



**February
2006**

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The Class Of 2006

Northwest Stir-Canandaigua Wine Young Lions by Mina Williams

Category: Executive Chef/Chef-Owner	Adam Sappington 34 years-old	Restaurant Chef, Wildwood, Portland
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Evolution is the word that describes this Young Lion. Evolving as a chef, or with his menu full of the seasonal bounty presented at the back door of the restaurant, Adam adapts with chameleon-like tenacity. "I feel myself evolving daily and gaining a greater knowledge of the resources that the Northwest has to offer to my cooking and to my life," he says.

Adam insists that the restaurant keep true to its sustainable cuisine foundation, as prescribed by founding chef Cory Schreiber. He presents dishes that are straight-forward and honest using ingredients from local farms and ranches. "We are a farm-direct restaurant,"

he explains. "We honor the relationships and support our farmer and rancher partners. Additionally, we make a commitment to not manipulate products."

His passion for the regional and seasonal flair that his restaurant stems from his Missouri roots. While cooking with his mother and visiting area farmers' markets with his grandmother, he was struck with the bounty and beauty of farm fresh ingredients. Later, as a professional culinarian, he set out to find a thriving agriculture area that would provide opportunity to hone his skills. He found that area here in the Pacific Northwest.

Adam graduated from Western Culinary Institute and started cooking on the line at Wildwood. "It was, and still is an eye-opening experience," he says. "I knew that I found a niche with Cory." He became Sous Chef and was named Restaurant Chef in 2004.

His volunteer activities center around sustainable agriculture and ecological education. Just a few of his passions include: The Sauvie Island Center, a non-profit advocating for food, farming and the land; Three Rivers Land Conservancy, a group that protects natural areas, scenic and recreational areas, wildlife habitat, and historic lands in greater Portland; and Garden of Wonders an in-school program that integrates class learning with gardening. Adam is one of five chefs who cook lunch for elementary school children in Portland.



FRONT BURNER

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Category:
Sous Chef

Jason Stratton, Sous Chef
26 years-old

Café Juanita,
Kirkland



Many agree with the phrase "food is fashion," but Jason Stratton says that food is poetry. After studying poetry at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Wash. and working his way through notable kitchens including Le Gourmand, Avenue One and 727 Pine it is easy to see why he has that belief.

"For me, it's the place where I put focus. The spot that others pass up," explains Stratton. "Food and poetry are all about sharing intimate moments in the busy life. Stopping to take a moment, that's where life begins for me. That's why I like working in an open kitchen. I like to see how guests respond. It's the way I find the best way to live in the world."

Since becoming sous chef a year ago, Stratton has participated in a bevy of community and charity events Café Juanita's chef/owner, Holly Smith, champions. Whether at the event, or backing up and prepping ingredients at the Kirkland, Wash. restaurant Stratton sees these activities as an outreach that is part of his communion with guests and the poetry of food.

Stratton's ongoing mission at Café Juanita is to reach out to new purveyors, particularly connecting with farmers. "There are many great farmers who have never been able to sell to restaurants before," he says.

Category:
Sommelier

Tysan Pierce,
31 years-old

Southpark Seafood Grill & Wine Bar,
Portland



While most 24-year-olds were contemplating vocational choices, Tysan was emerging from the International Sommelier's Guild freshly minted with diploma in hand. Once the youngest instructor for the Guild's Wine Fundamentals class, she is now sommelier at Southpark Seafood Grill & Wine Bar continuing steadfast in her mission to take the pomp and mysticism out of wine. "Wine should be enjoyed," she explains, "not placed on a pedestal and removed from people's real experience."

One year out of Vasser, Tysan's wine curiosity was sparked while working in New York City restaurants. She considered the possibility of living in a wine region and moved to Portland because she discovered it was one of a few places where producers of world-class wines are only 45-minutes away from the city. She directed the wine program for the Heathman Restaurant, overseeing a 500-bottle cellar and now serves as full time sommelier shepherding Southpark's extensive wine program.

