

SAVOR THIS™

Winter/Spring 2013 ∞ Volume 5 ∞ Issue 1 ∞ A publication of The American Institute of Wine & Food®



**Valentine's
Day...**

**A Day for Lovers
or Food?**

**Sweets for Your Sweet
AIWF Chapter Events**

AIWF Member PBF&W Discount

SAVOR THIS™ Is a publication in association with The American Institute of Wine & Food® founded in 1981 by Julia Child, Robert Mondavi and Richard Graff, and others.

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Save the Date for The AIWF 2013 Leadership Summit & Midwest Wine Festival April 18-20, 2013

Look for more details to come by email or on www.aiwfevents.org by March 1, 2013.

To sign up to receive emails for this event [CLICK HERE](#)

www.midwestwinefest.com

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About AIWF Days of Taste®

The American Institute of Wine & Food's signature program since 1994. A discovery-based program which teams up chefs, food professionals, farmers and teachers that introduce elementary school aged children to the basic elements of taste, providing a hands-on educational experience, from farm to table through an exploration of food and nutrition.

- Provides fun-filled interactive taste experience, addressing some of the common food issues faced by today's children
- Discovering the world of flavors.
- Understanding how the five senses are used to appreciate food.
- Enriching their food vocabulary.
- Developing curiosity and a positive attitude towards new foods.
- Learning the link between food and good health.

What is Days of Taste® On Demand?

An educational & resource website with administrative tools designed to:

- Assists children's organizations with scheduling a Days of Taste® Program
- Chefs participation and resources
- Offers a user-friendly program curriculum
- Provides program administrative tools and resources
- Online or telephone program support
- Delivers a greater outreach for educating children about where their food comes from and making wiser choices when choosing the foods they eat
- And much more...

"In this age of fast and frozen foods, we want to teach school children about real food-where it is grown and how it is produced so they can develop an understanding and appreciation of how good, fresh food is supposed to taste."

- Julia Child



The American Institute of Wine & Food (AIWF) is a national non-profit founded in 1981 by Julia Child, Robert Mondavi, Richard Graff and others dedicated to promoting health and well-being through the enjoyment of good food and drink and fellowship that comes from dining together around the table and grants culinary scholarships to aspiring students and runs a national Days of Taste® program that teaches children about the culinary arts and nutrition.





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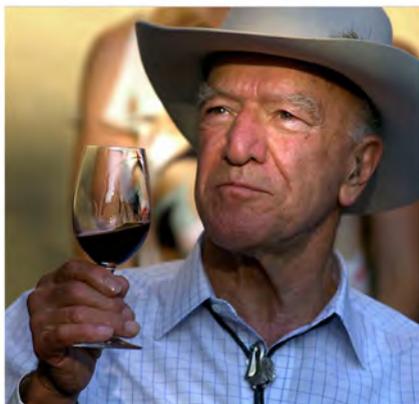
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All names included in "Likes" or submitted "Cooking Tips" between the dates of April 15 until April 30, 2013 will go into a random drawing. Winners will be notified through a Facebook message on or before May 15, 2013.



Valentine's Day...

A Day for Lovers or Food?



Valentine's Day in the United States means luxury. Dessert and cocktails. Sweetheart candies, cinnamon buttons, champagne, and heart shaped boxes of truffles. Chocolate is the food of choice and understandably so: a recent study at the University of Sussex showed that chocolate's effects on heart rate are better than those of passionate kissing. Truly indulgent!

While many view Valentine's Day's connections with confections as due largely to marketing, Valentine himself was rumored to have been a gastronomist by trade before he was sainted. Supposedly Valentine was one of the first medicine men to mix his cures with sweeteners to make them more palatable to his clients. Likewise, the Feast of Lupercalia, the ancient Roman

celebration many consider to be the predecessor of the modern Valentine's Day, had a lot to do with food, in that the sacrificial goat also served as the best meal many of the participants had all year.

The United States is not the only country to celebrate a food-centric holiday for lovers. Not only do many countries have holidays for couples, some also creatively recognize so-called "Singles Awareness Day." In South Korea, April

14 is Black Day, when those who didn't receive any presents on February 14 can curse love by eating jajanmyeon, or "black noodles." Jajanmyeon are wheat noodles topped with a black bean sauce, meat, vegetables, or seafood, and are popular enough to be considered one of Korea's national foods.

