

Beaux Freres Vineyard and Winery Fall Tasting Supper at Blantyre, Lenox, Massachusetts

It was an elegant and memorable evening of **Oregon Pinot Noir** wine tasting and gastronomy, at the [Beaux Frères Vineyard & Winery Fall Tasting Supper](#) at [The Dining Room at Blantyre](#) in [Lenox, Massachusetts](#) in the **Berkshire Mountains** with [Winemaster Michael G. Etzel](#) and [Relais & Chateaux Master Chef Christopher Brooks](#).

The setting was perfect, there was a chill in the November air, and a fire roared invitingly in the immense fireplace in Blantyre's Main Hall. Befitting the occasion, Sommelier Luc Chevalier and Wine Director Christelle Cotar began the evening pouring guests glasses of Krug Grande Cuvée while the gracious staff passed hors d'oeuvres to tempt our palates.



Sommelier Luc Chevalier and

Wine Director Christelle Cotar

Dinner was served in the stunning dining room where the table was magnificently set for 24, and the wood paneled walls glowed from the tall white tapers in antique silver candlesticks and votive candles on the elegant cut lace tablecloth. Nine sparkling crystal wine glasses, a cranberry accented footed water glass, a place card with each guest's name, a gold-rimmed charger plate, and an ivory booklet with the evening's menu was elegantly presented at each place setting. An opulent floral arrangement graced the center of the table, and a large Oriental carpet accented the glistening hardwood floor.



Dining Room

Blantyre's owner **Ann Fitzpatrick Brown** introduced **Winemaker Michael G. Etzel**, who told the history of his vineyard, Beaux Frères and introduced each wine for the pairings. Conversation flowed easily as the interesting guests, comprised of foodies and oenophiles exchanged their opinions on the nuances of each of the wines and which pairings they preferred with each course. It was an evening of celebration of the art of the grape and the art of kitchen, and Master Chef Christopher Brooks and Chef de Cuisine Arnaud Cotar outdid themselves with their gastronomic presentations that complemented the excellent Oregon Pinot Noirs.

The first inspired course was Sustainable Tuna, Cauliflower, Capers, and Parsley, presented as seared tuna with cauliflower puree, steamed cauliflower, capers, and parsley, on a pool of rich reduction sauce, paired with the Belles Soeurs, 2004. Interestingly, the 2004 was the last year that Beaux Frères made the Belles Soeurs Ana Vineyard Pinot Noir, which was similar in style to a French Burgundy from Cote de Beaune with its medium to full body, black cherries, raspberries, and spice notes of cinnamon and clove.



Sustainable Tuna

For the second course, there was an Autumn Mushroom Tasting, attractively presented as a selection of mushroom recipes consisting of a flavorful mushroom cappuccino served in a demitasse, a tiny, delicate chanterelle, a mélange of sautéed wild mushrooms, and a crispy, golden square croquette filled with mushroom cream. The mushrooms were gorgeous with their exotic earthiness that paired well with both the Beaux Frères The Vineyard, 2008 and the Beaux Frères The Vineyard, 2007, although the wines were very different from one another.



Autumn Mushroom Tasting

Winemaker Michael G. Etzel explained their difference as 2007 was a challenging vintage, it was rainy and cool, and he fermented that vintage more like a white wine. He felt that the 2007 was an elegant, feminine wine with red fruit versus black fruit, a wine of intellectual power, not physical power. In comparison, the

2008 was a more balanced and richer wine, with lots of black fruit and earthiness.

The third course was attractively presented Duo of La Belle Farms Duck, Orange, Watercress and Frisée (Haddock, Orange, Watercress and Frisée for Debra) paired with a Beaux Frères Willamette Valley, 2006 and a Beaux Frères The Vineyard, 2006; same vintage, yet very different results from Beaux Frères. This was a lovely course with contrasting flavors marked by the sweetness from the orange coulis, a slight bitterness of the frisée, and the rich dark fruitiness of the wines that worked well with both the duck and the fish.



