



*The Ladies Wine and Food Society of Melbourne (Inc.)*  
REG. No. A0022942F

Alexandra Club Dinner

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2023

We were fortunate to have been invited into the Alexandra Club by Rayleen Haig. What a dining experience. As we sat in a delightful charming dining room drinking out of beautiful delicate pink water glasses it took my breath away. Such grandeur with beautiful antiques, displays of fresh flowers and a painting of Queen Alexandra prominent in the room.

In planning this dinner, we thought that we would open the cellar and select some rare French wines that the members would appreciate. Rather than complicate things I choose a rather 'Retro' dinner menu.

Starting with pithivier of duck and quince as our canape, instead of Champagne, we decided to serve a pair of Sauternes. While we often serve Sauternes with dessert, an equally good match is savoury foods such as foie gras, terrine or this pithivier. Both went beautifully with the tiny morsels of duck.



*2009 Chateau Guiraud 1er Cru Classe (Sauternes) 750mL*

On first tasting, this seemed the lighter of the pair, so it was served first. While drinking, its richer characters emerged. 2009 is regarded as a decadent and opulent vintage for Sauternes. This has many years of life ahead. We have a number of half bottles remaining and I would suggest we leave them for another 5 plus years if possible.

*2009 Chateau Coutet 1er Cru Classe (Barsac) 750mL*

Barsac is an area within Sauternes and typically the wines from Barsac may be fresher and lighter than other areas of Sauternes. This wine lightened with more air and fresh citrus characters developed. As for Chateau Guiraud, this wine has many more years of enjoyment ahead. Both wines were opened 3 hours prior to drinking, checked then decanted to give them even more air given their youth.

The entrée was Prawn Cocktail, baby cos & bottarga. Juicy plumb prawns accompanied by a wedge of cos and a delicious bottarga cream sauce.

*2007 Domaine Bouchard Pere & Fils Corton Charlemagne*



What a treat this white Burgundy (chardonnay) proved to be. With online reports of premature oxidation, it felt risky to serve, but both bottles were in excellent condition and drinking beautifully. Rich and complex, this wine continued to evolve in the glass. Unfortunately these were the last bottles from the cellar. Reports from around the table were that it matched the prawns and equally the chicken if you were able to hold some back for long enough.

The retro theme was highlighted by the main course of Roasted baby chicken leg & breast with corn puree, charred leek and jus gras. The chicken was deliciously juicy and the corn puree was smooth, creamy and luscious.

*2006 Domaine Confuron-Cotéidot Vosne-Romanée 1er Cru "les Suchots"*

The palate of Vosne-Romanée (red Burgundy/pinot noir) is described as an "iron fist in a velvet glove". It is rare to find anything but excellence in Vosne-Romanée. This was a stunning wine which continued to develop in the glass. Both of these wines were opened 4 hours prior to service and then double decanted. This one in particular was looking tough and closed on tasting. Still life ahead, but better to catch it in its prime rather than waiting too long. Alas, these were our last bottles.

*2015 Chateau Haut-Pezat Saint Emilion*

An earlier drinking Bordeaux from Saint Emilion (merlot and cabernet franc grape varieties), this wine was drinking well with an elegant palate of fresh fruit and soft tannins. Youthful but approachable now and will further develop.

For dessert I chose the Alexandra Club signature Raspberry Souffle, fior di latte gelato. Impressive on its own, so we decided not to find a wine to complement.



We were delighted to have Rayleen speak about the history of the house, activities such as Choir, Bridge, Walking Groups and friendship groups that the House encourages. Alexandra Club also offers accommodation for travellers and there are several restaurants that one could dine at.

We took the opportunity to dine at Alexandra Club with the idea that this venue would be perfect for small intimate wine dinners.

Julee Andersen, Food Master

Janet Harper, Wine Master



