

EQUINOX to EQUINOX

Menu 2015

A metamorphosis of
ethereal dreams
as I lie in waiting for
a full dish of summer...

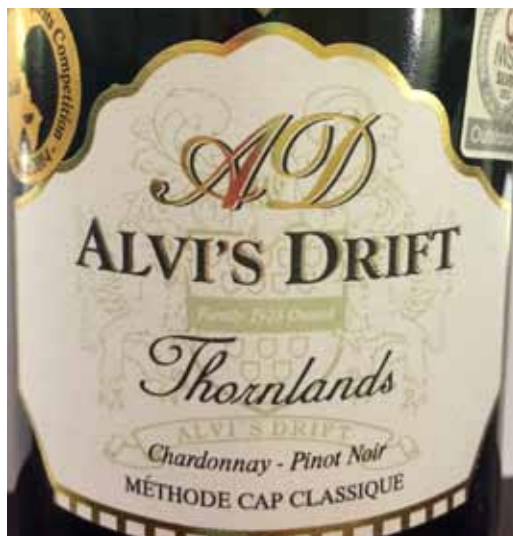
Jewels of the Sea

Oyster, Champagne, Fennel

The sea is a vast source of life, not only filled with beautiful creatures but also mystery and treasures. With this dish I was inspired by one of those treasures – “The Oyster Pearl”

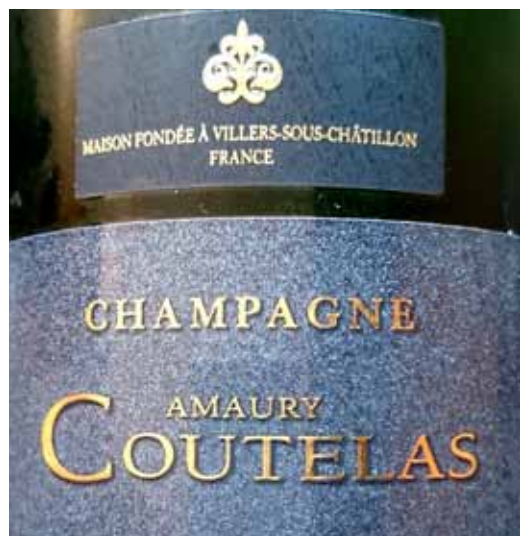
The birth of a pearl is truly a miraculous event. Unlike gemstones or precious metals that must be mined from the earth, live oysters far below the surface of the sea grow pearls. Gemstones must be cut and polished to bring out their beauty. However, pearls need no such treatment to reveal their magnificence. They are born from oysters complete - with a shimmering iridescence, luster and soft inner glow unlike any other gem on earth.

To create this dish I have combined an oyster macerated in champagne and a light apple jelly topped with slightly acidic champagne foam. The treasure of this dish is our own home grown pearl set in a spoon of salty Sturgeon d’Aquitaine Caviar.



Alvi's Drift
Thornlands MCC

A pale straw colour with aromas of freshly baked bread crust and biscuits dominate the nose. Roasted almonds and walnuts are evident on the palate that is complimented with a balanced and dry finish.



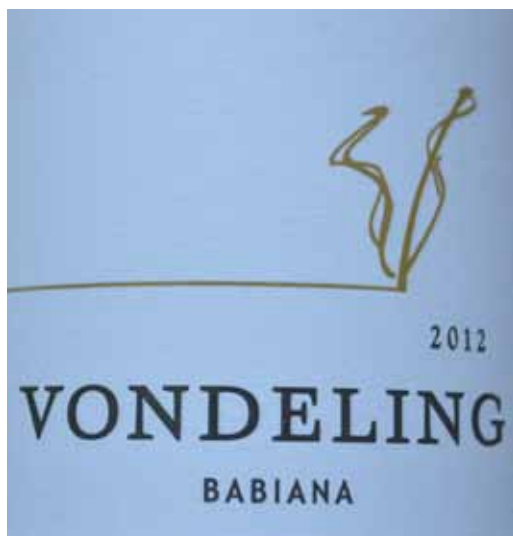
Amaury Coutelas
Cuvée Brut Origin

An elegant pale gold colour with subtle hints of silver. Its fruitiness and the complexity of the citrus aromas combines elegantly. Fresh entry with great finesse, great elegance and a good length.