Haddock, Orange, Watercress and Frisée

Boneless Lamb Rack, Parsnips, Sultana, Chickpea Croquette and Curry Jus followed (Dover Sole, Parsnips, Sultana, Chickpea Croquette and Curry Jus for Debra) paired with Beaux Frères The Vineyard, 2005 and Beaux Frères Upper Terrace, 2005. The lamb (as well as the Dover Sole) was presented with interesting flavor profiles with parsnip puree, chickpea croquette, and exotically spicy curry jus that complemented the earthiness of the wines. The Beaux Frères The Vineyard, 2005 was an aromatic wine with black fruit and earthiness on the nose, and a more delicate finish; whereas the Beaux Frères Upper Terrace, 2005, made from Dijon clones, suitable to Oregon's cooler climate, exhibited floral and earthy notes, which Michael said suggested a grand cru red Burgundy from the Cotes de Nuits.



Dover Sole

For the cheese course, a decade and a vineyard separated the Beaux Frères The Vineyard, 1992 and the Beaux Frères Upper Terrace, 2002. The 1992 was the first commercial release for Beaux Frères The Vineyard, which was an exceptionally warm year, and they harvested on August 31, 1992, as the vines were young and eager to produce fruit. As a point of comparison, they harvested their 2010 vintage on October 17, 2010, over 2 months later, due to a much cooler and rainy season. Like the 1992, which was the first release for The Vineyard, 2002 was the first vintage for the Beaux Frères Upper Terrace, and while both years were warm, and the wines had a commonality, the 1992 was at its peak, and the 2002 still had the potential for additional aging.

Desserts and coffee followed in the Music Room resplendent with its massive floral arrangement done in pinks and purples set in the center of the large wood table laden with an assortment of tempting desserts

Created by: Debra C. Argen and Edward F. Nesta

and sweets. Cream cupcakes, passionfruit mousse, small squares of rich chocolate crowned with gold leaf, miniature apple tarts, homemade caramels, and dark chocolate candies were just a few of the many offerings that sang their siren song. Antique silver tea and coffee pots nestled under quilted cozies, tall white tapers glowed in antique crystal candlesticks, and antique china recalled the opulent Gilded Age, of which Blantyre is part of, built in 1902.



Desserts

We conversed with the other guests reminiscing about the evening's pairings while enjoying a taste of Warre Port, 1970, a vintage created to celebrate Warre's 300th anniversary, and listened as the concert pianist played the Steinway in the corner of the magnificent room.

As we climbed the ornate wood stairs to our stunning Laurel Suite to spend the night, we reflected on a memorable evening of good wines, good food, and making new friends, just a few of the many things of which Blantyre excels.

The Menu

Beaux Frères Vineyard & Winery

Fall Tasting Supper

Sunday, November 7, 2010

At half after o'clock

Hors d'oeuvres

Krug Grande Cuvée

Sustainable Tuna, Cauliflower, Capers, and Parsley

Belles Soeurs, 2004

Autumn Mushroom Tasting

Beaux Frères The Vineyard, 2008

Beaux Frères The Vineyard, 2007

Duo of La Belle Farms Duck, Orange, Watercress and Frisée

Beaux Frères Willamette Valley, 2006

Beaux Frères The Vineyard, 2006

Boneless Lamb Rack, Parsnips, Sultana, Chickpea Croquette and Curry Jus

Created by: Debra C. Argen and Edward F. Nesta

Beaux Frères The Vineyard, 2005

Beaux Frères Upper Terrace, 2005

Cheese Selection

Beaux Frères The Vineyard, 1992

Beaux Frères Upper Terrace, 2002

Desserts and Coffee in the Music Room

Warre Port, 1970

The Dining Room at Blantyre is open for lunch for outside guests Wednesday through Sunday from 12:30 pm until 1:45 pm, and for dinner Wednesday through Sunday from 5:45 pm until 7:45 pm. The restaurant is open daily for hotel guests with extended hours for dining. Jackets and ties are required for gentlemen.



Blantyre

For information on upcoming **Wine Dinners at Blantyre**, including the **Sassicaia Wine Dinner on Sunday, December 5, 2010**, please visit the Blantyre website:

www.Blantyre.com/WineCellar-WineDinners.php

Read more about **Blantyre** in the [Destinations](#), [Hotels and Resorts](#), [Restaurants](#), [Chefs' Recipes](#), [Spas](#), and [Luxury Products - Gifts](#) sections.



The Dining Room at Blantyre

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For more information on **The Berkshires**, please visit the **Berkshire Visitors Bureau** website: www.Berkshires.org.

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