Giving back to the community is part of Tysan's fabric. She donates her time as Wine Director for the Metropolitan Family Service's Classic Wines Auction, teaches classes for the International Sommelier's Guild and is the Maitre D' and member of the Board of Directors for the International Pinot Noir Celebration.



FRONT BURNER

Continued from page 2

**Category:
Manager**

**Chris Heldridge,
31 years-old**

**General Manager
Canlis, Seattle**



For this Young Lion it's all in the details. "Details make the restaurant," Chris explains. "Food, wine and service are presented in every restaurant. But, at Canlis, the experience must feel like a genuine experience. All the correct details must converge to create that experience. A hundred

details go into an evening, if you miss one it diminishes the feeling. Our guests have expectations. Our job is to deliver on those expectations and exceed each and every time. Every day is game day."

As he straddles the operations of the wine department, the kitchen, the office and the front-of-the-house, Chris maintains his role as a hands-on manager who leads by example. While the floor is the focus for this extroverted general manager, he spends a lot of time with the kitchen staff and the wine department along with the dining room staff to maintain a team environment and keep the lines of communication open. All this is done with an effort to uphold the dedication to the details.

"It's great working for Canlis because it doesn't feel like a 55 year-old restaurant," Chris explains. "We have a young, energetic team and we are always on the lookout for new ideas. Without a big corporate structure, we have the ability to change things as the needs arise. We don't get mired down, we simply adjust accordingly."

"Having Mark (Canlis) in the restaurant is great," says Chris. "He is fabulous with the guests and it frees me up to concentrate on more of the business aspects of restaurant. It is also nice to always have a Canlis on the floor every night. Our guests like to be greeted by a Canlis."

Chris, a Seattle native, found his food roots growing up with a European-born mother and a father with an extensive wine cellar. Following his first career as a financial analyst for a merger and acquisition company he, became a part time wine steward at Canlis in 1999. For management experience he took an entry level manager position with Piatti, still occasionally taking a shift at Canlis from time to time, before becoming a full time maitre d' at Canlis.

**Category:
Bar Manager**

**Amon Mende,
30 years-old**

**Bar Manager
Tini Biggs & Watertown,
Seattle**



Amon is the epitome of on the job schooling. "I learn from those in the industry," he says. "I watch everything and work at learning something new every day." Starting his career in Spokane at an Irish Pub, he immediately took to the action of the bar, interfacing with patrons and multi-tasking. When

the chance came to move to Seattle, helping a friend open a new Irish Pub, he seized the opportunity.

Entering into the spirits arena, Amon moved to Zig Zag, deepened his knowledge of blends and brands while exploring the business side of the business. There he learned that things that sit on the shelf don't make money. It was under the tutelage of a co-worker with 30 years experience that the Young Lion discerned the differences of 80 Bourbons and 70 Scotches while refining the art of crafting the classic cocktail. This knowledge is the base for Amon's culinary approach to cocktail crafting.

"There is a large selection of spirits and you have to know how to mix them and match flavor profiles," he says. "In developing new specialty drinks you have to research and keep an eye on industry trends." He points to this spring's focus on fresh squeezed juices and fresh garnishes. "We are shopping at the Pike Place Market alongside chefs."

At Tini Biggs and Watertown, Amon has refined ordering, stocking, inventory, keeping an eye on cost controlling and scheduling. However, it's the cocktails that still inspire him. "Classic cocktails from the pre-Prohibition era are the anchor. From those the progressive creations happen that are in keeping with current trends."

The biggest lesson he has learned is that perfection is everything, particularly when it comes to "building" a cocktail. "Some patrons might scoff at a bartender using a jigger to measure ingredients," he says. "But a perfect cocktail comes from accurate measures. Then everything is blended to perfection."





EDITORIAL



Just Missing Dorothy... and Toto Too!

Time again for the announcement of NorthWest Stir's Young Lions Awards and this is truly a standout class. As a collection they emulate the heart, brains and courage it takes to be

in this industry, and they excel very successfully at it. Take a look at our 2006 pride of Young Lions and see how these professionals emulate the best of qualities that makes them a standout from their peers. The only thing missing from this Oz-like group is Dorothy!

