



Champagne and Bubbles 2024

Review of Champagne & Bubbles Event September 29, 2024

The rain that was not supposed to be present for our planned Champagne and “Bubbles” garden party, arrived in a downpour minutes before members started to arrive. While the rain was sporadic, it did not deter several hardy souls from visiting the BBQ on the patio to check out, and take snaps of the event’s main course, a pig, which had already spent many hours, slow roasting. This began early that morning under the watchful eye of Officier Maître Rotisseur, Castro Boateng.

But now becoming a little chilly, the comfortable lounge of the Club House beckoned, and just in time too, as Castro and his team were putting the finishing touches to a huge table laden with platters of charcuterie & fromage, which included local and international cheeses, an array of cured & smoked meats, house-pickled local fiddleheads and several other colourful vegetables.



The Carte du Vin’s first offerings were two Spanish Methode Champanoise wines. Both were from long-established vineyards: Raventos (1497) and Juveé & Camps (1921). Raventos produced the first Methode Champanoise wine in Spain in 1847.

A selection of five elegant canapes were also passed among the twenty-six members and guests, several commenting on their favourites, mentioned the Skewered Nigerian-style Beef Suya, delicate tiny cornets of ratatouille



confit, and mine was the Crispy Cauliflower with Harissa Aioli.

A Domain Rolet Blanc de Blancs de Jura, was a pleasing accompaniment.

Dozens of plump oysters on the half shell, graced their own table, along with their many tasty garnishes.

The fine bubbles and delicate nose of the Laurent Perrier “LP” Champagne offering, were a perfect balance for the piquancy of the lusciously plump oysters and the Pate de Foie Gras.



Retired Maître Rotisseur, Marcel Guichard, who prepares the superb Pate de Foie Gras each year for this event, was our guest. Bailliage members Deborah and Jonathan Mantell contrib-

uted their signature Steak Tartare, whose recipe was first introduced at this event by Bailli Honoraire, the late Colin Mantell.

The Seafood Charcuterie was simply stunning, A bountiful array of giant prawns, smoked salmon, crab and seaweed salads. Chef Castro is a master of the art of garnishing with the many house-preserved fruits and vegetables. The citrus chips made a perfect little platter to deliver morsels of seafood salad. The pairing was a Larmandier Bernier Latitude Blanc de Blancs, from thirty-five-year-old vines, grown in the Premier Cru region of the Cote des Blancs.



The roasted pig, ceremoniously removed from the BBQ, was paraded into the dining room to warm applause and no doubt, some salivation.

While the menu description is necessarily brief, it cannot do this course justice. The chefs prepared the pork meat in three deliciously, distinctive styles, which were served in separate chafing dishes. On offer were Asian, Argentinian and Southern style flavours, each with their appropriate garnishes and flavourful sauces. Diners were encouraged to try all three pork styles, and very obediently did so, without reserve!

The Bailli introduced the final wine, a Bruno Paillard Cuvée Brut, and noted that this wine was not like the earlier wine offerings from producers with multi-generational and family ownership. Bruno Paillard did something unusual and ambitious, when opening his Champagne House in 1981. He started with the proceeds from selling his Mark II Jaguar, as his first tranche of working capital

And of course there is a lot more to this interesting story. Bruno Paillard has become one of the top Champagne producers in France, farming sustainably, with a focus on an extra dry style with purity, minerality and aging potential.

As the dessert selection was enjoyed, Bailli Honoraire Stephen Burchert drew our traditional “lucky numbers” ensuring that five attendees happily went home with a gift bottle of wine.

The Bailli thanked Officier Maître Rotisseur, Castro Boateng and his team for the superb menu and service that made this Bailliage event such a success. Castro was presented with a gift, expressing the Bailliage members’ personal appreciation.

Review by Gail Gabel Bailli
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MENU

PASSED CANAPÉS

SPICED CRISPY CAULIFLOWER (DF/GF)

Harissa Aioli

SEARED DUCK BREAST (GF)

Roasted Pears & Crumbled Blue Cheese

VEGETARIAN CORNET (DF)

Ratatouille, Confit Garlic & Artichoke

BEEF SUYA (GF/ DF)

Nigerian Style Beef Skewers, HOB BBQ Sauce

HARISSA BEET TARTARE

Crostini, Capers, Gherkins, Shallots, Harissa Aioli

OYSTERS ON THE HALF SHELL

Hot Sauce, Mignonette, Lemons, Horseradish, Caviar

PATE DE FOIE GRAS --STEAK TARTARE --Crostini

CHARCUTERIE & FROMAGE

Selection of Local & International Cheese, array of Cured & Smoked Meats, Chutney,
Pickled Vegetables, Crispy Bread, Olives, Spiced Nuts

SEAFOOD CHARCUTERIE

Prawn Cocktail, Lemons, Cocktail Sauce

Seaweed Salad, Preserved Sea Asparagus, Fiddleheads, Miso & Orange Dressing

Crab Salad, Citrus Chip, Avocado & Pea Purée, Salmon Roe

Smoked Salmon, Crispy Romaine, Shaved Parmesan, Caesar Dressing

PIG ROAST

Argentina Style: Fried Plantain, Avocado, Chimichurri

Asian Style: Steam Bun MISO & ORANGE Reduction, Kimich

Southern Style: Coffee BBQ Sauce, Southern Baked Beans, Coleslaw

DESSERT STATION

Selection of two mini desserts

Wine Selections for la Chaîne des Rotisseurs Champagne & Bubbles Event September 29, 2024

Raventos i, Cava- Blanc de Blancs, Spain, Methode Champanoise

A little millenary history: A property, that since 1497, still belongs to the Raventós family, who live and work on the estate, and where in 1872 the first Catalan “Champagne” was produced. Probably one of the longest family-owned winemaking traditions in the world. Set in the middle of the farm property, sheep and goats graze on the vineyards and help to regenerate the sole compound in the terroir. Horses work the vineyard according to ancestral methods. Raventos was certified organic in 2009 by CCPAE and biodynamic by Demeter since 2013.

