

IWFS Philippines Branch:
Tasting of Bordeaux Second Wines
Lemuria, April 21, 2016



Above: Tasting in progress.

Conceived by IWFS President Bernie Sim, members and guests of the International Wine and Food Society Manila Branch converged at Lemuria Restaurant, in Quezon City, to assess 6 Bordeaux second wines from recent excellent vintages. Truly, it was a night to remember.

The tasting was arranged in two exacting flights; the first flight consisted of Fiefs de Lagrange 2005, Dame de Montrose 2005 and Clos du Marquis 2000 – certainly an interesting way to start the night.

The second flight consisted purely of second wines from First Growth Chateaux, and all from the excellent 2000 vintage. The wines were Bahans Haut Brion, Carruades de Lafite, and Pavillon Rouge du Chateau Margaux.



The first three wines, in order of tasting.

In the first flight, Fiefs de Lagrange 2005 was quite the lightweight. Almost as if acting the foil, the Dame de Montrose 2005 was big, meaty and tannic - more years in the bottle were needed to tame the Dame. In the middle of the ring sat the Clos du Marquis 2000, which, like the Dame de Montrose, initially guarded itself with strong tannins, but turned out fairly approachable as a smoky and spicy wine. The Fiefs de Lagrange was clearly the shy, odd man out here, being much lighter than the other two wines.



Taking honors for the event: Bahans Haut-Brion along with its 2000 compatriots, Carruades de Lafite and Pavillon Rouge de Chateau Margaux.

As thoughts closed on the first wave, in came the second flight - both the Pavillon and Carruades were rather closed – in particular, the Carruades had somewhat elevated acidity. Both really needed more time to open their doors - perhaps another five years waiting in line.

Breaking out of the game, however, was the Bahans Haut-Brion. Calling it perfect was an understatement. Lovingly sweet fruit, smooth soft tannins, and a long finish set the bar for the night. Although it is tempting to drink now, it is still all about the fruit at this stage. There might be more development and complexity forthcoming in a few more years - but make no mistake, it is absolutely exquisite right now. By far, Bahans was my wine of the night, and of most of the attendees as well.



From top left: Salade Lyonnaise, Clos du Marquis - our dinner wine, and one of Lemuria's literal signature desserts. No one gave the tenderloin any quarter, so feel free to use your imagination.

A beautiful three-course dinner followed the tasting – not too much, just right for the tasting crowd. The first course was a savory Salade Lyonnaise, followed by an entrée of a very vivid, porcini-rubbed, Tasmanian Cape Grim Beef Tenderloin. The wine poured for dinner was Clos du Marquis 1996 which was open, ready, and very much waiting - perfect for drinking now, and completing the meal. To finish, we were sent off with a delightful dessert of Coco Crème Berry.



A devilishly delightful finish for the night.

Although most left right after dinner, a few who remained were treated by Marina Schroeder – the owner of the restaurant, to a half-bottle of von Bassermann-Jordan Deidesheimer Kalkofen Eiswein 1998. It was a bit of a struggle to get the bottle open as it had a very crumbly but stubborn cork. But the payoff was great; unctuous, sweet, oily, but superbly balanced by the acidity, this wine was quite literally oozing with character, with hints of candied tropical fruit and orange marmalade. To top it all off, it had –extreme- length, lasting minutes; this wine lent some of its years for us to soak in all its flavors. Truly, this was a rare treat and a great way to end the evening.

I would like to thank Bernie for chairing this event, Marina Schroeder, the talented Chef Kevin Endaya, as well as the rest of the staff at Lemuria for their great food and even better service, and all the attendees who made this spectacular event possible - after all, great wines taste better with equally great company.

Jay Labrador