

Review of the Victoria Bailliage's First L'Ordre Mondial Event

Saturday February 25th, Hosted by Finest At Sea Ocean Products Ltd.

Larry Arnold, our Echanson, launched the Victoria Bailliage's first L'Ordre Mondial with a selection of eclectic wines chosen for their ability to complement a superb array of seafood, but also as a lesson in their unexpectedly modest price points. The Imagine Café was the location, conveniently situated next door to the evening's host, Finest At Sea Ocean Products Ltd. (FAS)

Every Victoria Chaine event begins with a glass or two of "Bubbles" and last night was no exception. This time though the NV Brut was a surprise offering from Portugal, produced near the regions better known for white and traditional Port. The price was even more interesting at the \$30 mark.

The group of 35 Chaine and Mondial Members and their guests, glasses of "Bubbles" in hand, sampled platters on a "grazing station" that included several different types of smoked fish, albacore tuna in mini red peppers, smoked salmon tartare, spot prawn quesadillas with smoked pepper cilantro cream and stuffed mussels.

Before moving into the dining area seating, Mr. Robert (Bob) Fraumeni, the owner of FAS, welcomed the group and gave a brief history of the company and its guiding principles: *"All FAS products are 100% wild and caught by our own fishermen through sustainable fishing practices"*. "FAS is the leading provider of the finest quality seafood on the West Coast of BC, including: Halibut, Sablefish, Salmon, Spot Prawns, Albacore Tuna, Dungeness Crab, Mussels, Oysters, Scallops, as well as many smoked and prepared products" supported by state of the art processing, storage facilities, transportation and delivery systems in Victoria and now Vancouver.

Larry continued the evening's programme introducing a white wine, new to all, an Abellio Rias Baixas Albarino which was delightful with the Salmon Crudo course. The full menu and wine list is available on this web site, but possibly the most interest was generated by the quite delightful Leyda Valley Pinot Noir which was amazingly priced at under \$10. The last two courses were paired with well-priced wines from New Zealand and Australia, a Waihopi River Sauvignon Blanc with the Sablefish and Hardy's Whiskers Blake Tawny Port rounded off the evening with a luscious Walnut Orange Semifreddo.

Executive Chef Louis Vacca was complimented for producing a superb array of dishes. The serving staff of three, led by FAS's Rose Brewer who had worked a full day earlier in the FAS seafood shop did a sterling job in the Imagine Cafe's rustic environment.

The lesson learned was that there are many modestly priced "little gems" to be found among the product offerings in local wine stores.