund by visiting www.aidsfund.org.

SWEETLEAF STEVIAPLUS

Wisdom Natural Brands now offers an all natural zero calories sweetener. SweetLeaf Steviaplus is available in single serving power-packets with no calories, carbohydrates, or chemicals and is 10 times sweeter than sugar. It is made of stevia rebaudiana, a herb native to Paraguay that has been used as a sweetener for centuries. Steviaplus contains a soluble fiber that improves regularity and strengthens the immune systems. It is also a sugar alternative for diabetics and is certified kosher. Steviaplus is available in the natural food section of your grocery store and at natural food stores. Visit www.wisdomnaturalbrands.com for product information.

APRÈS GASTRONOMIQUE: A COOKING AND CULINARY ADVENTURE

Après Restaurant in Whistler, British Columbia announced the launch of their cooking school, Après Gastronomie. Courses will run monthly until November, each at a different location. Two wine seminars will be held as part of the course, focusing on wines from B.C., Oregon and Washington. For more information, visit www.apresrestaurant.com or call 604-935-0200.



HEALTH

SNOWPACK RELIEVES PAIN WITHOUT THE USE OF DRUGS

Introduced in 2002, SnowPack has taken the initiative to bring to the forefront ice therapy, considered one of the oldest and safest methods of controlling pain and inflammation and proven to be effective in reducing swelling. Most importantly, compared to medications, ice therapy has no side effects or fear of heart complications. The product is reusable, dye-free, non-toxic, latex-free, and its contents are biodegradable. Visit their website www.snowpackusa.com to order your SnowPack, or to obtain more information.

HOTTEST BEVERAGES

According to the list released by the Cascadia Consulting Group, healthy beverages once again took the lead in 2004, as the trend toward healthier food and beverage consumption continues. At the top of the list was *Sanfaustino* (calcium water). Enjoyed in Italy for over 110 years, it offers 10% of the adult RDI for calcium in each 8 oz glass (www.sanfaustino.com).

Another product, *Inko's White Teas*, is one of the rarest of all teas which, according to modern research, carries the highest level of disease preventative antioxidants known as polyphenols. (www.healthywhitetea.com).

Growing in popularity in public schools is *Switch*, a 100% carbonated juice, that is healthy, all-natural and does not contain sugar or preservatives. (www.switchbev.com).

The *Zico Coconut Water* is a 99.9% pure coconut water with natural flavour essences, and it contains five essential electrolytes, more potassium than a banana, low acidity, no fat, no sugar added, and no cholesterol. (www.zico.com).

The *Metromint* water hails from the Northern Rockies. Infused with peppermint from Oregon and Washington, it is pure, natural, and carries the benefits of mint: stress relief, breath freshener, and rejuvenation. (www.metromint.com).

EAT WHAT YOU WANT AND STILL REMAIN THIN?

According to David Hariton, author of "Survival of the Thinnest", his prescription works to let you look good, feel great and stay thin while eating whatever you want. As a number of studies have shown, our bodies are not merely passive fat depositories; rather they maintain a particular level of fat that suits our lifestyle. High levels for couch potatoes; low for active. The key is a 30-minute a day exercise programme that not only works, but also jibes with a recent report in "Nature" about a study conducted by Dr. Dennis M. Bramble (University of Utah) and Dr. Daniel E. Lieberman (Harvard University). The study concluded that our distant ancestors developed primitive running attributes, thus improving the odds for survival and reproduction. The book is available at www.survivalofthethinnest.com

WINE / SPIRITS

DON EDUARDO TEQUILA SPORTS NEW PACKAGING

With the rising popularity of luxury spirits, Don Eduardo Tequila has a new look for its family of ultra-premium, award-winning tequilas, in line with renewed commitment to this brand. The clear glass bottle remains unchanged, but enhanced with a refined design of the Orendain coat of arms, a reminder of its long history and heritage. The tequilas are produced exclusively from fully matured 100% estate-grown blue agave from the Orendain Estate in Jalisco, Mexico. For more details, contact sean_wachsman@b-f.com.

NIAGARA COLLEGE SOMMELIER PROGRAM

Niagara College and the Canadian Association of Professional Sommeliers (CAPS) is now offering certified sommelier training. The course is currently scheduled to run until May 2006. A student is required to complete six modules, including sommelier management, production, and New World wine regions. Once the modules have been completed, the student will receive a joint certificate from Niagara College and CAPS. For more information, go to www.niagarac.on.ca/sommelier.

CHARDONNAY DU MONDE 2005

Results from the 12th annual Chardonnay of the World competition are now available. The three-day competition, held at Pasteur Institute in the Burgundy wine region of France, judged over 1000 wines from 37 countries. Several Canadian wines received medals, including three gold, four silver, and five bronze. Among the gold medal recipients were Peller Estates Winery and Jackson-Triggs Vintners. For complete results, visit www.chardonnay-du-monde.com.

JACKSON-TRIGGS AWARDS AT CUVÉE 2005

Jackson-Triggs Niagara Estate Winery received several honours at Niagara-on-the-Lake's annual Cuvée Gala. Winemaker Tom Seaver accepted two of only four 'best of' trophies in the categories of Best Red Wine and Best Sparkling Wine. Seaver also accepted the Gold Medal in the Best White Wine category. The winning wines were the winery's Grand Reserve Meritage VQA 2002, Grand Reserve Methode Classique Sparkling VQA 2001, and Grand Reserve Chardonnay VQA 2002. For information on the winery, visit www.jacksontriggswinery.com.

TRAVEL

AVEDA SPAS

Nova Scotia Signature Resorts announced the grand opening of Aveda Spas at the Keltic Lodge in Ingonish, and The Pines in Digby. *The Keltic Spa* will feature a seaweed body treatment to reflect the proximity to the Atlantic Ocean. The 5,000 square foot spa will include four treatment rooms, sauna, hair salon and pilates workout area. *The Pines*, inspired by the Annapolis Valley region where it is located, uses apples as the main ingredient in many of their treatments. The 2,500 square foot spa is built beside the Gothic-style outdoor pool overlooking the Bay of Fundy. Visit www.signatureresorts.com for more information.