Another standout in the industry, says Beverage Business columnist Tim O'Brien, is Northwest wines and winemakers. With the youth of the vineyards, uncertainty keeps predictability off balance. Read his column to help unravel the quest for the very next trend.

As many of you know, I am an equipment junkie. While I find nothing more flavorful than flesh charred over an open flame, I do applaud equipment that can make your jobs easier, cheaper or better. Put all the innovations under one roof and that is a standout event that just might blast me out of the office. The National Restaurant Association has just announced its Kitchen Innovation Award winners and plans to showcase these time, effort and money savers at the Show May 20 to 23 in Chicago. Just a few items that caught my eye is Beverage Air's Miracool Series Cooler, with a condenser and compressor integrated into a removable cartridge at the bottom of the unit; Cooper Atkins' Coolit-Rite thermometer with a programmable timer that retains data; and a "smart" combi oven from Cleveland Range that automatically tailors humidity to the type and quantity of product even for crispy items.

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Eddie Montoya Passes

Christopher Edward "Eddie" Montoya, chef of West Seattle's Ovio Bistro, died unexpectedly of unknown causes while visiting family in New Mexico on Christmas Eve morning. He was 27.

Montoya's creativity won him widespread praise. "He just has an amazing palate. It was instinctual. He put together flavors that nobody would ever really think of ... and it always worked," said Ovio's co-owner Ellie Chin. From the start of his young career he won fans throughout town, who praised everything from his cornmeal-crusted calamari to his lobster-watermelon salad.

He was drawn to cooking from the time he was a child, said his sister, Monica Montoya. "If we were at breakfast, he wanted to know what we were going to have for lunch and then for dinner. He always wanted to watch the cooking shows." He originally studied nursing before switching to culinary school. "He just loved it so much, and he lived for that," said his sister. "His favorite thing was watching people enjoy his food."

In addition to his sister, he is survived by his parents, of Silver City, N.M.; younger sister Nicole Montoya of Silver City; grandparents Isidra Padilla and Ricardo Padilla of Tyrone, N.M., and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

Memorial donations can be made at Ovio Bistro, 4752 California Ave. S.W., Seattle, WA 98116. The restaurant is also keeping a memory book for friends and patrons that will be sent to his family.



NEWS YOU CAN USE

NorthWest Notes

Portland restaurants **Blue House Café** and **Francisco's at the Blue House Café** have sparked national attention because of their cooperative operations. The updated bungalow on Brighton Avenue serves as the house and home for both restaurants, with the Café taking charge during breakfast and lunch day parts and Francisco's sweeping up with serving dinner. Both operations have their own chef/owner. Dirk Yeaton, owns of the Café and the property. Dave Mallari, chef/owner of Francisco's, helps Yeaton cover fixed expenses with his lease which lets Francisco's not only use the space but also all the equipment. Obtaining insurance proved to be a stumbling block. Arranging for each restaurant to have its own dedicated refrigerated storage was the method to smooth out the potential of cross-contamination. Stepping up fire inspections to twice a year was another concession Yeaton and Mallari made to license their restaurants.

Seattle Magazine recently honored several local eateries for outstanding "star-worthy" contributions of: cheap sandwiches, **The Saigon Deli**; truffle fries, **Canlis**; after dinner freebies, **Crave**; free wine, **Tutta Bella**, flaming food, **Waterfront Seafood Grill**; dessert too pretty to et, **611 Supreme Creperie & Café**; miniburgers, **Cascadia**; and, yuppie brisket, **Barbacoa**. Watering hole winners in the best of categories included: picking up hotties, **Joey's**; nightlife, **Paddy Coynes**; artist hangout, **The Hideout**; girls night out spot, **Chapel**; celeb spotting, **Earth & Ocean**; quiz night, **Reading Gaol**.

