

Champagne Extravaganza September 10th 2017



Victoria Baillige's annual Champagne Extravaganza was again held at the beautiful ocean-side residence of Dr. and Mrs. Jack Littlepage. This was the first Champagne event, that many of our new members had attended since joining the Chaîne. Definitely a memorable "baptism of excellence" for all concerned.

Tents were set up on the lawn overlooking the sea and also over the deck to shelter from the sun, the ice tray loaded with dozens of freshly shucked oysters. This was a very popular spot for those who preferred their oysters on the half shell, just with simple lemon, or the more adventurous garnishes of cucumber and Jalapeno mignonette and horseradish. Oysters Rockefeller with a touch of spinach, bacon and confit garlic cream under a smattering of toasted bread

crumbs competed for attention with the Oyster Caesar Shooters with a delicate mix of bacon, pickled bean and lime served with pipettes of a spicy hot sauce.

An absolute must and long-standing tradition at the Champagne event is a platter of Pate de Foie Gras, which was again prepared for us by Retired Executive Chef Marcel Guichard, who was not able to join us on the day. The dreamy looks on the faces of the Members when sampling the buttery richness of the Pate said it all.

Our Vice-Echanson, Larry Arnold, had selected a delightful slate of "Bubbles" for all to enjoy throughout the afternoon. Larry's excellent narrative on each wine selection was given with his usual flair, with anecdotes about the winemakers, their methods and vineyards.

Gardet Chigny-Les-Roses Champagne Brut Tradition NV
Louis Massing Grand Cru Blanc De Blancs Champagne Brut Nature NV
Le Mesnil Grand Cru Blanc De Blancs Champagne Brut NV
Tendil & Lombardi Champagne Cuvée Brut NV
Bauchet Signature 1er Cru Champagne Brut NV
Chanoine Champagne Brut NV

This year, Executive Chef Castro Boateng, and a new Chaîne member, undertook most of the catering and his very inventive menu was truly impressive. As each Canape appeared from the kitchen and was tasted, one had to wonder if the next offering could be as good. They were, time after time.





The poached spot prawns, were followed by beet cured salmon, then a delicate harissa scented rack of lamb and my favourite, the African “fish and chips” – morsels of crispy battered fish and plantain chips with a spicy tartare sauce.

The Steak Tartare and Charcuterie and Fromage Station were well sampled and offered a selection of local and international cheeses, cured and smoked meats.

Something completely new was the Parmesan Reggiano Station, where fresh pasta was cooked in Parmesan wheels and served in small bowls. One could choose a garnish from wild mushrooms, peas, crispy pancetta, spinach pesto or grilled chicken morsels.

Executive Chef Castro, rounded out the afternoon’s feast with a selection of desserts that left many hoping for “seconds”. The white chocolate lemon tarts disappeared far too quickly (no “seconds” unfortunately) and these were followed by a very delicate Madeleine. No one could resist the finale of mini Eclairs with raspberries and Vanilla Cream.