It's not surprising that in Sweden, a country often known for its sweet tooth and one of the top places for candy consumption each year, popular Valentine's Day foods include jelly hearts – sweet, red, gummy candies – and rich pastries and sweet breads, often adorned with marzipan or flavored with cardamom.

Valentine's Day is celebrated on June 12 in Brazil. Carnival, of course, dominates the spring holiday season and its

wild pre-Lent celebration of all things forbidden brings with it an assortment of decadent foods such as fruit juices and cocktails made with Brazil's famous rum, cachaça, deep-fried fritters, barbecued meats, and hearty stews made with starchy cassava root.

In Japan, women often give chocolates to the men in their lives, including coworkers and friends. Platonic connections receive hiri-choco (roughly translated as "obligation chocolate") while significant others receive the more expensive and personalized honmei-choco ("prospective winner chocolate"). Food is not only something to eat, but possibly also a symbol of one's true feelings.

Perhaps the strongest connection between Valentine's Day and food comes from real and imagined aphrodisiacs, or foods that create desire. Named after the Ancient Greek goddess of love, Aphrodite, countless foods have been associated with lust including almonds, oysters, figs, wine and avocados, many of which are regarded for their physical attributes rather than any real chemical properties.

Celebrations of love and celebrations of food are inextricably linked in most cultures, ancient and modern. So whether Valentine's Day gives you goose bumps or triggers your gag reflex, make time for a special meal and share it with someone whose company you just love. ❀

Valentine Trivia



Valentine's Day is supposed to be a day to declare your love. It is the holiday that sells the most greeting cards with the exception of Christmas and it is also a holiday where gifts of candy and flowers are freely and not so freely given as tokens of affection. Here are a few facts about Valentine's Day you may not know.

1. In reality, there were actually 3 St. Valentine's. One was a priest, one a bishop and one little is known about except he was a martyr. The stories of the priest's and bishop's martyrdom are so closely related it is difficult to tell which St. Valentine the Holiday is named after.

2. According to legend it was St. Valentine himself who sent the first valentine in the form of a letter to his jailer's blind daughter with whom he had fallen in love. Just before he was put to death at the hands of King Claudius II for marrying the king's soldiers without the king's permission he penned a note to his love and signed it... From your Valentine.

3. It is believed that a Mount Holyoke college student by the name of Ester Howland created the first lace valentine in the United States from lace, ribbon and colorful pictures. She has become known as the Mother of the Valentine.

4. Teachers receive more valentine cards than anyone else, even children.

5. More than 650 million valentine cards are exchanged by children from ages 6-10 each year and most of the cards were purchased in



the last 6 days leading up to Valentine's Day.

6. Each year the city of Verona Italy receives more than 1000 valentines addressed to Shakespeare's Juliet. It is amazing how much affection a dead fictional character can attract.

7. It was once believed that if a woman saw a flying robin on Valentine's Day she would end up getting married to a sailor. If a sparrow was the bird she saw she would end up marrying a man that was poor and live a happy life, if she saw a goldfinch then she was to marry a man that was a millionaire. Makes one wonder who she would marry if she saw a crow.

8. In 1929 at the height of prohibition Al Capone ordered the killing of members of a rival gang run by Bugs Moran in Chicago on Valentine's Day. Authorities were unable to find any real evidence to tie Capone to the crime and he was never arrested or tried for the murder of these seven men. Instead he served his time for tax evasion.

9. In the Middle Ages young men and women drew names from a bowl to see who would be their Valentine. They would wear this name pinned on their sleeves for one week. This was done so that it becomes easy for other people to know your true feelings. This was known as "to wear your heart on your sleeve."

10. It is estimated that 15% of the women in the United States who receive flowers for Valentine's Day send them to themselves.

There are no figures that tell how many of these women are married, single or in a relationship.

11. Approximately 3% of pet owners will give a Valentine's Day gift to their pet.

12. Alexander Graham Bell applied for his patent on the telephone on Valentine's Day in 1876.

13. The chief colors associated with Valentine's Day are pink, red and white. Pink is a delicate, almost innocent shade of red and is also connected with Saint Valentine, whose burial was said to have caused the pink almond tree to blossom. Red is a symbol of warmth and feeling...the color of the heart, while white represents purity and



faith...a faith between two who love each other.