Washington's eighth federally recognized American Viticultural Area is the **Wahluke Slope**, a geographically isolated, generally south-facing slope of land near the Saddle Mountains in southeastern Washington. The new 81,000 acre AVA lies in the center of the Columbia Valley AVA and is bounded on the west and southern ends by the Columbia River, on the north by the Saddle Mountains and on the east by federal lands of the Hanford Reach National Monument. It sits entirely within the established Columbia Valley appellation with red wine grapes (Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah) making up 80 percent of total 5,205 bearing acreage.



National Notes

Phil Romano, the man behind **Romano's Macaroni Grill** and **Fuddruckers**, and The Dallas Morning News, have settled a 2004 lawsuit stemming from a restaurant review that Romano alleged was factually incorrect. The newspaper stands by its review and the settlement requires neither side to pay damages. Instead, the newspaper agreed to re-review **Il Mulino New York**, the restaurant the disputed review stemmed from.

Culinary resources: "Fresh Mushrooms Your One-stop Source For the Facts" The Mushroom Information Center. History, types, storage, buying and handling, cooking methods. For more information contact 212.420.8808 or www.mushroom-info.com.

"Inspired Creations for Appetizer Menus" Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board. Trends, recipes and cheese-inspired starters for all themes of restaurants. For more information contact www.foodservice.WisDairy.com.



Special Seasonings

At the association's Hospitality Awards Gala, The Washington Restaurant Association honored industry members for their outstanding commitment to community, service and hospitality. Lifetime Achievement Award: **Marc Zanner, Great Western Dining**. Humanitarian of the Year: **Diane Symms, Lombardi's Neighborhood Italian Restaurants**. Host of the Year: **Michael Carr, Schwartz Brothers Restaurants**, and **Lisa Hooke, Senior Froggy Restaurants**, Spokane. Supplier of the Year: **Tom Buckley, Caffe Vita**.

Gordon Brothers Cellars, has recently received Best of Class honors at two international competitions. The winery took a Best of Class Gold at the L.S. County Fair for Bordeaux Blends \$30.01 and up and a Best of Class for red Blends \$18 and up at the Gold Challenge Wine Competition.

Cascadia's catering manager, Nancy Neyhart, starred in an episode of A&E's "Move This House." She agreed to place her move into her new home into the hands of strangers – from packing to furniture placement to painting. Must have left more time for her to book parties.





NEWS YOU CAN USE



Birth Announcements

Portland's Pearl has another new baby. **Everett Street Bistro**, owned and designed by Kyle Lynch, emerged from the former Torrefazione space as a full-service bistro and espresso bar. Executive

Chef Ethan Powell, was previously sous chef and manager at Andina Restaurant in Portland. He is a graduate of the French Culinary Institute in New York.

Lynch has also added **Fenouil** to the Pearl scene. Serving as KL Design Group's principal and creative director, he birthed the 8,500 square foot bi-level brasserie for owners David and Suzie Regan and Pascal Chureau. Chureau is also executive chef. The spot is open for Sunday Brunch, lunch and dinner.

On Seattle's Capitol Hill Scott Simpson has opened **Fork**.

As with most conceptions, it all began over a very good bottle of wine. Two Northern Italians, Samuele Lucchese of Genova and Arlindo Moraes of Bologna, discussed the lack of truly authentic Northern Italian food in the south Puget Sound area. Olympia's **Basilico** came out of that night.

Alexandria's on Second closes in its Belltown, Seattle, location. The owners and some of its dishes now reside at the new **Joanna's Soul Cafe and Jazz Club** serving breakfast, lunch, dinner and late-night live jazz, with saxophonist Gary Hammond at 9 p.m. Sunday.

Growing Times: Fidelitas is acquiring a 5-acre parcel of land on Red Mountain in Benton City, Wash. This gives the winery a place to call home, while staying true to its terroir.

Moving Times: Café Stellina and **Osteria La Spiga** have both announced intent to join Seattle's 12th & Madison / 12th & Pike project. The restaurants will move into the historic Piston & Ring building undergoing renovation along 12th Avenue on Capitol Hill.