Sunflower Spring

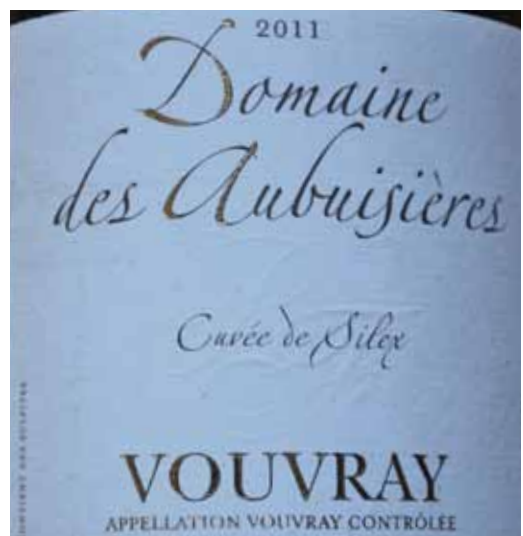
Carrot, Jelly, Puree, Orange Blossom Yoghurt Cream

Although this dish is composed around a single main ingredient, it is by no means monochromatic and the use of different carrot varieties, each with their own unique identity, colour, sweetness and taste, combined with the subtle addition of orange blossom, is what makes this dish a beautiful representation of the flavours of early Spring. To me, Spring vegetables are a treasure, joyful by definition and symbolize Nature's generosity when it comes to colour and flavour. To most of us the humble carrot evokes memories of Sunday lunch, but with this dish I wanted to show carrots in a whole new dimension and create new memories. While recently travelling through Provence, surrounded by farms endlessly dotted with fields of golden sunflowers, I found my inspiration.



Vondeling
Babiana 2012

Soft fruit and spice, opening up to expose sweet wild honey, peach blossoms, pineapple and toasted cashew nuts. A taught mineral freshness with a lingering finish.



Domaine des Aubuisières
Cuvée de Silex 2011

Extremely fruity, soft and supple on the palate. The fragrances show lovely freshness and elegance. The lingering finish is driven by sweet fruit flavours.

Millionaire's Nest Egg

Quail Eggs, Black Truffle Paste, Courgette

The inspiration for this dish came from a variety of sources. My focus on the spirit of Mother Nature; the fact that black truffles are now in season and our individual aspirations and desires to one day have our own modest nest egg grown into a treasure chest.

Although our Weaver bird's nests in the garden seem fragile, it provides all the necessary protection to keep the delicate little eggs safe. With the design of this dish I visualized what it should look like, and wanted it to closely resemble a true "birds nest". I have created the nest with delicate courgette tagliatelle, garnished with "twigs and leaves". Within the nest, you will find three miniature quail eggs, each with a decadent liquid centre.

When available: Thinly sliced fresh black truffles will be served with your Millionaire's Nest Egg. The black truffle has been described variously as the diamond of cookery, fairy apple, black queen and gem of poor lands, fragrant nugget and the black pearl.



Waterkloof Circumstance
Viognier 2010

Pale gold with green. Shows restraint, elegance and a strong mineral character with white peach and violets on the nose. Delicate lemon and peach flavours with a long, lingering mineral finish.



Tokaji Pendits
Muskotály Dry 2007

A tangerine blossom liqueur, top the tasting notes now, although the wine is still very light on its feet and refreshing. Balancing golden apple acidity with a unique taste of tarragon.

Mousse de Mer

Rooibos, Langoustines, Risotto

I found my inspiration for the dish during a walk on the beach, watching the waves creating beautiful foam as they came rolling in, washing up small bits of bark, shells and seaweed and I immediately wanted to recreate this beautiful small tableau on my plate.

For the “beach” I combine the sweet and tart flavours of tomato and also prepare a fragrant stock combined with one of South Africa’s truly traditional ingredients - Rooibos Tea. This adds a great deal of depth and complexity to the consommé and merges naturally with the sweetness of the langoustine. The light creamy “Mousse de Mer” is ethereal and light yet provides decadence to this playful dish.

I hope you will enjoy this creation and remember a special moment rediscovering the water crashing against the shore while standing with your toes in the sand...



Hugel & Fils
Pinot Gris Tradition 2011



Gustave Lorentz Pinot Gris
Grand Cru Kanzlerberg 2007

The bouquet is a well-balanced range of aromas, acacia honey, apricot, liquorice, fresh almond and lightly smoked brioche. Perfectly dry, yet soft, juicy and full-bodied. A long, tasty finish, with depth and texture.

A lot of orange peels and sweet dried flowers on the nose. Relatively dry palate with a tinge of oranges and bitter pith. Oily mouth feel with some nectarines on the finish but rather more of a classically bitter sweet style.

Alchemist's Infusion

West Coast Rock Lobster, Hibiscus Consommé, Heirloom Vegetables

Heirloom vegetables are a gardener's inheritance, handed down to him by his family. They have been selected and saved over hundreds of years, and offer some of the best tasting and best yielding varieties. The diversity of colours, flavours and textures in heirloom vegetables certainly add variety to my menu.

The colourful hibiscus flower is cultivated worldwide for both its aesthetic appeal and its medicinal uses, which are primarily in the form of tea. Even though, for many of us, the beautiful hibiscus flower brings to mind visions of the Hawaiian Islands, the hibiscus plant is actually native to Africa. Hibiscus tea is made from the dried, vibrantly coloured calyces of the hibiscus flower and has an exotic and tart flavour.

