

Terrine 3 – 2006

August 5, 2006

Three years ago I was trying to think of a way of holding a dinner where we could feature food instead of just wine, and where each couple could prepare a dish and present it as a pot-luck sort of thing.

The theme that I finally came up with wasn't so much a type of food or cuisine as a method of preparation – terrines. It allows tremendous scope in terms of ingredients and preparation methods and as I took the liberal view on allied dishes like ballotines, pates, galantines and such, there was enough range to keep everyone happy. We've done it three times now, in the garden, at a table which comfortably seats 12 people.



It is fun to bill it as 'Garden Stadium', and as an Iron Chef sort of competition, but in fact the only competition is against oneself, trying to make something interesting that pleases yourself and others.

Accordingly, the official judges remain fairly non-judgemental.



The fun part is not only choosing and preparing a dish, but also coming up with two often quite different wines to go with it, giving us all an opportunity to study the fascinating art of food and wine matching.

This year's event took place over about 5 hours in absolutely perfect conditions, not too warm, not too cool, and the food, wine and company was as always second to none.

First up was:

Terrine de Poisson Trois Couleurs



A wonderful dish with a really great sauce, it was paired with:

Clos du Chateau de Mosny , Montlouis-sur-Loire Brut NV – a very pleasant little Loire bubbly that had a pleasant soft nose and sufficient acidity to go reasonably well with the food.

2002 Bourillon-Dorleans Coulee d’Argent Vieilles Vignes Vouvray – it got more interesting with this wine which showed a waxy honey and fruit nose, medium bodied, and with a bit lower acidity than is usual in this wine, as well as a bit more fruit in the mouth than you expect. Very nice match with the fish.

Terrine aux Ris de Veaux et Homard Truffé



My dish, so I can give a bit more detail. A recipe from Tour d’Argent, it is layered sweetbreads, lobster and sliced black truffle in a Port bouillon jelly, served with two kinds of mayonnaise, a green and a red flavoured with spinach and tomato respectively.

The recipe was cause for domestic upheaval as she-who-must-be-obeyed had forgotten there were two live lobsters in the fridge and let out a shriek when she opened the door and they greeted the light by making a break for it. For the rest of the day she wandered around muttering “For the love of God, Montresor” and named them Montresor and Fortunato (see Poe’s story ‘A Cask of Amontillado’ if you don’t know the reference).

2003 Black Hills Alibi – a Bordeaux blend from a BC winery, and probably the best such in the province, I thought I’d give the home team a shot at glory. Lighter wine with clean slightly citrus nose, quite nice with the food but in this case overwhelmed by the competition.

1995 Ch. La Louviere – none of us cellars much white Bordeaux, but whenever we taste a wine like this we always ask ourselves why that should be. The nose on this was really tasty – an oak and fruit melange that reminded me of vanilla pudding. Complex in the mouth and very smooth, sweet and long, it was the hands down popular choice as best match with this dish.

Jambon Persillé



Two pictures as this contestant, in a blatant attempt to influence the judges,



submitted a side dish of majestic proportion, a Belgian endive tart with cheese pasty that was admittedly excellent. The main dish was nothing like the traditional ham in parsley jelly either, but was richly textured and accompanied by a stack o' taters that was the perfect foil to the flavours of the terrine.

1995 Williams Selyem Pinot Noir, Russin River Cuve – a very Burgundian wine, right from the excellent Pinot nose featuring cherries to the smooth silky finish. My choice as best wine with the food, but then I may be rightly accused of being a bigger fan of Burgundy than of New World Pinot

1999 Siduri 'Christian David' Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast – an impressive wine in the more usual American style, this showed a big rich Pinot fruit nose, sweet entry, was smooth on palate and has some soft tannin remaining – must have been a bit of a brute when younger. A stylish wine, it failed to seduce me from the Williams Selyem.

Terrine of Guinea Fowl, Green Lentils and Porcini Mushrooms



1962 Chateau La Grace Dieu, Grand Cru (Saint-Emilion) – an even more pronounced difference between the wines with this interesting course. 1962 was a decent vintage overshadowed by 1961. I do not know this producer and don't recall ever seeing it before. Nonetheless it put on an interesting showing. There was (needless to say) nothing much in the way of fruit left, but the nose was copybook mature claret until it very suddenly went all metallic on us. Brown edges and a lot of acidity and some remaining flavour interest.

1999 Casalferro – this IGT from Barone Ricasoli showed currants and coffee in the nose, with quite a bit of oak and a hint of pepper. Still tannic, it is an international style of wine with good length and a future ahead of it. None of the telltale terminal acidity of so many Italian wines, and a good accompaniment to the dish.

Terrine de Lapin aux Noisettes



1988 Beaune-Teurons – Albert Morot – a slightly stinky nose and lots of acidity, the fruit levels a bit low but pleasant and perhaps the better wine with the food.

1996 Condado de Haza - this was a nice mature Condado from back in the days before they started pounding this out in great quantities, to the detriment of quality. Leather and fruit in the nose, the wine smooth and mature. Nice on its own and with the food, but a little lower acidity made the Burg the best wine for matching the food in this flight.

Lamb Terrine



This terrine used traditional pig's foot for gelatine and while the experimental batch had no problem sticking together, this one had a minor failure of 'stiction' but certainly not of flavour – you can't find a good pig's foot when you need one!

1998 Domaine Bois de Bourson Chateauneuf du Pape – I am not acquainted with this producer although others present were. Great nose with black pepper and Rhone funk, it still could use some time as the tannins are evident if softening. Spicy/peppery in the mouth as well. Very nice.

1997 Montresor Santomio – this merlot/cab blend from Veneto was very presentable indeed with ripe fruit and chocolate in the nose, which reminded one generally of Bordeaux a bit, and it would have made an interesting ringer in a group of clarets, only the slightly high terminal acidity and the ripeness in the nose being clues to origin. The maker's name was particularly apt in light of SWMBOs previous lobster adventures.

We finished up with some chees and a **Gould Campbell Old Vintage Character Port**, some of which had found a home in my Port jelly, Quite pleasant at the age of about 25 years (I've had it for more than 20 years). You don't see that terminology any more, do you?

At the end we took a vote and it was unanimous that there be a T4 next summer (only this time I won't wait to hear what everyone else is making before making a decision myself....)