"KAMU LODGE": NEWLY-OPENED ECO-RESORT IN NORTHERN LAOS

A two and a half hour boat journey upriver from Luang Prabang takes you to the eco-friendly experience of the Kamu Lodge, on the banks of the Mekong. Accommodation comprises 20 luxurious safari tents especially imported from South Africa, with electricity provided by solar panels attached to each tent. Thatched shelters cover the tents, while stone-built private bathrooms have the modern convenience of a solar-powered hot shower. The 2-day, 1-night experience includes transfers by traditional riverboat, an excursion to Pak Ou Caves, and typical Lao meals in a restaurant set among rice fields. Optional activities include rice planting, gold panning and fishing in the Mekong, treks through the forest to learn about its medicinal plants, encounters with members of neighbouring villages, and swimming at a nearby waterfall. Write info@kamulodge.com for more details.

EUROPEBYAIR

EuropebyAir's Flight Pass program is expanding. Air Plus Comet and Aero Flight have recently joined the Flight Pass program providing travelers with a cheap and easy way to explore Europe. The addition of Air Plus Comet provides flights from Madrid to Milan or Rome of only \$99 US one-way. The Frankfurt-based airline, Aero Flight, provides flights to destinations such as Alicante, Catania, Karpathos, St. Petersburg and Sarajevo. These routes, as well as all of Flight Passes 22 carriers, are available for \$99 US per person one-way. Flight Passes are only sold outside Europe to non-European residents. For more information or to book a flight, go to www.europebyair.com or call 1-888-231-9455.

TABOO RESORT REOPENS

Ontario's awarding winning Taboo Resort, Golf and Spa has undergone extensive remodelling and is now open to the public once again. The renovations include a new dining area featuring the restaurant with a private, glass enclosed dining room, and an interactive culinary theatre and piano bar. The resort also features completely redesigned lakeside accommodations. Taboo is located near Gravenhurst, Ontario on Lake Muskoka. For more information, visit www.tabooresort.com.



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Wining & Dining

by Margot L. Ritchie

A Rare Vertical Tasting of Three Different Centuries of Wines from Château Villemaurine, Saint Emilion

Peter Mietzynski Agencies hosted a special tasting from the cellars of Château Villemaurine this spring. The oldest château in St. Emilion, it has been owned since the late 1970s by Robert Giraud S.A., a leading producer in Bordeaux. The blend of predominantly Merlot grapes, with Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc is both powerful in structure and delicate in finesse. This reflects the low yields from 30+ year old vines and aging in oak barrels for at least 18 months.

This vertical tasting spanning three different centuries - 1865, 1914 and 2001 - provided a rare opportunity to assess changes in viticulture and winemaking techniques. Valued at \$26,000, \$8,000 and \$85 respectively, these bottles had been stored in their underground cellars and recorked every 30 years.

This tasting depleted their library of the 1865 vintage, made the same year Abraham Lincoln was assassinated, from 12 to just 10 bottles. It is now the oldest vintage remaining in their cellars. In the days before phylloxera hit France over 1875-1890, there was no need for pesticide or fungicide. Grapes were hand harvested and crushed by foot. The free run juice was vinified with the skins, giving a distinctive herbal character and greater acidity to the wine. This vintage did not undergo malolactic fermentation, a practice that only started in the 1950s. Thin and pale, with orange hues as one might expect of a vintage of this age, the wine showed an amazing complexity with great length on the nose. On the palate, berries and dried cherries intermingle with herbaceous and acidic undertones.

The 1914 vintage coincided with the outbreak of World War I. Its colour had not fallen out as much as the 1865 vintage and showed a deeper roan red colour. The compelling nose was intensely complex, with barnyard aromas, cedar and vanilla.

In keeping with the tasting's aim to select vintages from historic milestones, the 2001 vintage was picked in memory of the September 11 tragedy. Deep plum in colour, the great structure and elegance of this wine is testimony to why Château Villemaurine wines age so well. Smokey, with vanilla and dark chocolate nuances and pepper and licorice aspects on the complex nose and palate, it has a long, silky finish. One can only imagine what its cellaring potential might be into the next century.

"Experience the Greek Wine Renaissance"

That was the theme of a wine seminar and tasting at Toronto's Hotel Intercontinental this spring. Sofia Perpera, who came to the U.S. from Greece in 2002, created the concept of 'All About Greek' www.allaboutgreekwine.com to raise the profile of Greek wines in North America.

As she explained, the Greek winemaking industry suffered during the long era of Turkish occupation, the subsequent World War I & II, and the Balkan and Civil Wars. After centuries of winemaking, retsina was popularized in the 1950s. This winemaking technique added pine pinch or resin to preserve white wines in the days before glass bottling. Retsina dominated the Greek wine scene until a major investment began 25 years ago that has heralded in a renaissance in Greek wines. Three major themes characterize today's Greek wines - indigenous grapes, fruit forward wines and quality for value price points. This was exemplified in the tasting of eight white and nine red wines that followed the seminar.

Roditis is a popular pink-skinned varietal grown extensively on the large island of Peloponnese, to the south of mainland Greece. *Oenoforos Asproolithi 2004* (\$14) comes from Patra, the most mountainous region of Greece. This white wine shows a racy acidity, with lemon, almond and mineral notes and a clean finish.

Moschofilero is another pink-skinned varietal that produces delicate, aromatic white wines with Muscat characteristics. We sampled two wines made 100% from this varietal, both grown in the Mantinia appellation of Peloponnese. From Domaine Spiropoulos, *Mantinia 2004* (\$12.95) makes a refreshing aperitif wine. Clear with a light pink hue, characteristic of this varietal, it has a honeysuckle nose with an unctuous palate of sweet honeyed pear notes and ripe almonds. The *Mantinia 2004* from Domaine Tselepos (\$15) also has the characteristic light pink hue. With an underlying core of acidity and a slight spritz on the palate, this wine has hints of grapefruit, almond and minerals in the finish.

The thin skinned Athiri grape is one of the oldest Greek varieties, originating on the island of Santorini. This varietal is typically blended, except on the island of Rhodes which experiences particularly long sunshine periods. *Athiri 2004* from Enoteca Emery (\$16) in Rhodes, has a light golden hue. Round fruit flavours of lemon, apple and white peach are underlaid by an acidic backdrop.

Robola is a low yielding white indigenous varietal. Genitilini's *Robola 2003* (\$18.95) comes from the island of Cephalonia to the northwest of Peloponnese. Round citrus and peach flavours, with hints of smoke come through on the palate.

