



Italian Businessmen's Club of Portland Newsletter

November 2011



L 'angolo della Cultura

What's more Italian than wine?! Italians may not have created the beverage, but it certainly became an ideal place to grow and drink it. There is no region or island of Italy that does not produce wine, from the Pinot Noir of Valle d'Aosta in the north to the Malvesia of the small islands surrounding Sicily.

Last year, Italy led the world in wine production and have traded that position with France for several years. Spain is always a close third, followed by the USA. However, when it comes to drinking wine, Americans drinks only about 20% of what western Europeans drink (40-50 liters a year), though we Italian Americans drink our share.

Italian wines can be a great value as well as an adventure when compared with wines from everywhere else. Why an adventure? Because there are so many types, styles and vintners in Italy that even Italians stick to the wines from their region, maybe occasionally trying a wine from elsewhere.

In the US, most restaurants and wine shops keep only the better known types of Italian wine for the same reason. There are over 500 different wine types, over 300 of which are classified as DOC (*Denominazione di origine controllata*) and fifty as DOCG (*DOC garantita*). These are controls to ensure the wine is from a particular grape variety (or combination), from a particular area, etc.

Even without a DOC, there are exceptional Italian wines (as well as ordinary table wine). The Super Tuscans follow the skill of the winemaker rather than rules, frequently commanding \$100 and up.

It's been several decades since Italy pushed inexpensive straw covered Chianti flasks, soave, valpolicella and lambrusco (remember the TV ad "Reunite on ice ... so nice"?). Those varietals are still here but replaced (in most cases) with wine of a much higher quality. Throughout Italy, wines are much improved since the 70's. Better wine clones, growing techniques, modern production techniques and aging are the reasons.

Importers/distributors are looking for values in little known wines, many which can be now found in good, local wine shops. An adventure is looking for an unfamiliar Italian varietal and trying it.

IBC Meeting Review and News

We were back at Port City Pasta for our October meeting and will be there again in November. Ron Milio and his staff prepared an outstanding dinner.

The Vendemmia was reviewed. It was an outstanding event in all respects except one. The weather was perfect! The meal prepared by our own Emilio Barbero was terrific (wonderful lasagna, salad and a great spread of prosciutto, salame and formaggi). Andrea Algieri's music was appropriate and nice, grapes were clustered on the vine in a beautiful setting at Ardiri Vineyard, John Compagno and Reagan were gracious hosts. For \$50 pp, it was an outstanding event. **What was missing? You!** Attendance was way off and Frank Genovese seemed a bit heated about that during the evening.

Reasons for low attendance at this and our monthly meetings were discussed and there were many suggestions for getting increased attendance. One which we will take is to go back to having personal phone calls made to members reminding them of meetings and upcoming events.

Looking towards future events, some suggestions were for us to do better scheduling by taking into account other clubs' events and to hold the Vendemmia earlier in September. That would get us away from the many October events and maybe have better weather. Other suggestions were for another type of event in the spring or a simpler spring vineyard event with limited food to keep the price down.



KOIN's Jeff Gianola at Columbus Banquet

Several IBC members attended this year's Columbus Day Banquet, a celebration and reminder of our Italian heritage. KOIN news anchor, Jeff Gianola, spoke eloquently about growing up in San Diego's Little Italy.

Our annual **Christmas** dinner is coming up soon and we would like to have our club unite for it as we have in the past. To help, a telephone committee was formed with George Spada as its lead to contact each member personally.

Last year's IBC Christmas Dinner brought requests from some for a weekend date and an alternative to lamb. We have arranged to satisfy both, so no excuses. Last year's Christmas dinner was an elegant and wonderful event, so let's see if we can again have good participation.

Next IBC Meeting Notice

... still working on the perfect meeting spot for our meetings and we welcome your suggestions. Dinner at our October meeting at Port City Pasta was excellent and we will meet there again in November. Let Frank know what you think about meeting places for 2012. Our December meeting will be Christmas dinner at the Benson Hotel.

Our next dinner meeting will again be at Port City Pasta on Tuesday, November 8, at 6:30

333 S. State Street in Lake Center, Lake Oswego



IBC Club Elections

It's time to nominate officers and board member to run for office in January. President, Frank Genovese and Secretary, Bob Iannacone will have served for 3 years and indicated that they will not run again. Some board member nominations will also be open.

Please think about running for those positions yourself or nominating other club members. If you are interested or would like to nominate someone, please call Frank or send your nominations to Bob Iannacone, robert202@comcast.net. Nominations will also be called for at our November meeting. Ballots will be sent out by year end for a January vote. Please consider this seriously and help your club, The time commitment is not large but dedication is needed.

The club's secretary (me) writes the newsletter and if you like to write, this is your opportunity. If not, a person can simply fulfill the secretary's duties and we can find another way to do the newsletter. The two tasks need not be tied together.

IBC Christmas Celebration ... Sign up now

for an elegant and festive Christmas celebration at the beautiful downtown Benson Hotel

Dinner

- Radicchio Caesar Salad with Prosciutto
- Choice of Lamb Ossobuco over Polenta with fig sauce
or
Skewer of Grilled Shrimp and Scallop with Saffron risotto
- Crispy Tiramisu
- Coffee and Tea

Songs and dance music by John English (the Voice)

Many door prizes

Friday December 16, 2011

No host Cocktails with Italian appetizers at 6:30 PM, dinner 7:30 PM

\$65 per person, \$125 per couple; contact one of the officers for reservations or send

you r check to the IBC at the address below

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