Today’s wine offering, a Blanc de Blancs with 5% Malvasia from Sitges, a variety that had almost disappeared, until rediscovered on the estate. It is a blend of traditional native varieties: Macabeu, Xarel-lo and Parellada, and is aged on the lees for at least 18 months.

This Raventos has a pale and bright color with some green tints denoting youth, is clean and fruit-driven, with a Mediterranean nose, and notes of fennel and other aromatic herbs. The wine has tension, balance and fruit but is not heavy, and has an almost salty twist in the finish. It is pure, clean and pleasant, tasty on the palate and gives excellent value for its price point.

Juvéé & Camps Gran Reserva de la Familia 2019

For a comparison with the Raventos:

A family-owned vineyard established in 1921, and one of the top Cava producers in Spain. This wine is aged on the lees for over 36 months and delivers finesse and complexity on the palate. Delicate fruity flavours of apple, pear and green apple are apparent, with hints of rosemary and other aromatic herbs. Three traditional grapes : Xarel-lo 40%, Macabeo 30% and Parallellada 20% completes the blend.

Domaine Rolet, Blanc de Blancs Crémant de Jura, Methode Champanoise

Domaine Rolet, created in 1942 by Désiré Rolet, is one of the jewels of the Jura region. This “Traditional Method” sparkling wine was previously, and simply referred to as “mousseux”. The wine is a blend of 50% Chardonnay, 10% Savagnin, with equal parts Trousseau, Poul-sard, and Pinot Noir, which come from other estate vineyards in Arbois, Passenas, and Le Vernnois. No Malolactic Fermentation (MLF), and has spent a minimum of 1 year on lees in bottle prior to disgorgement. Dosage is 6g/L. The creamy palate is shaped by tight green apple, crunchy pear, ripe red apple, and light meringue, finishing with a lemon peel twist and a lingering chalkiness, thanks to the region's marl soils.

Laurent Perrier Brut LP

A little interesting history: former cooper and bottler in Chigny-les-Roses, André-Michel Pierlot settled in Tours-sur-Marne in 1812 as a champagne wine merchant. He was succeeded by his son Alphonse, who had no descendants, and passed the company on to his cellar master Eugène Laurent, who died prematurely in 1887.

His widow, Mathilde-Emilie Perrier, took over the company, adding her surname to that of Eugène Laurent to give the House the name Veuve Laurent-Perrier.

This wine has fine bubbles which feed a persistent mousse, and a delicate nose with hints of fresh citrus and white flowers. The wine's complexity is expressed in successive notes of peach and white flowers. There is an excellent balance between freshness and delicacy with fruity flavours very present on the finish. Comprising a majority of Chardonnay, (at least 50%), Pinot Noir, (at least 30%), is rounded out with Meunier. As an aside, Laurent Perrier reserves up to 20-30% of their wines to ensure perfect consistency in style. A Laurent-Perrier Cuvée is made from more than 100 crus and benefits from ageing in the cellar, with balance and freshness enhanced by a light dosage.

Larmandier Bernier 'Latitude' Blanc de Blancs

A little old family history: Since the 19th century, and eight generations, the Larmandier family has been working the vines on the Premier and Grands Crus regions of the Côte des Blancs. Chalk is the keystone of these great terroirs. The wine's grapes are primarily Chardonnay, from 19ha of biodynamic farming of old vines averaging 35 years.

This particular champagne, "Latitude", was historically named, "Tradition" but was later changed to "Latitude" to better characterize its rounded, rich and charming style. It is composed exclusively of chardonnays with 3g/L residual, which always comes from the same "latitude", i.e. the south area of Vertus. The wine has exquisite scents of pale-yellow fruit, such as apple and quince, along with prominent fresh herbal notes. The prelude of fruity scents is followed by a palate of the same invigorating and refined flavors.

Bruno Paillard Cuvée Brut

A little "modern history" this time: In 1981, Bruno Paillard, then aged 27, did something unusual and ambitious: He started a new Champagne house. He planned to lever his knowledge of the grape market, having worked in his father's grape brokerage house for six years. First, he sold his Mark II Jaguar for 50,000 Francs, and borrowed from a bank, to secure his working capital for the company. He then bought grapes after renting winery space to process them.

Today, Bruno Paillard remains 100% family owned, with a succession plan: Bruno's daughter, Alice, has taken over from him. She is now the main shareholder and is the future CEO. The grapes for their wines are all farmed sustainably and Paillard's distinct method uses low dosage to create an extra dry style that is focused on purity, minerality, and aging potential. Pinot Meunier (22%), Chardonnay (33%) and Pinot Noir (45%), of which a part (20%) makes its first fermentation in barrel. In addition, there are the reserved wines, 25 vintages blended since 1985 in a proportion that can go up to 50%.

A long cellar aging, 3 years on lees is followed by 5 months minimum, after disgorgement. The dosage, Extra-Brut (less than 6g/L), makes this wine an authentic and pure champagne. Notice apricot, dried apple, dried lemon, shortbread and almond on the nose. This wine is medium-bodied, very fresh and balanced, with sharp acidity and fine bubbles on a creamy, biscuity and dry palate. Very fresh and balanced.