14. More than 36 million heart-shaped boxes of chocolate will be sold for Valentine's Day.

15. American men say they'd prefer to receive boxed chocolate as a Valentine's Day present followed by gourmet, high-end chocolates then conversation heart candies.

16. So where did the idea of giving chocolates on Valentine's Day come from? From the moment chocolate was discovered it was considered valuable, divine, and decadent, so what better gift to give a woman? The first chocolate candies (as we know them today) were invented in the 1860s by Cadbury, who was also the first to market them in a heart-shaped box for Valentine's Day that same decade. I wonder if he knew at the time what a historic idea it would turn out to be. ❖

Wine and Chocolate Pairings



Matching Flavor Nuances

Wine and chocolate paired together? They're natural companions. Both have complex flavors and notes, both have similar components and nuances in common. A wine and chocolate pairing follows the same kind of process as a wine or chocolate tasting, except you taste both together.

How to Team up the Pair

Examine the attributes of the chocolate, and follow the same steps as you would in a classic chocolate tasting. That includes noting the aroma, listening for the snap when you break it and checking the shine and glossiness. Before tasting it, though, take the same notice of the wine.

Swirl the wine in the glass: be aware of the color and the viscosity.

Sniff the wine and note the bouquet and flavor components.



Sip the wine; let it fill your mouth. Notice the wine's complexity, which flavors come to mind. Now take a small bite of the chocolate, let it sit on your tongue. When it just begins to melt, sip the wine again and swirl together with the chocolate.

Flavors to Expect

Just like in a chocolate or wine tasting, the flavors are released in stages. The first notes should be filled with fruity acidity (from the grapes in the wine, and the cacao beans in the chocolate). Watch the flavors that unfold in this middle stage, and look for a sweetness phase. The finish should be identified by tannins, flavor notes common to both wine and chocolate.

Many of the same flavor notes you experienced in your chocolate tasting will emerge during the pairings. You'll observe fruity, nutty, spicy and/or woody notes. You may even detect roasted flavors specifically identifiable with chocolate.

What to Pair

Pair lighter chocolates with lighter wines; darker chocolates with full-bodied wines. Go from light to dark in your tasting session, starting with milk or lower percentage cacao chocolates and their corresponding wines.

Pairings for Dark, Bittersweet and Semisweet chocolate:

- Zinfandel
- Syrah
- Tawny Port
- Armagnac
- Cognac

If you're looking to pair up Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, or Sangiovese reds, they need to be well-aged to suitably pair with darker chocolates.

Pairings for Milk Chocolate

- Merlot
- Riesling
- Sauvignon Blanc
- Dessert wines

Chocolate, with its rich texture and intense flavors, always delights the palate. When paired with full-flavored gourmet foods and beverages, the taste sensations created are remarkable.❖

Resources:

Hall of Festivals

Leah Coakley – Food Blogger

Hershey's Corporation

Sweets for your Sweets



Photo: John Reilly Photography

Recipes from Gale Gand AIWF Ambassador
and James Beard Award Winning Pastry Chef



Photo: John Reilly Photography

Chocolate Pots-de-Crème

Makes 8 to 10

4 ounces best-quality bittersweet
chocolate, chopped
6 egg yolks
4 cups heavy cream
½ cup sugar
Pinch of salt

Place the chopped chocolate in a bowl. Combine the cream and salt in a saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. As soon as it boils, remove from the heat and pour over the chocolate, mixing until melted. Put the saucepan back on the stove.

Whisk the yolks and sugar together in a medium bowl. A little at a time, add all the hot chocolate mixture to the egg mixture, mixing after each addition. Pour back into the saucepan and heat it over medium heat until slightly

thickened. The mixture should be thick enough to smoothly coat the back of a wooden spoon. Run your finger down the back of the spoon; when the edges do not blur, the mixture is ready.

Pour the mixture into ramekins or mugs or dessert cups. Tightly cover each ramekin with plastic wrap, making sure the plastic does not touch the surface of the custard. Refrigerate at least 4 hours or until ready to serve. ❖

Chocolate Heart Throbs



Makes 10-20, depending on your cutter size

For the cake:

3 cups sugar
 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour
 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ cups cocoa powder, preferably Dutch-process
 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons baking powder
 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons baking soda
 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt
 3 eggs
 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups milk
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup vegetable oil
 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups very hot water

For the marshmallow:

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup water
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup light corn syrup
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
 2 egg whites
 1 tablespoon powdered gelatin
 2 tablespoons cold water
 few drops of red food coloring

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
 red sugar for sprinkling

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 13 X 17 sheet pan and line the bottom and sides with parchment paper.

