

PESSAGNO  
WINERY



## Food & Wine

### Beginning Notes

We first tasted many individual items with this Pinot Noir and, for us, this wine seemed to have a particular affinity for the following flavors: bacon, blue cheese, parmesan cheese, tarragon, duck, orange peel, cherries, beef, garlic, Herbes de Provence.

Based on these components, the following series of tastings were arranged into a “menu” to showcase various different notes in the wine and to emphasize its range throughout the entire meal:

Gus & Kathleen Gustat

*Friends and Cellar Club Members of Pessagno*

#### Taste #1

- Blue Cheese/Bacon Gougères

#### Taste #2

- Confit Duck/Spinach Composed Salad with Tangerine and Herbes de Provence Vinaigrette
- Mini-Popovers - with Sweet Butter

#### Taste #3

- Marinated Beef Tenderloin with Peppercorn-Cognac-Cream Sauce
- Asparagus Spears with Tarragon Shallot Dressing
- Olive Oil Braised Potato Slices with Roasted Garlic Puree



FEATURED WINE

2007 PINOT NOIR  
Idyll Times Vineyard

# Blue Cheese/Bacon Gougères (cream puff pastry)

## Ingredients

- 4 slices thick cut bacon
- ½ cup 2% milk
- ½ cup water
- 6 TBL unsalted butter
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- ½ tsp fine ground black pepper
- 1/3 tsp ground cayenne
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 4 large eggs
- ¾ cup blue cheese crumbled
- 1/3 cup grated parmesan
- 4 large scallions, green parts only, finely minced

## Directions

Pre-heat the oven to 400 degrees.

1. Brown the bacon well, drain, chop finely and set aside. Reserve the drained bacon fat for another use.
2. Place the milk, water, butter, salt, black pepper and cayenne in a small non-stick sauce pan and bring to a boil. Stir in 1 cup of flour and continue stirring over medium heat until the dough mass (it will be a sticky ball) begins to adhere to the sides of the pan. Turn off the heat and let this cool until you can handle it comfortably (about body temperature)....
3. Beat the 4 eggs in a small bowl. Add them one at a time and blend in well to the cooled mass of dough.
4. Add in your flavorings of choice and stir well to incorporate throughout the dough. In this case, we chose blue cheese, bacon, scallions and parmesan.
5. Line a cookie sheet or a half-sheet pan with parchment paper. Drop small balls (about the size that a melon baller would create) of dough about 1-1/2 inches apart on the prepared sheet. We used a #100 disher scoop---the dough is sticky, but this works pretty well and gives a very even result. Bake in the oven at 400 until they just start to brown, approximately 20 minutes. Be careful not to get so brown that you scorch the egg or the cheese. Slide off of the pan onto a wire rack to cool. These may be re-crisped and served warm or served at room temperature.

Makes 5-6 dozen. These freeze well and can be re-heated and crisped for serving later.

# Baby Spinach Salad with Confit Duck and Tangerine Herbes de Provence Vinaigrette

## Ingredients

- 1 large bunch of baby spinach well washed and dried
- Duck meat pieces removed from 2 legs of confit duck (reserve the bones and skin and trimmings for another use)
- 1 TBL Dijon mustard
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2-1/2 TBL agave syrup
- 3/4 tsp herbes de Provence
- 1/4 tsp kosher salt
- 1/4 cup of the herbed gel that came packed with the duck confit (reserve the fat for another use), or 1/4 cup duck demi glace if your duck confit legs did not have enough liquid along with the fat.
- Zest from 1 tangerine
- 2 TBL of blanched sliced almonds (optional)

## Directions

In a small mixing bowl, whisk the mustard with a slow stream of olive oil until a thick emulsion has formed. Fold in the rest of the ingredients and refrigerate at least 2 hours prior to using.

## Assemble and Plate

Place a few tablespoons of the dressing with the spinach leaves and toss lightly until well coated. Place a small mound of leaves onto each chilled plate. Coat the duck pieces with another tablespoon or two of the dressing and arrange 3 (or so) pieces on top of each mound of spinach leaves. If using, sprinkle a few almond slices on top of each salad and serve at once.

# Mini-Popovers

## Ingredients

1 mini-popover pan (1/2 cup openings---usually 12) or you can use a regular (12-hole) muffin pan---they will not be quite as tall if you use a regular muffin tin instead of a popover pan.

3 TBL softened, unsalted butter to prepare the popover cups

1/4 cup of unsalted butter, melted and then slightly cooled

6 eggs

2 cups milk

2 cups flour

1 tsp kosher salt

## Directions

Thoroughly grease each cup of the popover pan, using the 3 TBL of softened, unsalted butter.

Place all the remaining ingredients in a blender. Blend on low until well incorporated. Rest the batter for 30 minutes.

Pour the batter into the popover cups to fill about 3/4 full. Bake in a 375 degree oven for about 50 minutes. DO NOT OPEN THE OVEN DOOR during this time. When the popovers are nicely browned, remove from the oven, take the popovers out of the cups (they should lift out easily) and place on a cooling rack. Pierce the top of each popover with the point of small paring knife to release the steam.

Serve these warm along with sweet butter.

Makes 12 mini popovers.

