

BILLY CREWS

PRESENTS A

Far Niente Wine Dinner

By Bobby Lee Lawrence Photography by Joseph Burgess



Wine enthusiasts enjoying dinner



Barbara and Billy Crews

The event, hosted by Billy Crews and his wife Barbara, was attended by many local notables, and turned out to be one of the area's premier celebrations. Evelyn Rohrbaugh did a masterful job of organizing the event, and was pivotal in keeping everything on schedule.

Chef Balta, who has been creating exceptional cuisine at Billy Crews for five years, performed his usual magic. Since joining Billy Crews, he has enhanced his reputation and built a loyal following, placing him among the top chefs in the area. Balta's culinary career has spanned most of his adult life, and he honed his techniques while employed throughout the country in many prestigious establishments.

The evening began with a reception and Nickel and Nickel's Truchard Vineyard Chardonnay, perfectly chilled. This 100% Chardonnay has generous aromas of tropical fruit with vanilla and spice. Many of the guests went back for a second glass, the ultimate compliment.

The first course was a palate-tempting Scallops Ceviche Salad. Unlike the traditional Ceviche, it contained white beans and a little citrus. Chef Balta created this dish keeping in mind that too much citrus would conflict with the wine pairing; he was correct. The Far Niente Chardonnay was very fruity and redolent with fresh citrus, kumquats, and notable floral aromas. This pleasant-

ly acidic wine certainly stood up as a side-by-side equal to the salad.

For duck lovers, myself included, the next dish was anxiously awaited. The Duck au Zin, paired with Nickel and Nickel Dyer Vineyard Syrah, did not disappoint. Preparing duck can be tricky; if it's too well done it will be tough and flavorless. However, this dish was perfectly prepared with a sauce containing shallots and onions in a syrah wine reduction. Accented with Spanish olives, the offering had everyone buzzing. Syrah was an excellent choice, particularly setting off the olive element of the dish. Made from 100% Syrah grapes, this wine proved itself delightfully complex; rich and dense flavors with a peppery and spicy finish, it was the perfect pairing for the duck.

The main course was Beef Wellington. The beef was baked into individual pastry cocoons, an interesting and surprising presentation, and it was perfectly prepared and juicy. I proclaimed it the star of the evening. The side dishes were California blend and au gratin potatoes, and the blend was expertly prepared al dente. The wine pairing consisted of two different Cabernet Sauvignons, one from Far Niente and one from Nickel and Nickel. Both were outstanding. I personally preferred the John C. Sullenger Cabernet, but after discussions with other guests the consensus seemed to be a fifty-fifty split. These Napa Valley Cabernets lived up to their terroir* reputation. The Far Niente Cabernet spent



Carolyne Fall and Maurice Zech



The Far Niente regional representative




twenty months in French oak, longer than the typical aging of a Cabernet; this explained the dusty, roasted oak aroma. The finish was long and velvety, perfect for a beef dish.

Nothing finishes a great meal better than a great dessert wine. Far Niente's Dolce from Napa Valley has been called "liquid gold" and certainly lives up to its name. Made from botrytis grapes with flavors of apricots, honey, and butterscotch, it is a perfect match for fruit and fruit tarts, as well as many cheeses. Botrytis grapes have a low yield and need near perfect conditions to produce, making this a dessert wine not to be missed.

Throughout the evening, Mark Pighini, the Western Regional Manager for Far Niente, was masterful in describing the wines served. His knowledgeable insight into each wine enhanced the dining experience. He shared the history of the Nickel and Nickel Winery with the audience, giving the guests an interesting perspective on what goes into wine making.

It was unanimous. All who indulged in the pure pleasure of the wine and cuisine agreed the event exceeded their expectations.

It's worth noting that every year since 1986, Billy Crews has received the Grand Award for his extensive wine list, featuring over 1,400 of the finest wines in the world. Dining at Billy Crews is an experience to remember. Look for the next wine dinner announcement; it's an exciting experience you won't want to miss. Billy Crews is located at 1200 Country Club Road in Santa Teresa, New Mexico. You can contact Billy Crews at 505-589-2071 or visit them on the web at: www.billycrews.com. 

*Terroir - refers to the total impact of given site, i.e.: slope, soil, orientation of the sun, elevation, total rainfall, accumulated hours of sunshine, etc.




What Women Want

*Treat Yourself and Those you Love
Your Headquarters for
High Quality Fresh Foods*

- Gluten Free
- Low Sodium
- Low Carb
- Chemical Free
- Dairy Free
- Gourmet
- Sugar Free
- Free Daily Sampling
- Natural and Organic
- Name Brands you've Come to Trust

OPEN:
Mon.-Sat. 9:00 am to 8:30 pm
Sunday 9:30 am to 8:30 pm

505-521-3003
1701 E. University Ave., Las Cruces
Pan American Plaza
www.toucanmarket.com



World Class

The finest hand-selected foods and wines are at the End of the Vine in Ruidoso, NM

Sample Award-Winning NM Wines
Manicaretti Pasta - Artisan Cheeses
Bear Creek Smokelhouse Fine Meats
Ritzenhoff Glassware - Riedel Crystal
Fine Olive Oils & Olives - Mascarpone
Aged Vinegars - Parmigiano Reggiano
Joseph Grace Stemware - Pronto Gouda
Urban Accents Spices - Cave-Aged Gruyere
Stonewall Kitchens - Blue Crab Bay Company
Kaffe Magnum Flavored Coffees
Numi Tea - Forte Tea - B. R. Cohn
Bella Pesto - Napa Valley Harvest

New EOTV Products:
-Artichoke Parmesan Tapenade
-Raspberry Chipotle Sauce
-Sun Dried Tomato Topping
-Orange Lavender Horseradish
-Mango Key Lime Tequila Sauce
-Roasted Red Pepper Relish

End of the Vine

2801 Sudderth · Ruidoso
Open Everyday · 630-WINE