Assyrtiko, a varietal first cultivated on the island of Santorini, produces bone dry white wines due to the volcanic soil type there. *Domaine Sigalas Santorini 2004* (\$20) is a 100% varietal. Crisp, with up front acidity, it has a fresh, youthful character of apple and lemon, with sweet pears in the finish. Assyrtiko and Malagousia are blended equally in *Domaine Gerovassiliou 2004* (\$15). Pale lemon with lime highlights, this wine has excellent body with good acidity. Forward tropical fruit, pear and spicy notes give way to an elegant finish in this well balanced wine. *Ktima Pavlidi 2004* (\$19) is a blend of Assyrtiko and Sauvignon Blanc grapes. This delicate wine is crisp and light, with some herbal notes and apple skin flavours in the finish.

In the reds, one of the most recognized Greek varietals is Agiorghitiko, known as the St. George grape. It produces full bodied wines, rich in tannins with a black currant bouquet. We sampled four 100% varietal wines from the Nemea region on the island of Peloponnese. *Fresco Averoff 2003* (\$16), from Katogi & Strofilia is an aromatic wine. Food friendly, it is deep plum cherry in colour, with black pepper, licorice and spice intermingling with sweet dried cherry flavours. *Mount Helios Agiorghitiko 2003* (\$16.95) shows a greater sense of terroir. Subtle oak flavours, from three months of oak aging, underpin light strawberry and red currant fruit on the palate. Palivou Vineyards Nemea 2003 (\$28) has a New World style. Garnet and plum in hue, it has concentrated flavours of licorice and chocolate, with herbal notes and savoury undertones. Well integrated oak from 14 months in barrel adds complexity. *Domaine Skouras* uses this varietal in its *Grand Cuvee 2003* (\$28). Intense garnet hued, with a deep raspberry flavoured palate and a subtle herbaceous undertone, this wine has good aging potential.

Xinomavro is a popular red varietal, whose high tannins and acidity provide great aging potential to the wines. From Kir Yianni Estate in Macedonia, one of the oldest winemaking regions in northern Greece, comes the 100% varietal *Ramnista 1999* (\$20). Light cherry in hue, this wine shows savoury olive and herb flavours on the palate. Though the acidity has mellowed with age, this wine should still be paired with food because of its high tannins.

Next we experienced blends of indigenous Greek and other Old World varietals. The first was *Mercuri Estate 2001* (\$19.35) from Peloponnese, made from the Italian varietal Refosco (70%) and Mavrodaphne (30%). The latter is typically blended with Kointhiaki currants to produce the delicious Mavrodaphne dessert wine. This drier version is rustic in style, with up front flavours of sweet plums, red licorice and spice, with hints of chocolate and caramel in the soft, mid palate.


We then sampled three reds that incorporated Bordeaux varietals in their blend. Tsolis Winery from the island of Peloponnese, blends Cabernet Sauvignon (90%) with Grenache and Merlot in its *Ftelia 2000* (\$33.50).

Unfiltered and aged for one year in new oak, coffee, cedar and tobacco, with animal notes show in this wine of classic Bordeaux elegance. Evangelos Tsantalos from Macedonia, blends Cabernet Sauvignon (60%) with the indigineous Limnio (40%) grape in its *Metohi 2000* (\$17.95). Garnet plum coloured, sweet chocolate and firm forward oak flavours come through in this well extracted wine. Ampelones Antonopoulos blends Cabernet Franc with the indigenous Vertzami grape, favoured for its intense colour extraction, in their *Gerontoklima 2000* (\$29). Plum coloured, this wine has a floral nose with a mid palate of sweet fruit and mineral notes that will cellar well for 3-4 years.

Greece is delivering some intriguing wines at exceptional price points. It is well worth the effort to explore them.


New 1.5 Litre Bottle Format for South Australia's Banrock Station Wines

Banrock Station has enjoyed a loyal following for their range of easy drinking, food friendly wines. Their recently released 1.5 litre format, offered in three single varietal options, is particularly convenient for summer entertaining with large, informal gatherings. Look for fresh notes of green apples, citrus, hints of pear and tropical fruit undertones in the *Chardonnay 2004*. Unwooded, it shows enough complexity to appeal to those who love their rich textured Chardonnays. The *Shiraz 2003* is dark purple in colour, with forward fruit aromas of cherries, plums and blackberries, intermingled with hints of spice. Medium bodied, with soft tannins, it is fun to pair with a platter of cold cuts, cheeses, pickles and olives at a picnic. The *Cabernet Sauvignon 2003* has dark berry hues, with notes of plums and cherries. Made in an approachable style, it is well suited to barbecue fare.


Banrock Station continues to win recognition for their efforts to promote preservation of the wetlands and wildlife. Their aim is to protect species that are on the brink of extinction, conserving their natural habitat to allow them to survive in the wild. A portion of each bottle that Banrock Station sells is donated to wetland organizations worldwide. For more information, visit www.banrockstation.com.au. 



Margot Ritchie is a Toronto-based wine and food journalist and consultant. She has traveled through many of the wine-growing regions of North America, Europe and New Zealand. Her wine-related activities include providing food catering to private functions and corporations, co-ordinating wine lists for restaurants and putting together wine cellars for private clients.



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CONCOURS MONDIAL 2005 DE BRUXELLES

Article and photos by W.C. Enoteca

The luxurious Thermae Palace hotel, located in Ostende, Belgium - the area's queen of beaches - hosted the recent 12th annual Concours Mondial de Bruxelles, the authoritative and highly-respected international wine competition that is known for its professionalism, integrity, excellence, and experience. The 192 judges who took part hailed from 43 different countries and five continents. With the double patronage and support of the Office Internationale de la Vigne et du Vin (OIV) and the Union Internationale des Oenologues (UIOE), Concours Mondial firmly entrenches this competition as a leader in the international scene.

A staggering 4,666 wine and spirit samples from 46 countries were swirled, smelled and blind tasted over a period of three days (or 2780 hours). The judging panels comprise 32 committees (30 for wines and 2 for spirits), composed of six tasters, each of whom taste around 50 samples each morning. During the tasting, every effort is made to guarantee optimal conditions: tasting glasses that meet high quality standards, strict control of ambient temperature, continuous monitoring of refrigerators, etc. The mandate of Concours Mondial de Bruxelles is for wine producers from around the world to showcase their wines in an

environment of equality and impartiality and, in so doing, make it possible for consumers to discover wines of various origins and be able to make informed choices. A medal from Concours Mondial de Bruxelles is not only a mark of guarantee for the consumer, but also recognition of choice for the producer.