# Beef Tenderloin with Cognac Pepper Cream Sauce

## Ingredients

Beef Filet Mignon - allow 4-6 ounces per person (about 1 to 2 inches)

For the Marinade

¼ cup soy sauce

½ tsp granulated garlic

2 TBL dijon mustard

1/8 tsp dried oregano

For the Cognac Pepper Cream Sauce

1 minced shallot

1 TBL olive oil

1 TBL green pepper corns

1 TBL black pepper corns

1/3 cup dry white wine

¼ cup cognac and 1 TBLs cognac reserved

½ cup sour cream

¼ cup whipping cream

1 TBL Dijon mustard

1 TBL brine liquid from a jar of capers

Salt to taste

## Directions

Prepare the Beef: the day before, rinse and pat dry and then place it on a rack set over a half-sheet pan in the refrigerator uncovered and allow it to dry overnight. The next day, stir all of the marinate ingredients together in a small bowl, place the meat into a zip-lock bag, pour the marinade in, distribute to coat well. Seal the back and place back into the refrigerator for 2-3 hours. Note: do NOT go longer than 3 hours. At the end of 2-3 hours, remove the meat from the marinate, rinse thoroughly and pat dry, place it back on the rack over the sheet pan in the refrigerator. About 2 hours before you plan to cook the meat, set it (still on the rack) out of the refrigerator and allow it to come to room temperature.

## Prepare the Sauce:

This can be done the day ahead, refrigerated, and then reheated gently before serving.

1. Place both types of pepper corns into a small zip lock bag, close the bag and place it on your cutting board. Pound the pepper cords with the flat side of your kitchen mallet (or a rolling pin--NOT glass) until they are cracked to about the “extra coarse” stage. Shake them out of the bag into a small bowl and set aside for the time being.

2. Finely mince the shallot – you should have about ¼ cup of shallot.
3. Heat a medium sauté pan, add 1 tablespoon of olive oil.
4. Sauté the shallot until it is soft, but not browned.
5. Add the white wine and the crushed pepper corns and simmer over medium heat until the wine thickens and is mostly evaporated.
6. Turn OFF the Burner. Add the ¼ cup of cognac and ignite. Shake the pan gently until the flame subsides. Note: have a pan lid large enough to cover your sauté pan within easy reach. If the shallot starts to brown more than just a bit of tanning before the flame subsides, smother the flame with the lid to stop the browning.
7. Add the whipping cream and stir in the Dijon mustard and the sour cream. Heat very gently over low heat. If the sauce is too thick, add a little more cream.
8. Pass the sauce thru a fine mesh strainer to remove most of the peppercorn and shallot particles.
9. Return the sauce to the sauté pan and add the caper brine and the reserved tablespoon of cognac. Taste the sauce and adjust with a bit of salt or a bit more caper brine as needed.
10. The sauce can be refrigerated at this point and/or gently re-heated just prior to serving. Plan on about 2 TBL for each serving.

### **Cook the Beef**

1. Heat the grill until very hot (600 degrees)
2. Brush the filet with oil and place on the grill.
3. Rotate the filet 90 degrees every 15 seconds until all 4 sides have been seared.
4. Turn the right hand side of the grill down to low and place the filet on the upper rack.
5. Grill the filet for 6 minutes on each of 2 sides, or until the thermometer reads 115 degrees for rare.
6. Remove the filet from the grill to a carving board and let it rest for a few minutes.

### **Plate and Sauce the Beef**

Cut the filet into individual pieces. Place onto warmed plates and drape 2 tablespoons of the warmed cognac peppercorn cream sauce over 1 end of the meat.

# Asparagus with Tarragon Dressing

## Ingredients

- 1 bunch of fresh asparagus (plan on 3 spears per person)
- 1 TBL Dijon mustard
- 1 TBL shallots, finely minced
- ½ tsp kosher salt
- ½ tsp coarse ground black pepper
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil (prefer one with a peppery tart character)
- 1 TBL fresh tarragon, leaves only, finely chopped
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1-3 TBL milk or cream if needed to thin the dressing slightly

## Directions

Rinse the asparagus well, snap the stems to remove the woody parts. Place the asparagus spears into a steamer and steam for 3-4 minutes until just tender. Plunge into an ice bath to stop the cooking and refresh the color. Pat dry and set aside.

In a small mixing bowl, whisk the mustard with a slow stream of olive oil until a thick emulsion has formed. Fold in the rest of the ingredients and refrigerate at least 2 hours prior to using.

## Assemble and Plate

Place 3 spears on the plate and drape 1 TBL of the sauce over the middle of the spears.

# Olive Oil Braised Potatoes with Roasted Garlic Puree

## Ingredients

2-3 heads of garlic

¼ cup TBL Olive Oil

2-3 Baking Potatoes

½ cup Olive Oil

OPTIONAL: sprigs of any of the following herbs: tarragon, thyme, rosemary, oregano

## Directions

Slice a small portion off of the top of each head of garlic to expose the cloves. Drizzle olive oil over the open end of each head. Place the heads together in a piece of aluminum foil – or in a small covered baking disk cut side up and roast at 300 degrees for about an hour – or until the garlic is soft and slightly tan. Cool the garlic, then squeeze the heads over a small bowl to extract the roasted cloves. Mash with a fork to make a spreadable paste. Add a little olive oil if the result seems too thick to spread.

Scrub the potatoes well. Cut them crosswise into ½ inch rounds and brush them immediately with olive oil and place in a large roasting pan. Heat the grill until it is very hot (about 600 degrees). Place the potato rounds on the grill for 2-1/2 minutes per side. Remove the potato rounds back to the baking dish. Spread a little of the garlic paste on the top side of each slice and place in a single layer in the baking pan ---making sure that there is a generous coating of olive oil in the bottom of the pan. If you are going to use any fresh herbs, scatter them over the top of the potato rounds now. Place the pan in a 350 degree oven and roast for 20 minutes, or until the potato rounds are just fork tender. Remove from the pan and place on a rack over the pan and keep warm until ready to plate. Plan on 2-3 slices per person, depending upon the diameter of the slices. Strain and reserve the remaining olive oil for other uses.