

The 14th annual terrine event is now history, and the weather cooperated by not being too hot, partially due to the cover provided by all the smoke streaming out to the coast here from forest fires in the BC interior – a mixed blessing that also gave a smoky ambience to the event.

The premise is to prepare a terrine (galantines, ballotines, tourchons, patés all are approved alternatives) and to present it with a pair of wines, usually somewhat disparate ones, so the participants may decide which, if any, is most suitable with the food. The great advantage of this sort of food, and exactly what I was seeking when I first organized this, is that it can be prepared a couple of days ahead of time, making the labours of presentation for each couple much lighter, being limited to plating and uncorking a couple of wines. Figured I'd try it out back in 2004 and it is still going strong fourteen years later.

Although we had moved last year from a one acre garden, where the eating area was a hundred feet from the house, the new house with eating area right outside the door and the presence of a river running through the smaller back yard was applauded by several people as offering a faster transit to kitchen (and bathroom).

The first course was a crab and avocado terrine. It should be noted that while much thought goes into the creation of the terrine itself, just as much thought is expended on coming up with suitable accompaniments to the terrine, and this dish was no exception, with a very artistic display indeed.



I asked if they had used papaya when I first saw it, but was informed that papaya was so last year and that everyone was using mango now.....

The wines were:

2015 Bodega Terras Gauda O Rosal Rias Baixas – this had a citrus based nose, with hints of grassiness, full flavoured and with clean terminal acidity.

2014 Finca Maquina & Tabla Rueda Verdejo – this Spanish white was also very good, showing a fuller, spicier nose and lower acidity. Interestingly, both worked superbly with the food and I called it a tie.

Next came a Salmon and Foie Gras Mousse, a thin stratum of the latter encased in a comparably large amount of the former with, you guessed it, mango!.



Wines were:

1990 Moulin Touchais Coteaux du Layon – these Loire Chenins seem to be almost immortal, lasting decade after decade and usually getting more interesting with age. This one had a floral nose with elements of melon and wax, and was medium amber, pretty much the same color as the next wine. It was only mildly sweet compared to other dessert wines from the area like Quarts de Chaume, and that worked well with the food. This wine is still a youth and has a future ahead that will likely include further complexity.

2002 Balthasar Röss Hattenheimer Nussbrunnen Riesling Auslese – rich petrol nose mixed with pear and vanilla notes, sweet entry, good acidity and length. I thought this a tad sweet to go well with the fish and chose the Moulin Touchais as best match.

The next course was Seared Chevre and Potato Terrine with pickled golden beets, chiogga beet caviar and purple beet/sauv blanc gelee. This must have taken considerable skill in assembly as the potato layers were very thin and the cheese would have limited adherence to it – that sort of thing makes me fear for the structural integrity of a dish, but the cook who did this personifies intrepid.



2012 Marc Deschamps Pouilly-Fumé Les Champs de Cri – this wine had a very good nose and excellent acidity, but in my opinion was a bit too reserved and lacked the weight to work really well against the terrine.

2010 William Selyem Russian River Pinot Noir – this blended pinot was excellent! It showed a ripe pinot nose with blackberry/raspberry and some spice, and lacked the too often experienced over weight, over sweetness of many Californian Pinots. Medium body, tasty and by far the best match with the food.

The next course was mine, a Chicken and Macadamia Nut Terrine with accompaniments of Castelvetrano Olive, Provolone Piccante and Fennel Salad, Ginger Tomatoes, and Ginger Shallot Marmalade (I love shallot or onion jam/marmalade with charcuterie and will definitely use this one again – not too sweet, done with balsamic vinegar balanced against some honey, and with just the right hint of ginger).



My wines were:

1995 Ruffino Chianti Classico Riserva Ducale Oro – a bit ripe with blackberry fruit in the nose and a hint of nutmeg, but that was the best art of this wine as it petered out on palate.

1995 Bodegas Alejandro Fernández Ribera del Duero Pesquera – fortunately this one saved the day and then some – killer nose, a bit funky and Rhonish, with some coffee undertones and dark cherry and spice. Full and long in the mouth with good balance. A pleasure with the terrine.

The next of the normal (as opposed to extra) terrines was a chicken liver entry with cherries poached in port and a pistachio relish.



Wines were:

2009 Domaine du Murinais Crozes-Hermitage Caprice du Valentin – I found the nose on this wine to be a tad reserved, probably a little closed at the moment. Some decent fruit and softening tannins bode well for the future. Modern in style rather than traditional, I thought.

2009 Le Vieux Pin Syrah Équinoxe – ballsy move putting a BC Syrah, even the best syrah from the best BC producer, against a Rhone, but it paid off and won the contest for me. Excellent syrah nose with black raspberry and some road tar and leathery notes. On palate it was full bodied and spicy, but also very smooth and quite long.

Normally we end there at one terrine per couple, but one attendee decided she wanted to create a second one as a sort of finishing dessert sort of course and I, of course, acceded to her request and also supplied an oddball Port to go along with it. The terrine was a layering of a mixture of gorgonzola, fourme d'ambert, chevre, green onions and brandy layered with spiced walnuts and herbs.

1992 Quinta Nova de Nossa Senhora do Carmo Port – an old quinta that supplied wine to others, it was bought by Burmester and it is worth looking at the history – see <http://www.vintageport.se/house/QuintaNova.php>

The wine was medium colour, had a nose that was ripe, but not overly so and had significant spice. A middleweight Port with some charm, ideal for a luncheon.

There will be a Terrine 15 event and I already have some ideas about what to make....

For notes on the previous 13 years see <http://www.rhodo.citymax.com/food-and-wine.html>