Space does not permit the listing of all winning wines, but you are invited to visit www.concoursmondial.be for complete details. In the meantime, following are the number of Great Gold Medals awarded:

Great Gold Medals:

Australia:.....1	Italy.....13
Canada:.....1	Luxemburg.....2
Chile:.....3	Portugal.....3
France.....8	South Africa:.....3
Germany:.....1	Spain.....6
Hungary.....1	Switzerland.....1
	Uruguay.....1

We congratulate the organizers in having the vision to hold, for the first time, the 2006 competition outside Belgium: in Lisbon, Portugal. This initiative is sure to increase the scope of the competition, and add a greater European flavour to this already popular and successful event.

Thermae Palace Hotel, Ostende - competition headquarters



Ostende - old and new architecture stand side by side



Ostende's Port



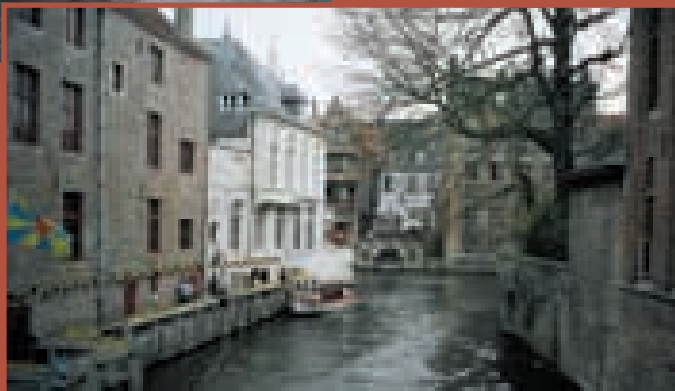
Yes, there is only one Venice. But, surely, there is no denying the history, mystery, charms and tourist attractions of Bruges, Belgium, also known as the 'Little Venice of the North'.

The Flemish coastal city of Bruges dates back 2000 years, when it began as a Gallic-Roman settlement. It was attacked for the first time by the Germanic people around the year 270. Christianity came to the area with the arrival of Saint Eligius around 650. Bruges' name is derived from the Old Norse word 'Bryggja' which means 'landing stage', and this name can be seen on documents and coins since the mid-ninth century. By the 11th century Bruges had become a commercial centre in Europe but, with the storm flood of 1134, a deep channel appeared - the Zwin - which then reached the spot of today's Damme. This occurrence forever changed the Flemish coastal plain. Over the centuries, Bruges has had many setbacks, to the extent that around 1850 Bruges was the country's poorest city. Things began to improve around the late twentieth century so that, today, the city has evolved into an art and tourist centre whose museums and monuments attract millions of tourists annually.



The Canals (Left/Below)

Left: In the background, the well-known Belfry with its 366 steps of winding staircase. Its carillon of 47 bells is acknowledged as one of the finest in the world.



A delightful excursion was organized for the judges of the Concours Mondial de Bruxelles to Bruges, located a mere half-hour drive from Ostende. Upon arriving in this enchanting city, one is immediately struck by not only the harmonious blend of its old and modern architecture, but also by the city's obvious similarity to Venice

Bruges has much to offer tourists, from its Archeological Museum that holds such finds as pottery, glassware, leather, metalwork and woodwork; to the Diamond Museum that not only illustrates Bruges' history as Europe's oldest diamond centre and demystifies the world of the diamond, but also demonstrates that diamonds are one of the country's most important export products. The Groeninge Museum displays art of Flemish,

BRUGES •

LITTLE VENICE OF THE NORTH




Bruges' gothic City Hall

Dutch and Belgian painters over a span of six centuries. The baroque interior church of this historic hospital complex, Museum of Our Lady of the Potterie, is a treasure trove of paintings, tapestries, furniture, sculptures as well as a major anthology of silverware.

As the judges meandered through some narrow and winding streets, they also came upon Burg Square and the nearby City Hall, one of the oldest gothic city halls of the Low Countries (1376-1420). If you are interested in the history of Bruges, then visit the Historic Room of the City Hall where documents, paintings and other items are stored.

Below: The competition judges enjoying their visit to Bruges. In the background, the statue of famous Dutch scientist Simon Stevinplein (1548-1620), who was also a leading counselor of Prince Maurits of Nassau.



Bruges will appeal to visitors of all ages. Sandy beaches in nearby Ostende for water and sun worshippers complement a variety of sporting and leisure activities. A well, good hotels and top cuisine make this region a perfect holiday destination. So, if you're planning a trip to Belgium, it would be well worth your while to immerse yourself in this world-famous city that is well known for its historical and artistic heritage. 

Beauties Come of Age

by Robert Black

The average tourist to Italy, and frivolous young lovers, enjoy sharing fruity carafe wines on outdoor patios and terraces.

For wine aficionados, at home or abroad, many pleasures of Italy come from full-bodied beauties that have matured gracefully with time.

Often they are referred to as Barbaresco, Barolo, Brunello or Super Tuscans, plus there are other pleasant surprises.

One of my favourite wine categories is Barbaresco. The region is very close to the Barolo zone in Piedmont, Italy.

The eponymous wines of both regions have been accorded the top status in Italy of D.O.C.G. and only the Nebbiolo grape is allowed in either wine.

Barbaresco wines tend to be more precocious than Barolo as they are quite approachable at five years of age and may last for another decade or more. The trace of minerals in the soil in Barbaresco impart a distinctly different flavour profile which is wonderfully complex and appealing, especially with the right food.

1985 Pelissero Barbaresco Vanatu

I brought this wine home from the winery years ago and was rewarded for aging it in a cool, dark cellar. Opened recently at the Ca Bianca restaurant in Sonoma County, California, it was perfectly developed.

The colour was that of a rustic red brick. Complex aroma of truffles and ripe fruits wafted subtly from the vessel.

To harmonize with such a wine, I selected deboned quail stuffed with a wild mushroom ragu accompanied by a saffron risotto. It was definitely the right food.

Within the Barolo zone there are several sub-zones and some of those, notably Serralunga, Monforte d'Alba, Barolo, and Castiglione Falletto have wines that live longer than those from a sub-zone such as La Morra.

1979 Barolo Cavallotto (Castiglione Falletto) Riserva Bricco Boschis

A riserva Barolo indicates the wine has been aged longer than a normal Barolo, four years rather than three, traditionally most of the time in large oak casks. Only the best of wines in top vintage years have the structure to handle this extra aging and to improve the final result.