This dish consist of a beautiful and aromatic vegetable consommé that will re-infuse through hibiscus tea and other aromatics, which include Angelica - our small tribute to Hungarian winemaker Angelika Árvay whose wine we have selected to accompany this dish. Guests will be allowed to participate in the cooking process, as the infusion will be done at your table. The warm vegetable tea mixture will be served over West Coast Rock Lobster cut into medallions that will gently cook when it comes into contact with the heat from the consommé.

(V) Please note that for our Vegetarian guests this dish will be served with Saffron Scented Vegetable Tortellini's.



Árvay Padihegy
Furmint 2009

Medium gold colour wine with a green reflex. Ripe peach, William's pear, maize, burnt sugar, vanilla, lemongrass and minerality aromas. Holding fruitiness as much as minerality, the wine has a really long finish.

Garden of Eden

Mauritian Seabass, Confit Tomato, Lemon Grass Velouté

With every new dish we add to our seasonal menu, we do a deconstruction tasting where we taste each ingredient individually with the proposed wines to ensure that we find "The Perfect Pairing" - creating culinary masterpieces around the aromas and flavours of the best wine available.

For this dish I had the great pleasure of deconstructing the elements and ingredients with winemaker Koen Roose of Spioenkop Wines, who spent a day with me in the kitchen, sampling a variety of different ingredients until we found the perfect match with Koen's Virginity I - an Elgin white blend with a rebellious touch! (Be sure to watch our YouTube Video of the deconstruction process.)

This dish combines sustainably farmed Ferme Marine de Mahebourg Mauritian Seabass glazed with peach blossom honey with a delicate tomato and lemongrass Velouté.



Spioenkop
Virginity 1 2012

Crystal clear, light gold colour. You will discover a surprisingly complex nose of pineapple, peach, black current leaves, gooseberry, fern and some honey. This rebel has a well rounded finish that is crisp and crystal clear.

Open Range Duck

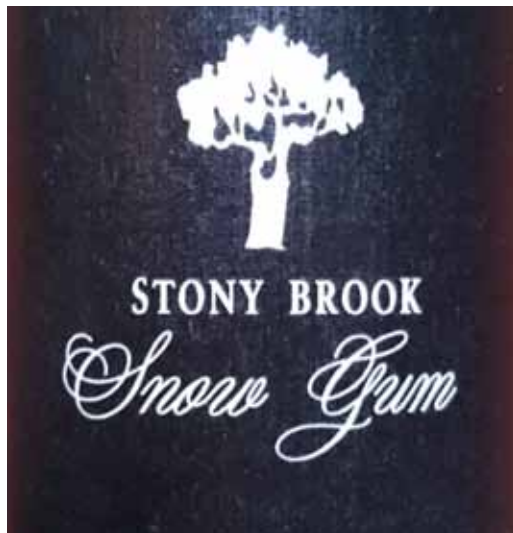
Duck, Pear, Parsnip

With the falling leaves that have changed to amber-brown I am reminded that Mother Earth has entered the Equinox. With cooler days and the slowing rhythm of nature a new variety of produce presents itself.

I have selected the theme of Autumn for our open range Duck as the colours, flavours and components of this dish all reminded me of Autumn. Creamy parsnip purée with poached pears and a touch of quince adds a delicate sweetness to my duck.

The ducks that I use for this recipe are sourced from Dargle Ducks who is a Proudly South African business venture. They are one of the countries` leading duck farms, and one of the very few that offers truly free range White Peking Duck.

For my dish I have selected to use the duck breast, a confit of the duck legs and a mousse of foie gras to be served with my spiced poached pears.



Stony Brook
Snow Gum 2009

Wonderfully dark colour with red hues. This is a robust wine with a great depth of flavour. It has deep gamey appeal with hints of sweet leather in a sleeve of velvet.



Domaine Berthaut
Fixin 2011

Garnet coloured wine. A complex nose releasing woody, spicy and fruity scents. Medium-bodied wine revealing a broad texture, smooth tannins and a short finish.

Country Lamb

Free Range Lamb, Salty Rack Rib

Whilst traveling through South-east France I re-discovered the traditional blend of herbs called - "Herbes de Provence". These aromatic herbs that flourish in the hills of Southern France during the hot summer months, is generally used by the handful when fresh, and usually consist of bay leaf, thyme, fennel, rosemary, chervil, oregano, summer savoury, tarragon, mint, and marjoram, although orange zest as well as lavender can also be included. These herbs can also be dried and blended into a fragrant rub to be used during the winter when most of these herbs are not available. This dish consists of deboned lamb loin, crusted with fragrant "Herbes de Provence" and served with a ragout of vegetables and braised lambs' brains with slow cooked salty rack rib.