In a mixer fitted with a whisk attachment mix together the sugar, flour, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Add the eggs, milk, oil, and vanilla extract and mix at low speed for 5 minutes. Gradually add the hot water, mixing at low speed just until combined. The batter will be quite thin. Pour the batter into the pan. Bake until the center feels firm to the touch, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool in the pan. Chill, covered, until ready to cut the cake. With a heart cutter, cut out hearts and place them on a sheet pan. Make the marshmallow. With a large plain tip in a pastry bag pipe marshmallow on half the cake hearts to cover the surface entirely. Top with remaining cake hearts

to form sandwiches. On top of the cakes pipe 2 teardrops in a V meeting at the bottom to form a heart. Sprinkle the marshmallow lightly with red sugar.

To make the marshmallow combine the $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water, the corn syrup, and the sugar in a saucepan fitted with a candy thermometer. Bring to a boil and boil to "soft-ball" stage, or about 235 degrees. Meanwhile, whip the egg whites until soft peaks form. Sprinkle the gelatin over the 2 tablespoons water and let dissolve. When the syrup reaches 235 degrees, remove it from the heat, add the gelatin, and mix. Pour the syrup into the whipped egg whites. Add the vanilla and add a few drops of red food coloring to turn it pink and continue whipping until stiff.

Do-Aheads

You can make the cake layer ahead and freeze it for up to a month. ❀

Kids in the Kitchen



Chef Gale Gand's Kids in the Kitchen Class 2012. Photos: Jess Dawson

Rice Krispy Treat Hearts

3 tablespoons butter
4 cups mini marshmallows
6 – 8 drops red food coloring
6 cups toasted rice cereal

Spray a cookie sheet or 10 X 13 pan with cooking spray to grease it.

In a large saucepan melt the butter and marshmallows together, stirring occasionally. Once it's melted add the

food coloring. Then stir in the cereal and gently stir till it's well coated. Pour onto prepared pan and with oiled hands gently press it flat, leaving it about 1 inch thick. Let cool slightly then using a heart shaped cookie cutter, cut out hearts. Carefully insert a lollipop stick if desired. Let cool and decorate with frosting and sprinkles.

Modeling Chocolate

7 ounces chocolate
1 ½ tablespoons to 4 tablespoons corn syrup

Melt the chocolate over hot water. Stir in corn syrup then place turn out onto parchment and let cool till stiff enough to mold like clay. ❖

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FEBRUARY 2013

- 2 **Menu Memories -**
AIWF San Diego (CA)
Revised Winter 2013
Farmers Market Chefs
Cooking Class Schedule -
AIWF Dallas/Ft. Worth (TX)
- 5 **Dine Around: C'est Tout**
A Bistro - AIWF Dayton (OH)
- 9 **Mardi Gras Party -**
AIWF Dayton (OH)
Chinese New Year Dumpling
Class - AIWF Washington (DC)
- 15 **Late lunch at Carbone's -**
AIWF Dallas/Ft. Worth (TX)
- 16 **Revised Winter 2013**
Farmers Market Chefs
Cooking Class Schedule -
AIWF Dallas/Ft. Worth (TX)
- 17 **2013 Vintners Hall of Fame -**
AIWF Members-at-Large
- 18 **Event and Program**
Planning Session -
AIWF Kansas City (MO)
- 19 **Bourbon: The America Spirit**
Dinner at Larkspur -
AIWF Wichita (KS)
- 20 **Dinner at Upstairs on the**
Square - AIWF Boston (MA)
- 21 **Four Course Wine Dinner at**
Prestonwood Country Club -
AIWF Dallas/Ft. Worth (TX)
- 23 **Revised Winter 2013**
Farmers Market Chefs
Cooking Class Schedule -
AIWF Dallas/Ft. Worth (TX)
- 24 **Odd Duck -**
AIWF Milwaukee (WI)
- 27 **Wine Dinner at Villa Capri -**
AIWF San Diego (CA)
Educational - Asador Restau-
rant in the Renaissance Hotel
- AIWF Dallas/Ft. Worth (TX)