This wine was absolutely at its peak as evidenced by its effusive aromas. Apt descriptors for a good Barolo are 'tar and roses'. This wine exhibited the aroma of tar, however, at this stage of its evolution, the floral character was a pot pourri of mature scents. The taste was rich with a soft mouth feel. By age 25, it had peaked but it held until we could enjoy the incredible match in tonality and texture along with the flavours of the food.

This wine was shared at a friend's home. It was matched with homemade pasta in the form of veal cannelloni. They were simultaneously silky and al dente.

Drizzled with a salsa di pomodoro made from fresh heirloom tomatoes the marriage was

magical. Aging had mellowed the wine so the combination was successful. In its youth this Barolo would have over-powered this dish and been inappropriate.

The region of Piedmont is best known for the quality of its wines based on the Nebbiolo grape - but there are other grapes that warrant attention.

Barbera wines have historically been made from the workhorse Barbera grape. It was planted lower on the hills and in the valleys where Nebbiolo did not perform as well. Often it was also over cropped as the vineyardist tried to get double the yield from Barbera than from Nebbiolo.

Not surprisingly the results were often unimpressive. This changed for the better about forty years ago. Giacomo Bologna altered the approach to growing Barbera and to its elaboration in the winery. By selecting vineyard sites to optimize the varietal, and drastically reducing yields to the range typical for quality wines, the results were amazing. When Barbera wines are made in this style, they can comfortably cohort with other noble grapes as they are as loveable as the late Giacomo.

1985 Bricco dell Uccellone (Giacomo Bologna)

The name of this Barbera wine can make you chuckle, blush or both, but requires translation by someone who has Italian as their mother tongue.


My son and I traveled in Piedmont in 1988 and there he acquired a magnum (1.5 liters) of this wine which he later presented as a gift to my wife who could not go to Italy at that time.

Recently the three of us, plus a Sicilian friend, shared the wine. A mature magnum and four people was a great combination along with rack of lamb grilled medium-rare to rare to accentuate the meatiness of the wine.

In fact it was such a great combination the magnum was soon consumed. Since we still had lamb and Parmigiano Reggiano cheese of Emilia-Romagna to come, something had to be done.

1981 Regaleali Rosso del Conste Tasca d'Almerita - Sicily

The principal grapes in this wine were Calabrese and Perricone. These varietals are virtually unknown outside their homeland, but they should be. I have bought and cellared numerous vintages of these wines and have been rewarded both in value and consistently noteworthy quality.

This occasion vindicated the Regaleali being selected to follow through with the lamb and to carry on to the cheese course. With the lamb the Regaleali exhibited dark fruit flavours that resonated wonderfully with rosemary fresh from the garden. On switching from Piedmont to Sicily we may have gone south geographically but, wine wise, we were still on top of the world. 



Robert Black, has won international wine journalism awards in three countries. He is respected as the Canadian authority on Italian wine. He conducts gastronomic trips worldwide and, along with the world's leading enologists, judges internationally in four countries.

Do You Have a Pet Peeve?

Write to

editor@elitewinefoodtravel.com

with your Pet Peeve,
(50 words or less) and it may be included in an upcoming issue. Visit www.elitewinefoodtravel.com and click on "Have Your Say" to share your Pet Peeve!



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Calendar of Events

29TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL EASTERN WINE COMPETITION & PUBLIC TASTING

SUMMER BOUQUET: PUBLIC TASTING AND AWARDS CEREMONY

June 18, 2005: Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York

Hosted in conjunction with the International Eastern Wine Competition, and Vineyard & Winery Management magazine, this event follows on the heels of the IEWC Competition in May. The Museum will again play host to the 'Summer Bouquet', a public tasting and awards ceremony at which the Best of Category winners of the competition will be made public. Wine lovers can sample more than 100 wines and meet winemakers from around the world, as well as indulge in food prepared by Finger Lakes-area restaurateurs and fine food companies. For admission prices, group rates, and weekend lodging packages, contact Yvette Sterbenk, 607 974-8124 or visit www.cmog.org

NIAGARA GRAPE AND WINE FESTIVALS

Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

Kick off summer in Ontario's wine country with a series of festivals scattered from Grimsby to Niagara-on-the-Lake. Taste some on Ontario's newest wines, or experience some old favourites. Check the website for information on the upcoming Niagara Wine Festival, September 16-25, 2005 and Niagara Icewine Festival, January 13-22, 2006.

NIAGARA WINE TRAIL USA

Until December 4, 2005

Niagara Wine Trail, in Cambria, NY, announced the revised dates for this year's events that incorporate four wineries in the Niagara Escarpment and Lake Ontario, USA area: Warm Lake Estate, Niagara Landing, Marjim Manor, and Vizcarra Vineyards. These weekend events run through until December 4, at a cost of \$5.00 per person that includes a wine glass for tastings and admission to the participating wineries. For more information, visit www.warmlakeestate.com or contact Michael VonHeckler at 716-731-5900.

SCARAMOUCHE RESTAURANT CELEBRATES 25TH BIRTHDAY

July-August 2005: Toronto, Ontario

Celebrate Scaramouche's 25th anniversary with one of the new Silver Anniversary tasting menus. This series of five course menus features some of Executive Chef and co-owner Keith Froggett's personal favourites, including roasted quail filled with Quebec foie gras and wrapped in paper-thin slices of smoked bacon. The menus will also include Scaramouche's famous mile-high coconut cream pie. For reservations, call 416-961-8011. To view the menu and wine list, visit www.scaramoucherestaurant.com.

21st ANNUAL VEGETARIAN FOOD FAIR

September 9-11, 2005: Toronto, Ontario

The Toronto Vegetarian Association will be hosting the 21st Annual Vegetarian Food Fair this fall at Toronto's Harbourfront Centre. This free event draws up to 15,000 visitors each year and is the largest event of its kind in North America. Over 100 vegetarian-related businesses and organizations will be on hand showcasing products ranging from non-dairy chocolates to soymilk-making machines and vegetarian-based soaps. The all-vegetarian World Café will be open for the duration of the fair. Visit www.veg.ca/foodfair or call 416-544-8891 for more information.