Rietvallei Estéanna
Bordeaux Blend 2008

Expressive cherry and cassis aromas on the nose with delicate hints of violets. The cherry flavours persist with just a hint of vanilla and cedar and a good lift of acidity. Rich tannins makes for a smooth, long-lasting finish.



Ortus de Château Bélingard
Côtes de Bergerac Rouge 2007

A lovely deep ruby colour with flashes of violet. An intense nose with a combination of soft fruit, flowers and vanilla. A superbly long finish with a flourish of fruit on the palate.

Lemon Verbena

Bergamot, Lime, Vanilla

Verbena, a Latin word meaning “leafy branch”, was brought to Europe by Spanish explorers in the 17th century from Argentina and Chile. There it was grown for its fabulous lemony oil that was used in perfume and cosmetics. Verbena was also widely known not only for its culinary uses.

I have always loved lemon verbena and can still fondly remember when I first discovered its enchanting taste and made fresh lemonade. I wanted to create a dish that was my ode to lemon verbena and where I could feature this aromatic herb in a variety of preparations.

To present it's freshness we have made a light and refreshing jelly topped with lime and lemon curd. To display its versatility we have prepared a Victorian sponge cake with crystallised lemon verbena leaves, and finally to soothe the body and mind a relaxing vanilla and lemon verbena tea to carry you off into sweet dreams...



Champagne Dominique Boulard
Brut Réserve Magnum

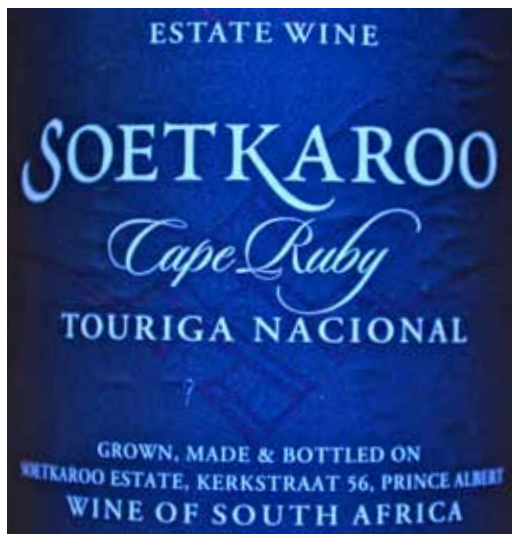
The colour of straw with hints of lemon, fine and persistent. The entry on the palate is lively, followed by an impression of fullness; the wine is opulent with a baked apple sensation. The citrus stands out in the finish.

Chocolate Cherry

Dark Valrhona Chocolate, Tonka

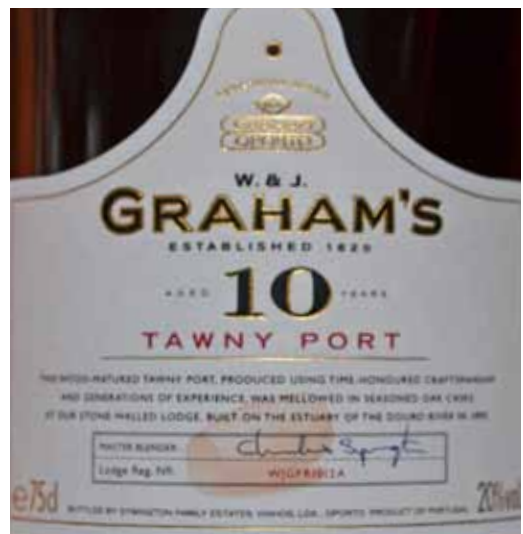
Cherries symbolize fertility, merrymaking, and festivity. In Japan, where cherry blossoms are the national flower, cherries represent beauty, courtesy, and modesty, while the ancient Chinese regarded the fruit as a symbol of immortality. Because cherry wood was thought to keep evil spirits away, the Chinese placed cherry branches over their doors on New Year's Day and carved cherry wood statues to stand guard in front of their entrance.

This dish was inspired by my recent visit to Portugal where we discovered one of the most incredible pairings - velvety dark valrhona chocolate served with sweet Port that left the slightest aftertaste of fully ripe red cherries in my mouth. With cherry season in full swing, I could not resist experimenting with these tastes and have created Chocolate Cherry. The combination of slightly bitter chocolate and a variety of the sweet and sour cherry elements, will tantalize your taste buds from beginning to end.



Soetkaroo
Touriga Nacional 2010

Dark purple with black fruit pastilles on the nose. This exceptional wine shows savoury tannins with seemingly endless flavours of plum and redcurrant on the lingering finish.



Graham's
10 Years Old Tawny Port

A deep tawny colour with zesty sweet floral aromas and delicate, well-spiced flavours of apple tart, flan and cocoa powder. The plush and creamy mouth-filling finish is fresh and balanced.