Anniversary Times: Salty's on the Columbia celebrates its silver anniversary. **Rosebud** marks its 12th anniversary. The **Tasting Room** is three. **Crave** turns two.



Ingredient Substitution

Tysan Pierce recently joined Southpark Seafood Grill & Wine Bar as the restaurant's sommelier. She brings 10 years of experience, most recently directing the wine program for the Heathman Restaurant.

The Seattle Yacht Club has snagged **Tom Black** as executive chef. He was most recently at MTM Management's Alderbrook.

Jeremy McLachlan has been appointed new Executive Chef of Salty's on Alki. He comes from a nine-year tenure at Salty's on the Columbia in Portland. He worked under the tutelage of previous Corporate Chef **Byron Shultz** training in French techniques. He takes over the toque from **Dan Thiessen**, who held the position of Corporate Executive Chef for almost two years. Thiessen left Salty's to work in the media (KVI 570 Talk Radio), teach and to open his own restaurant later this year in Bellevue.

Angie Roberts now tends the fires as Chef de Cuisine at Flying Fish, Seattle. She comes from Earth & Ocean where she was executive sous chef

El Gaucho, Portland welcomes **Jaime Mansfield** as Head Chef. He has been Sous Chef at the restaurant since 2002. Before joining El Gaucho's Mansfield was a chef at Holden's Bistro in the Pearl.

26brix in Walla Walla welcomes **Michael Kline** at Chef de Cuisine. He comes most recently from The Eiffel Tower Restaurant in the Paris Las Vegas Casino where he was Sous Chef under Chef **Jean Joho**. Former Campagne veteran **Jim German**, takes over as bar manager. He was most recently at Whitehouse Crawford in Walla Walla. Kline replaces **Drew LeTourneau** who becomes Sous Chef. German replaces **Mark Morasch** behind the mar. Morasch's National Guard unit is being deployed to Afghanistan.

The Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance announces the appointment of **Elizabeth Martin-Calder** as Executive Director. She comes from the Portland Art Museum where she directed marketing and communications strategies. Martin-Calder succeeds **Krista McCorkle Davis**, who served as Executive Director for the Alliance for the past three years.





FOOD FINDS



Chocolate is hot and the trend is twisting America's milk chocolate loving spirit toward the dark side. As consumers embrace more Euro-styles of chocolate, urged on by nutrition news relating benefits of the dark chocolate, chocolate emerges as a decadent drink. Boutique brands lead the list of offerings, but big brand powerhouses are seeking sweet success snapping up chocolate companies to add to their stables.

Hip Hot Choco

Prepare for guests questing for drinking chocolate as a morning treat or bedtime toddy, these spots have:

Portland's **Mio Gelato** recently caught the eye of USA Today and was dubbed one of the 10 best spots to enjoy true molten chocolate. The cioccolato caldo, an Italian-style drink is prepared in a bain-marie that regularly stirs the thick chocolate. Some Italian-inspired hot chocolate recipes call for eggs used as a thickening agent.

Oh Chocolate! in Seattle's Madison Valley swings to the French-side. Their style of hot chocolate is prepared with molten chocolate, milk and 40% butterfat cream, then served with freshly whipped sweet cream. Other French-style followers blend the chocolate with hot water and sugar.

El Diablo Coffee on Seattle's Queen Anne takes the South of the Border Mexican-style approach to hot chocolate. Ibarra chocolate blended with cinnamon and vanilla and heated just so.

Moonstruck in Portland brings a new meaning to hot chocolate, dishing up molten chocolate and dashing it with cayenne for a caliente hot chocolate.

Besides International style, specific producer ingredients add to the flavor profile of the finished beverage. Ephemere Sauce is a meta-popular ingredient used at Dilettante in Seattle's Westlake Mall. A proprietary bittersweet ganache, it adds a delicious, opulent note to an already indulgent beverage.