GERMAN WINE ACADEMY TOUR

September 11-17, 2005

Experience one of the oldest wine producing areas in the world during the early harvest. Deutsches Weinstitut presents the annual wine study tour from September 11-17. This one week tour will take participants through six different wine regions of Germany where they will experience winery tours, meet the producers and wine-makers, and sample local cuisine. Go to www.germanwines.de for more information. For a free brochure, with reservation application, contact the German Wine Information Bureau of Canada at 905-815-1581 or germanwinecanada@sympatico.ca.

JACKSON-TRIGGS 'TWILIGHT IN THE VINEYARD'

Summer 2005: Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

Tickets are now on sale for Jackson-Triggs 2005 performing arts programme. The performances are held at Niagara-on-the-Lake's open-air amphitheater beginning July 2 and concluding on August 27. The festival opens with a performance by singer-songwriter Sarah Harmer. Other performances throughout the festival include Melanie Doane, Spirit of the West, Matt Dusk, and Quartetto Gelato. The programme will conclude with the world premiere of Carmen La Gitana! This show, inspired by Bizet's Carmen, includes ballet dancers Veronica Tennant, Rex Harrington, and Ronda Nycka, opera singer Jean Stilwell, flamenco guitarist Jorge Miguel and pianist Robert Kortgaard. For tickets, visit www.jacksontriggswinery.com or call the Jackson-Triggs Amphitheater box office at 1-866-589-4637.

COLORADO MOUNTAIN WINEFEST

September 15-18, 2005: Grand Junction, Colorado

You can look forward to a weekend full of food, music, competitions, tours and seminars in addition to the best wines that Colorado's Grand Valley has to offer. The "Golf and Wine with a View" reception at Redlands Mesa Golf Course returns for its second year at the Winefest. Contact gayelene@orecommunications.com or go to www.visitgrandjunction.com for more information.

SPLENDOURS OF SICILY: WINE, FOOD AND CULTURE

September 28-October 9, 2005: Sicily, Italy

This 11-day excursion will take travelers through the vineyards of Sicily, guided by wine expert and educator Steve Thurlow. Guests will be led through wineries during the annual Vendemmia (grape harvest), experience Mount Etna, Europe's largest active volcano, and enjoy the late-summer Mediterranean sun. The tour includes visits to major Greek and Roman historic sites, and guests will stay in three beach-side hotels. For more information, or to download a registration package, go to www.stevethurlow.com.

STIRRING THINGS UP IN CHICAGO

Until October 2, 2005: Chicago, Illinois

Experience the sights, sounds and tastes of Chicago this summer during the numerous events held as part of the *Stirring it Up* series. Events include showcases of Chicago's culinary, visual, performing, and literary arts including poetry readings, theater performances, cooking classes, and music concerts. The highlight event, the *25th annual Taste of Chicago* celebration, will be held June 24-July 4 on Chicago's lakefront. These events also coincide with special hotel rates at many of the downtown hotels. For more information on any of the events, visit www.877chicago.com or call 1-877-244-2246.

HOSTEX 2005

October 16-18, 2005: Toronto, Ontario

This year's HostEx is scheduled for October 16-18 at Toronto's International Centre. This foodservice and accommodation trade show is Canada's largest hospitality trade show. In 2004, the show hosted over 950 booths and close to 10,000 visitors. This event also generates Canada's largest attendance of chain buyers. For more information, visit www.hostexshow.com.

GRAPES FOR HUMANITY EVENTS

October 18 & 19, 2005: Toronto, Ontario

Grapes for Humanity, a non-profit organization supporting victims and survivors of disasters and personal tragedies, will be hosting several fundraising events this fall. On October 18, Grano Restaurant in downtown Toronto will hold an exclusive wine tasting with Marchese Leonardo Frescobaldi. On October 19, join the Frescobaldi 'Under the Tuscan Stars' event at Toronto's Park Hyatt Hotel. This private dinner and auction will feature some of the finest Frescobaldi wines. For more information, or to book reservations, visit www.grapesforhumanity.com or call 1-800-218-1422.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE SHOW OF CHAMPAGNE AND SPARKLING WINE TECHNIQUES

October 19-22, 2005: Epernay, France

The eighth edition of this international tradeshow gathers together the sparkling wine professionals from some of France's most noted wine sectors, as well as professionals from Germany, Italy, and Spain. Events include a day of European technological meetings on October 19, a technical day for oenologists, presentations and wine tastings, and awards ceremonies. This show focuses on the unique field of sparkling wine and the techniques used to create this product. For information, contact Delphine Dethune delphine.dethune@reims.cci.fr or go to www.reims.cci.fr.

TORONTO GENERAL & WESTERN HOSPITAL FOUNDATION CULINARY WINE FESTIVAL

October 27-29, 2005: Toronto, Ontario

You can't go wrong by eating and drinking for a good cause. This year's Grand Cru Culinary Wine Festival will feature wine tasting, unforgettable dining experiences and a wine auction and brunch. All proceeds go to Toronto General & Western Hospital Foundation's Support a Scientist program. For information, visit www.grandcru.ca or call 416-483-8333.

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4TH ANNUAL VINTAGES AUCTION

October 29-30, 2005: Toronto Ontario

Ritchies Auctioneers & Appraisers of Toronto will be hosting the annual Vintages Auction, that allows collectors to buy and sell rare and old bottles of wine from some of the finest wine-producing regions of the world, including France's Burgundy and Bordeaux region; Italy; Australia; and California. For more information, contact John Miller of Ritchies at 416-364-0704 or e-mail jmiller@ritchies.com.

HOLIDAY FOOD & WINE PAIRING

November 5, 6, 2005: Grand Junction, Colorado

Participating wineries at this eagerly-awaited event offer tastes of their signature wines, paired with holiday dishes especially chosen to complement the wines. Visit www.visitgrandjunction.com for information.

SAN DIEGO BAY WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL

November 10-12, 2005: San Diego, California

San Diego's largest wine and food event will showcase more than 150 wines from around the world. The three-day festival will feature wine tasting, cooking classes, wine pairing dinners, and reserve tasting. The event concludes with the Grand Event and Auction on November 13, 2005. For more information, go to www.worldofwineevents.com or call 619-342-7337.

PROWEIN 2006

March 26-28, 2006: Dusseldorf, Germany

ProWein, an international trade fair for the wine and spirit industry, has announced the dates for the next fair: March 26-28, 2006. Last year, ProWein, held in Dusseldorf, hosted more than 29,000 industry professionals and offered more than 2,700 exhibits from around the world. For more information on registration, or to become an exhibitor, visit www.prowein.com.


