

La Chaîne Does Caviar with Dr. Cornel Ceapa!

Dr. Ceapa is an international authority on sustainable sturgeon farming and caviar production President of *Acadian Sturgeon and Caviar Inc.* and Regional Bailli of New Brunswick.

Hosted at Artisan Bistro by Executive Chef and Maitre Rotisseur, Daryl Pope.



The traditional Reception “Bubbles” flowed freely as our 36 Members and their guests mingled and met Dr. Cornel Ceapa, along with his business partner and wife, Dorina. It was just not possible to miss the level of passion and respect that Cornel has for sturgeon, its amazing pre-historic beginnings and how some species have managed to survive despite the predations of man from over-fishing and the use of inappropriate aquaculture practices that focus on profit at the expense of humane treatment of the animals. It was fascinating to learn that the two largest caviar producers in the world are now China and Italy, both countries exporting huge volumes of caviar each year.

The three delicious Acadian caviar types we sampled last night are produced without the addition of chemicals or hormones and the taste and quality are outstanding. Cornel and his wife Dorina, work only



with the two local sturgeon species – Atlantic Sturgeon and Shortnose Sturgeon.

As well as wild sturgeon and caviar, they produce Acadian Gold and Acadian Green (the only farmed caviar in the world, from Shortnose Sturgeon). Most importantly, they use every single part of sturgeon – nose to tail. Even the sturgeon skin is being tanned into leather.

Cornel began our introduction on how to eat and experience the differences between each of the three caviars. He explained the value of trying a sip from a shot of the iced vodka, we each had to clear our palate before savouring the caviar, though some preferred to stay with the “Bubbles” which was equally as enjoyable. Each caviar type was presented on a Mother-of-Pearl spoon, first the Gold, then the Green and finally the Black wild caviar. Wow, in my case, so different tasting and smooth compared to other caviars I have tried in the past.



Chef Daryl then presented each type of caviar matched to an appropriate food accompaniment. The Gold caviar topped creme fraiche on a traditional-recipe potato blini; a silky cauliflower

Panna Cotta with tiny shavings of Callebaut White Chocolate partnered the Green caviar and a little duck fat potato topped with a sous vide-cooked quail egg accompanied the wild Black caviar. The cauliflower Panna Cotta was by far the hit of that course, with one guest suggesting that it was so delicious that she might like to bathe in a tub of it!



This ended the service of the Cave de Lugny Cuvée Millésimée Crémant de Bourgogne Brut 2015, to make way for pouring the Pieropan Soave Classico 2017 pairing for Chef Daryl's next course.

A house smoked Sturgeon Cake, made from the loin meat, with Miso Brown Butter Aioli was beautifully presented as the base for a "tower" stack topped with a delicate, almost melt-in-your-mouth Sturgeon belly Ceviche which was balanced on a lacy, Black Coral Tuille



The main Course of Sturgeon Loin, seared medium rare, garnished with roasted Gala Apple Purée, Butternut Squash Gnocchi and wild mushrooms highlighted the versatility of sturgeon Loin as a protein in

a fine dining event. The Cave de Lugny Macon-Lugny La Carte Lieu-Dit 2015, proved to be an excellent wine pairing.



The dessert course requires a picture to do any written description justice. Not just a Saffron Cheese Cake, but a delicate work of art created by visiting Pastry Chef Julia Palfrey. Cutting into the glossy coating on the vanilla cake, somewhat round-egg shaped, revealed the "yolk". The entire presentation was stunning. The pear sorbet was just simply luscious and the saffron gel and white chocolate garnish balanced the overall design. The Lafleur Mallet Sauternes 2015 paired very well, and, with a touch of elegance.



Commandeur, Dr. David Flaherty was invited to provide the event's Accolade which he did in his unique style, complimenting both Dr. Cornel Ceapa and Executive Chef Daryl Pope who introduced his team, which we noted with pleasure, now included two apprentices.

Bailli Gail Gabel, on behalf of the Victoria Bailliage presented both Cornel and Daryl with a glass wine carafe. Each carafe is etched with the Chaîne Logo on one side and on the other, the words: "Presented in appreciation by the Bailliage de Victoria, la Chaîne des Rôtisseurs."

Many Members have since commented that this was their best ever Chaîne event experience. The collaboration and co-ordination with Chef Daryl Pope and Dr. Cornel Ceapa was exceptional and took place over many months. Cornel sent Chef many Acadian products to try and with which to experiment on fla-

vours and potential course designs. Borrowing some well-known words, one could say that the Artisan/ Acadian team “hit this one out of the park”!

Gail Gabel, Bailli



Photos courtesy of David Izard, Lily Yee and Dorina Cerapa.

<https://www.acadian-sturgeon.com>

<https://www.artisanbistro.ca/>