- Alicia Comstock Arter



Northern Exposure

February 2 will wrap-up the eleven day "Dine Our Vancouver" experience this season. The promotion, presented by VISA, offers diners the chance to sample fare from the city's best establishments at unbelievably low prices. Restaurateurs from more than 100 operations are showcasing three course meals for C\$15, C\$25 and C\$35. For more information visit http://www.vancouver.com/whattosee-do/dine_out/index.htm.



Fonté Coffee Roaster's Master Roaster Steve Smith was one of thirty-two influential coffee experts from around the world invited by the Alliance for Coffee Excellence to grade the new crop of Brazilian coffees in the prestigious Cup of Excellence competition. In November, Smith traveled to Pocos de Caldas, where the semi-finalists were judged. With the other coffee experts, Smith graded the Brazilian semi-finalists, the best the country has to offer, culled from more than 550 entries.



Wild Side. A brief ray of sunshine last month prompted a bull sea lion to get out of the water and bask in the warmth... atop a guest's car during lunch service at Salty's on Alki. Sommelier Tim O'Brien confronted the wildlife and "urged" him to return to Elliott Bay.



BEVERAGE BUSINESS



Wine Futures

By Tim O'Brien

How would you like a peek into the future? You are a curious person, eager to learn and to make yourself aware of changing trends in the world of wine. You also enjoy wine so don't just sit there waiting for your invitation to visit an Oregon or Washington winery. Get out there, others are!

Investors are arriving from all parts of the world because they too, are curious and eager. They have tasted the efforts of our pioneer wine makers and they see opportunity and potential. It is amazing to consider how young the region's wine industry is. Thirty years is equivalent to a centimeter on the timeline of wine. Starting a winery or planting a vineyard is a very risky and expensive proposition. The financial return is delayed for years waiting for vines to mature and wine to age gracefully in expensive oak barrels. Despite of all this the wine industry is growing rapidly, showing no signs of slowing down. Exciting times for sure and the best is yet to come.

A large part of the excitement is the uncertainty. No one knows exactly what will be next bright star in the Oregon or Washington wine constellation. In Washington's beginning there was Riesling then came Chardonnay, Merlot, Cabernet and Syrah. Today Riesling is back in the limelight with vineyards being planted at the request of winemakers looking for high quality fruit to satisfy a resurgent demand. I was told

by one of the state's premier wine entrepreneurs that Malbec has a very bright future in their vineyards. The list of possible varietals to plant is extensive which provides a perfect opportunity for us, the all-important consumer, a.k.a. the guy who pays the bills.

Visiting wineries is where you get that peek into the future. Seek out the varietals that have not crossed your tasting path. They are the future. Make the most of your visit by tasting something new. Many wineries are experimenting with new plantings that are yielding remarkable results. They don't have enough wine to bring today's tasting room gems to the general market but you can enjoy them today in tasting rooms to get that glimpse into tomorrow. Listen to the story that accompanies each wine and buy those wines, before they become the next darling of the ratings game and double in price. When wine is good, they aren't secrets for long.

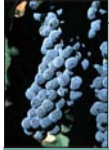
The tasting room is also the best place to consider how well a specific wine compliments food. Hopefully the tasting rooms provide something to nibble on so you get an idea of the wine's compatibility with food. Be sure to taste both white and red wine. The list of offerings in Oregon and Washington wineries is much longer today than it was a few years ago. The success of Syrah, for example, has prompted many growers to plant other Rhone varietals such as Roussanne, Marsanne, Viognier, Morvedre, Cinsaut and of course Grenache. Italian varieties including Sangiovese, Nebbiolo, Barbera and Zinfandel have also enjoyed some impressive results in competitions against California's best. The wine is there. It's your move to discover the future.

Tim O'Brien is the Sommelier and Beverage Director for Salty's. He is responsible for the three locations: Seattle, Tacoma and Portland.





CALENDAR



Social – Wine Events

February 1

“Four to Six” Old World vs New World Pinot Noir Tasting, The Art Institute of Seattle. \$12pp. For more information contact Dieter Schafer, www.ais.edu or WineDieter@cs.com .