VINEXPO OVERSEAS 2006

May 23-25, 2006: Hong Kong

Next year's Vinexpo International Wine and Spirit Exhibition will be held in Hong Kong. The decision to hold the event in Asia is an effort to show support for the market's growing industry in this area. Hong Kong was also the site of the first Vinexpo Overseas in 1998, which proved to be a great success. Tickets for the event go on sale June 2005. Go to www.vinexpo.com or e-mail go to info@vinexpo.com for more information.

VINITALY 2006

April 6-10, 2006: Verona, Italy

Mark your calendar now for this popular exhibition. Visit www.vinitaly.com for complete details. 

Have Your Say!

Our readers have responded!
Here are the results to the question:
Can there ever be too much garlic in recipes? (be honest!)

33% Agreed

67% Disagreed

Italy's Umbria District

A Cultural Fantasy

Entering Assisi on foot

Article and photos by Anna Cavaliere

In the centre of Italy, between Tuscany and Lazio (Rome's province) lies the picturesque province of Umbria. Unlike many other Italian provinces, this region cannot lay claim to a coast but it is home to hills, lakes and valleys. And since it is not overrun with tourists, it is a splendid vacation spot for those who dream of a more leisurely and serene vacation lifestyle. Umbria is harmony in motion, combining a rich culture of music, art, history, and religion. Agriculture is also alive and well, with the most famous of their products being 'truffles', highly regarded and esteemed by food aficionados worldwide.

Naturally one cannot expect to see all of Umbria at one time, so we concentrated a recent visit to this delightful area to seeing the Lungarotti Winery in Torgiano, Assisi, and Umbria's capital, Perugia.

father's tradition of innovation in all the company's activities. They, too, are committed to maintaining the winery's reputation for quality while all the while blending the values of tradition, territory and history.

We sampled some of this 'liquid' history at a private tasting graciously conducted by Elsebee Ortolani. The *Rubesco Rosso Di Torgiano* (Rubesco is an exclusive Lungarotti trademark), is a non-filtered wine made from a blend of Canaiolo and Sangiovese. Moderately aged in oak and then in the bottle, this well-balanced wine displays a rich ruby-red hue and offers good body. The incomparable classical wine, *Rubesco Riserva "Vigna Monticchio"*, can be drunk immediately or set aside for future consumption if properly cellared. The super table wine "*San Giorgio – Indicazione Geografica Tipica Umbria*", a blend of Sangiovese, Canaiolo and Cabernet Sauvignon, features rich tannins that augur well for its long aging potential. A new-age wine, the *Giubilante* is made with the Sangiovese, Canaiolo, Merlot and Montepulciano grape varieties, and is characterized by its intense colour and soft tannins. Very adaptable, it marries well with a wide variety of foods.

LUNGAROTTI WINERY

It would not be far off the mark to say that the town of Torgiano owes its high profile to the Lungarotti Winery, founded by the late Giorgio Lungarotti in the early 1960's. Today the company is headed by Maria Grazia Marchetti, Giorgio's wife and director of the Lungarotti Foundation and directed by sisters Chiara Lungarotti and Teresa Severini, who are diligent in employing their

The Lungarotti Winery



The Lungarotti Foundation

Under the auspices of the Foundation, and thanks to the vision and efforts of Maria Grazia Marchetti, Giorgio's wife, both the *Wine Museum* and the *Olive and Oil Museum* were conceived and became a reality. The foundation's mandate is to promote research and cultural events as well as the organization of conferences, exhibits, seminars and round tables. The Foundation is directly responsible for the two museums and preserving the works contained therein.

Il Museo Del Vino

Located in the 17th century Palazzo Graziani-Baglioni, its twenty rooms combine to hold marvellous treasures pertaining to archeological, technical, historical and artistic aspects of wine. The visitor is introduced to a magnificent history that begins from its mid-eastern origins to the present time. If you are interested in grapes and wine, and their impact on mankind, schedule some time to drop in at the museum.

The Olive and Oil Museum

Although olive-growing in Umbria can be traced as far back as the Roman age, it was after the 16th century when its growth increased to accommodate the demands of the religious orders of the time. Recognized as a source of wealth, the olive tree later attained 'protected' status in order to guarantee a constant supply to villages, towns and abbeys. Olive oil was not only used as a dietary supplement, but was also seen to have palliative and emollient health benefits, and sometimes even miraculous powers. A tour of the Olive and Oil Museum, housed in a combination of beautifully restored medieval structures in the centre of Torgiano, takes the visitor through ten rooms spread out over three levels. Be prepared to spend some time here since there is so much information to be absorbed. You can learn about the mythological origin of the tree; how the olives are

cultivated and the oil manufactured; the evolution of the many uses for olives, oil and their by-products, i.e. religion, medicine, cosmetics, sport, and even fuel. The list goes on! Oil has been 'a source of light' and, to highlight this connectivity, the museum displays a vast collection of oil lamps that date from pre-Roman times up to the 19th century. The museum is both informative and entertaining, and well worth a visit.

Le Tre Vaselle Hotel

We were fortunate indeed to spend a night at *Le Tre Vaselle Hotel*, located on Via Giuseppe Garibaldi, 48 in Torgiano, and just a mere 8 km. distance from Perugia. Walking distance to the Wine Museum, Olive and Oil Museum, and the Lungarotti Winery and vineyards, this hotel is luxury personified. The interior of the building, with the base being a converted 17th century home, is fitted with thick walls, wooden beams, terracotta floor, and large stone fireplaces. Depending on the room assigned, the view from the windows can be either the gardens, courtyards or the Tiber river valley. The hotel's kitchens proffer the rich flavours of Umbrian cuisine, accompanied by a vast and excellent wine and spirits list. Fitness buffs can use the outdoor pool during the warmer months, or for the rest of the year utilize the heated indoor pool or its whirlpool, small gym, or sauna. Also available, upon request, are massages and esthetician services. Tranquility, understated elegance, hospitable staff and great amenities are yours at this hotel. For more details, and rates, visit www.3vaselle.it.

