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Local News

Friday July 27, 2007

Sports

Sushi and Wine

Business

Commentary by Eve Bushman

Features

It may have been the wine dinner of the year - the unlikely pairing of a "thought-they-just-made-sushi" bar and Paso Robles winery Edward Sellers. Hosted by Valencia Wine Company and held at Maru Sushi - just a few steps away on Town Center Drive in Valencia, I was delighted to be seated next to Sellers and I took full advantage.

A Closer Look

Visiting the area of Paso Robles for golf, Sellers quickly fell in love with the landscape. He decided to buy a few acres to start. But by the end of 2004 he couldn't resist his fate any longer --he bought a vineyard and now had thirty acres of vines. Like Bordeaux or Napa where you cannot put the area's name on a label without having the grapes behind it, his wines are all 100 percent Paso Robles. His winemaker, Amy Butler, Sellers boasts, is one of few female winemakers available. Her education at University of California, Davis and her work at Staggs Leap and Schramsberg made her impossible not to snap up. Their first vintage, only available in Santa Clarita from Valencia Wine Company, was 2,500 cases.

Commentary

As the reception began with appetizers that tickled your tongue with tastes of tomato, peaches and goat cheese, we started our pairing perfectly with their Paso Robles Viognier 2005.

Editorial Cartoons

"A perfect floral wine, served at room temperature it shows everything" said Guy Lelarge, owner of Valencia Wine Co.

Entertainment

The entree was seared divers' scallops with a blood orange nage over wilted Swiss chard & arugula with Paso Robles Blanc du Rhone 2005. We were equally astounded at how well "disciplined and passionate" chef Jason Park had used his fine French restaurant experience to its fullest. I was again reminded that the best fish is sushi-grade. So I slowly sliced the scallop, as big as my palm, to take full advantage of every bit of sauce and Swiss chard.

Obituaries

The second course was pan-roasted skate wing over pomme puree and wild porcini mushrooms with a warm herb vinaigrette. Only half the guests recognized it as fish but it was delicious. Others, in the mood to joke, were happy to find our skate wing wasn't pigeon or the collar bone of some small animal.

Your Schools

The delicate fruit of the Paso Robles Rousanne 2005 was another perfect match to which Sellers remarked, "We make wine that balances the food and does not become the food."

SCV History

Next came roasted Peking duck breast over a chopped udon risotto with a cherry-Syrah reduction paired with our first red wine of the evening --Paso Robles Cuvee des Cinq 2004. This award-winning wine had the room buzzing with words like "elegant, yet understandable" and a wine that you "don't have to wait four years to drink; this was made to drink today."

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We now wanted to linger over the fourth course - lamb sirloin confit over banana fingerling potatoes tossed with creme fraiche and a boysenberry glaze served with another wine I had chosen for my own - Paso Robles Cognito 2004. Produced as a "black label" the first year; Sellers had since decided it had to be produced again. Then for the finale - chocolate cherry tart tatin with a Tahitian vanilla bean ice cream paired with Paso Robles Grenache 2004. The Grenache was only slightly sweet and 15 percent alcohol blended with nothing less than Chateaufort du Pape. This choice did not fail to please.

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By 9:30 and the crowd was buzzing. Mark White, whose Golden Empire Mortgage is above the Valencia Wine Company, had regaled us with stories of his cycling home from the wine bar on more than one occasion.

Vacation Holds & More

"I always had my favorite wine bar - the first licensed in our valley - right downstairs and now my favorite restaurant too," White said. "Being a resident of the Santa Clarita Valley since 1964, there has never been a better restaurant to go with these phenomenal wines."

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The wait staff, who had been attentive all evening, couldn't help but comment that they had been getting "rave reviews."

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As I made my exit, I thought it was comfortable that my tastes didn't allow more than two full glasses, leaving plenty more for those who could handle it!

Valley Homes

Eve Bushman is a resident of Newhall. Her column represents her own views and not necessarily those of The Signal.

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SCV Publications

READER METER

Q: What is the most important issue facing the Santa Clarita City Council in 2008?:

Expanding the hospital

Protecting open space

Relieving traffic congestion

Curtailling growth

Creating living-wage jobs

Creating affordable housing

Supporting "smart growth" construction with open space

Redeveloping Newhall

Being fiscally responsible in the face of state budget cuts.

None of the above

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