February 4

Wines for Your Valentine’s Dinner, The Art Institute of Seattle. \$65 pp. Washington and French selections, food and wine pairing. For more information contact Dieter Schafer, www.ais.edu or WineDieter@cs.com .

February 8

“Four to Six” Washington Syrah Tasting, The Art Institute of Seattle. \$12pp. For more information contact Dieter Schafer, www.ais.edu or WineDieter@cs.com .

February 18

Educate Your Palate: Washington Wine Class, The Art Institute of Seattle. \$65pp. For more information contact Dieter Schafer, www.ais.edu or WineDieter@cs.com .

February 15

“Four to Six” Gems from Southern France Wine Tasting, The Art Institute of Seattle. \$12pp. For more information contact Dieter Schafer, www.ais.edu or WineDieter@cs.com .

March 1

“Four to Six” Washington Merlot Tasting, The Art Institute of Seattle. \$12pp. For more information contact Dieter Schafer, www.ais.edu or WineDieter@cs.com .



Shows & Festivals

Through March 3

2006 Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival, Vancouver, B.C. For more information contact 604.873.3311 or www.playhousewinefest.com.

April 30 – May 2

Northwest Foodservice Show, Tacoma Dome. For more information contact www.nwfoodserviceshow.com, 503.582.9482 or 800.645.7350.



Prix Fixe

Through February 3

The Rover’s Cookbook 5-Course Tasting Menu, Rovers, Seattle. \$90 two people For more information contact 206.325.7442.

February 1

Meet the Artists Dinner Series, Mitchell’s, Seattle. \$50pp with wine. For more information contact Info@Mitchellis.com or 206.623.3883.

February 10 – 14

“Love American Style,” Red Star Tavern and Roast House, Portland. A la carte menu. February 12 – 14 heart shaped cookies to decorate. For more information contact 503.222.0005.

February 23

Devin Derby Dinner, Waterfront Seafood Grill, Seattle. Eight wineries featured, 4-courses. \$55pp. For more information contact 206.956.9171.

Daily

Cascadia for \$25, Cascadia, Seattle. Three-course menu, \$25pp. For more information contact 206.448.8884.



CALENDAR



Charities

February 10

Mardi Gras! To benefit Renton Technical College. Tickets \$50. For more information contact 425.235.2352, ext. 5728.

March 4

Classic Wines Auction, Oregon Convention Center, Portland. For more information contact 503.972.0194 or visit www.classicwinesauction.com.

March 11

15th annual Washington Wines Festival Auction, Columbia Tower Club, Seattle. Event benefits the Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic and Washington Wine Education Foundation. Tickets \$400 pp. For more information contact 206.236.6167.

March 21

Sexy Syrah Wine Tasting, Salty's on Alki. Event benefits FareStart. Tickets \$30pp. For more information contact www.farestart.org, info@farestart.org, 206.443.1233 or winelover99@comcast.net.

March 21

16th Annual Anthony's Oyster Olympics. Event benefits Puget Soundkeeper Alliance. Tickets \$85. For more information contact 206.297.7002 or www.pugetsoundkeeper.org.



Education

February 2-6

American Culinary Federation, Regional Conference, Hawaii. For more information contact www.washingtonstatechefs.org.

February 13

Washington State Chef's Association meeting, Emerald Queen Casino, Tacoma. For more information contact Steve Lammers slammers@oc.ctc.edu or 360.475.7571.

February 21

Shellfish & Crustaceans Cooking Glass with Executive Chef Charles Ramseyer, Ray's Boathouse, Seattle. \$35 pp inclusive. For more information contact 206.789.4130 ext. 220.



NorthWest Stir readers are offered an opportunity to adopt an oak tree growing in a French truffière. The anticipated outcome is that the tree will provide the correct environment to produce the genuine article, the Périgord black truffle, *Tuber melanosporum*, not the utterly gastronomically inferior, almost worthless, summer truffle, *Tuber aestivum*. Many tree "parents" visit their tree and stay in the truffière's house owned by Dick Pyle, a British ex-pat now living in Le Gers. Visit www.truffle-tree.com for more information. On the order form use the "media code" STIR to qualify for your discount from \$239 to \$199.