ASSISI

Thousands of visitors flock each year to the northern part of the Umbria district to visit Assisi, situated on the western slopes of Mount Subasio. Known as the "City of Peace", the site for meetings of many of the world religions, the city itself has had to endure invasions, civil unrest, occupations, and destruction over the centuries. History tells us that Assisi had many rulers beginning with its founders, the Umbrians, who were later deposed by the Etruscans whose walls can still be seen today. The Romans took power in 1 B.C., and left a legacy of several monuments including the "Temple of Minerva", the ruins of the "Amphitheatre" and the "Theatre". During their reign, Assisi enjoyed a period of relative peace and prosperity until the fall of the Roman Empire.

For the religious, Assisi is the birthplace of two of Christianity's great saints: Francis (1182) and Clare (1193). Born to Pietro and Giovanna Bernardone, Saint Francis was baptized Giovanni Battista, but called Francis. Ultimately, Francis would be the single most prominent influence on the life, culture and religion of Assisi that would later transcend to the entire world.

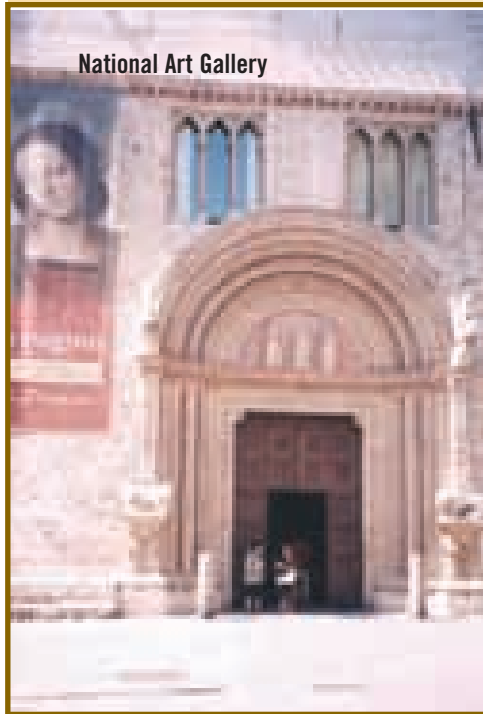
During the battle between Assisi and Perugia, Francis was captured and imprisoned for a year. As a result of this life-altering experience, he renounced his inheritances and his father's possessions to beg for alms, and to follow a divine exhortation to reconstruct the Church. He dedicated his life to preach the gospel of joy, humility and poverty, and showed unselfish love by caring for the lepers. His was a faith that most closely resembled the life of Christ. He died on October 3, 1226, and his remains were buried in the Church of St. George, where they stayed until they were moved to the Basilica in 1230. Today, the town holds the Festival of St. Francis on October 3rd-4th in his honour when the faithfuls come to venerate this beloved saint.



Le Tre Vaselle Hotel



National Art Gallery



PERUGIA

A protagonist of the Renaissance, the artist Perugino is credited with the reinvention of the perception of light, of transparency, and of colours, demonstrated by his unique use of these techniques in his art. Giovanni Santi, father of Raffaello, nicknamed him 'divine' and, possibly for this reason, there were many who traveled from France, Spain and Germany as well as other Italian provinces to delve into the secrets of his art. To see firsthand the collection of Perugino's works, the greatest of which can be found in the Chamber of Exchange, might be reason enough to visit Perugia. Add to that a vast collection in the *National Gallery of Art* of religious works from the 13th – 18th centuries, and there is no question that Perugia has to be included in one's itinerary. But there are other interesting facets to the city that lure visitors.

Perugia's *University for Foreigners*, the country's oldest and most prestigious institution, is recognized for its commitment to share with the rest of the world the Italian culture and civilization.

Home to the incomparable Perugina candy, although the factory itself is located out of the town, the town also has some hidden treasures to appeal to history buffs. Walk along the Etruscan walls towards narrow cobbled streets, pass through the archways built centuries ago, and it is easy to be transported to another time in history.

When one gets hungry, as one is prone to do, then there are many restaurants from which to choose. An amazing restaurant is "*Ristorante dal mi' cocco*", located just metres away from the University for Foreigners. All fresh ingredients are used in their recipes, including the bread that is made daily on site. The owners pride themselves in making pasta in the time-honoured tradition that uses Umbrian grain, ground in an old stone mill. Their typical regional fare is available at all times, but some items are only served on certain days of the week. For instance, if you are partial to '*pasta with artichokes*', you have to go there on a Tuesday; or '*gnocchi a la perugina*', your visit must coincide on a Thursday. Rest assured, whichever day you visit you will be impressed with the quality of the food, wine list, and service of this family-run eating establishment. The cost is about 13 euros, and that includes a glass of Vin Santo or Vernaccia. For reservations call 075 5732511.

Music lovers - it is now official! Sir Elton John will participate on July 12th in the Umbrian Jazz Festival that takes place in Perugia from July 8-17, 2005. He will join other notable singers, including Diana Ross, the Commodores, Ricky Fante and Blind Boys of Alabama.

Perugia seen from above




TERRE DEL CARPINE WINES

Nearby Perugia, on Via Forma Nuova, 87 in Magione, is the *Cantina Intercomunale del Trasimeno* (Intercommunal Winery of Trasimeno) where they produce a wide assortment of *Terre Del Carpine Wines* - named after the Franciscan monk, Giovanni Da Pian del Carpine, who lived in the 12th century. In addition to the best Sangiovese clones, the winery grows the Gamay, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon red grape varieties along with the Trebbiano toscano, Chardonnay and their famous Grechetto white grapes.

We sampled their *2003 Grieco*, currently being exported to Germany. It is a refreshing and light drinking wine, which displays surprising structure and marries well with cooked vegetables, soups and fish. The bubbly white *Bacchetto* is delicately fruity on the nose, but dry and well-balanced on the palate and is perfect as an aperitif or matched with white meats, fish or fresh cheeses. The *2001 Barca "Colli del Trasimeno" DOC* has an earthy and intense nose, and proffers a lightly tannic but full-body mouthfeel – ideal for rustic dishes or game meats as well as aged cheeses.

The winery is actively promoting the Grechetto wines, particularly in Germany, Belgium, France and Switzerland. Those who may travel the Colli del Trasimeno wine route can stop in at this winery's tasting room for a sampling of their wines. Those who cannot personally visit the winery might be interested in clicking on their web site www.trasinet.com/it.

No matter what your interests— religious pilgrimage, wines, food, festivals – Italy's Umbrian region is certain to delight all your senses. When next in Italy, be sure to make your way to this scenic and enchanting land. Buon viaggio! 

Fountain in Perugia



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