Sip a vibrant Pinot or a buttery Chardonnay February 24 through 26 at Portland's Yard, Garden & Patio show. Tucked behind a cascading 20-foot waterwall, at the end of a wooded pathway 20 Oregon wineries will offer up wines by the glass, bottle or case. The Pacific Northwest Wine Club will be on hand as wine guides. Participating wineries include: August Cellars, Champagne Creek, Chateau Bianca Winery, Chateau Lorane Winery, Harris Bridge Vineyard, Hillcrest Vineyard, Kathken Vineyards, Mia Sonatina Cellars, Silvan Ridge Winery and Willamette Valley Vineyards.



TALK OF THE TABLE

Rhone Varietal Harvest Bears Fruit

By Rusty Eddy

(Ukiah, Calif.) – In contrast to reports about the large 2005 grape crop in California, a few Rhone Ranger winery members, from Idaho to Paso Robles, report that their yields were lower this year than last.

While some of those lower yields can be attributed to shatter, Tracey Brandt from A Donkey and Goat Winery said that their “Mendocino County Syrah was off by 50% this year, not just because of weather, but because a bear ate over a half ton of the fruit.” Winemaker David Lake in Washington has the same problem, and noted that the vineyard block “looked as if it had been mechanically harvested. Fortunately, the bears had not seen the movie *Sideways* and showed a strong preference for Merlot!”

Also in Washington State, Wilridge Winery winemaker Paul Beveridge noted that yields were down “20% to 30%, but flavor concentration is great.” Hogue Cellars director of winemaking agreed, noting that “this vintage lacked the heat spikes we often experience; the even ripening developed plenty of concentrated flavors.”

On California’s Central Coast, Chuck Carlson of Curtis Winery had a crop like many other California winemakers: “We experienced good to above normal yields on all of our Rhone varieties, in fact, we had to drop fruit mid-season to ensure proper ripening. I’m pretty excited by what I’m tasting in the barrels.” Jason Haas at Tablas Creek Winery said that their “yields were up about 20%, and I know that this was moderate for Paso Robles wineries.”

Even vintners who had lighter than usual crops said that picking started later than normal. Like Forsyth, many mentioned the lack of heat spikes and the contribution that the long, relatively mild growing season made to flavor development. Charene Beltramo of Cline Cellars in Sonoma, spoke for many of the winemakers when she noted that, “the red wines have great color extraction and acids are higher than in previous years.”

Many winemakers waxed poetic about their acid levels. Bayard Fox from Renard, who describes his wines as “ballerinas that took up kick boxing,” compared 2005 to a European vintage:

I have been yearning to experience another European vintage with full knowledge I would never be able to do so living in the same Northern hemisphere. And yet, this year we have experienced an equivalent of continental climate with cooler, moister conditions, and hence higher acids with out the outrageous sugars. Essentially, I got my continental vintage without paying for the plane ticket!

By varietal, wineries report that Syrah yields varied widely by region (and bears), but that the late start of harvest combined with slow ripening developed “classic” flavors and balance.

Other Rhone Ranger reds garnered the same adjectives from winemakers: Grenache and Mourvedre look “exceptional.” Petite Sirah is “darkly colored, peppery and spicy.” Dan Lee at Morgan Winery simply said, “quality is awesome across the board.”

Viognier yielded ripe, clean and uniform flavors from Idaho to California, with some winemakers reporting intense varietal flavors at lower Brix than usual.

For other whites, the reports were similar. Roussanne, Grenache Blanc and Marsanne all developed ripe flavors at lower Brix than usual. And in obscure Rhone whites, Tablas Creek Winery in Paso Robles expects to pick its first crop of Picpoul Blanc, an ancient grape from the Languedoc region of France, in early November.

Norman Silverman from Silver Pines Vineyard in Sonoma, summed up 2005 simply: “it should be a benchmark year” for Rhone varietal wines.

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