- 28 **Winter Warmers -**
AIWF Baltimore (MD)
Exploring International
Cheeses, Oil, Vinegars, Wines
& More at The Better Cheddar-
AIWF Kansas City (MO)

MARCH 2013

- 16 **Savor Dallas: “A Global Wine**
& Cheese Celebration” -
AIWF Dallas/Ft. Worth (TX)
- 18 **Cooking Class -**
AIWF Dayton (OH)
- 20 **Ad Astra Selections Wine**
Tasting at Oeno's -
AIWF Wichita (KS)
- 24 **Comfort Food Perfect**
Pairing- AIWF Dayton (OH)
- TBD **Wine Dinner at Chef Jason**
Santos' restaurant Blue Inc -
AIWF Boston (MA)

APRIL 2013

- 2 **Dine Around: TBD -**
AIWF Dayton (OH)
- 6 **Big Reds - AIWF Dayton (OH)**
- 17 – 20 **AIWF National Leadership**
Conference - Wichita, KS
(Details TBD) - AIWF National
& Wichita (KS)
- 18 – 20 **Annual Midwest Wine**
Festival - AIWF Wichita (KS)
- 21 **WI Club-Auction Dinner -**
AIWF Milwaukee (WI)
- TBD **Scholarship Dinner at**
Newbury College -
AIWF Boston (MA)

Highlights of Napa Truffle Festival 2013



Something wonderful. Photo: Greg Wright



David Campbell primes the foraging group. Photo: Greg Wright



Comparing notes and fungi finds. Photo: Greg Wright



A treasure trove of fresh fungi. Photo: Greg Wright

Save the Date for the fourth annual Napa Truffle Festival, January 17-20, 2014 – check the website for updates: www.napatrufflefestival.com

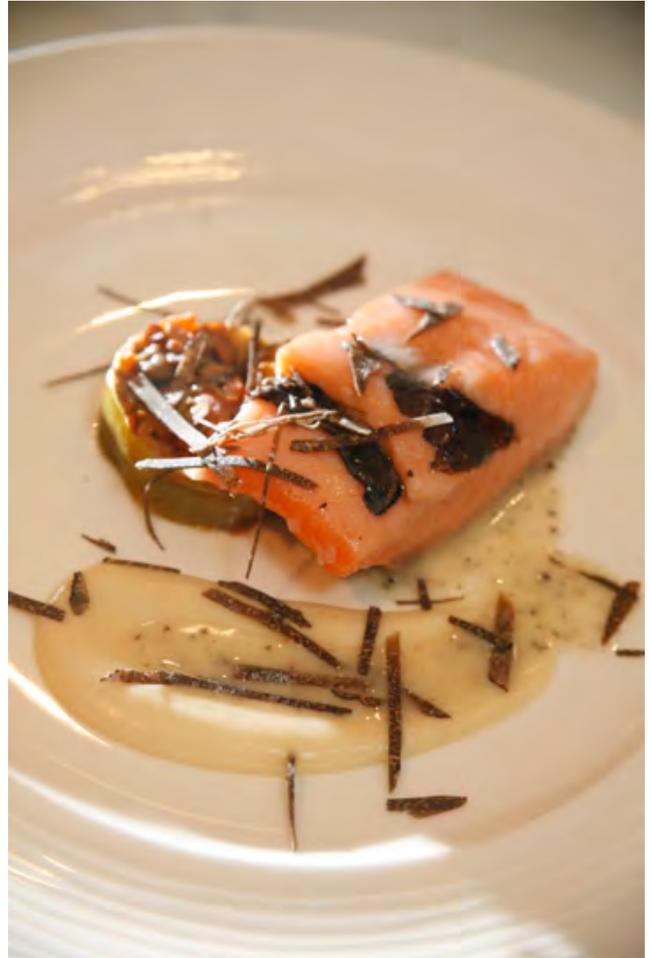
Truffles & Wine Dinner at La Toque



Crostino of Black Garlic and Truffled Duck Liver. Photo: Faith Echtermeyer



The Michelin Star Chefs gather around Robert Chang and Dr. Paul Thomas – from left to right: Chef Michael Tusk of Quince, San Francisco; Chef Marco Gubbiotti of La Bastiglia, Spello, Italy; Robert Chang of American Truffle Company; Chef Ken Frank of La Toque, Napa; Dr. Paul Thomas of American Truffle Company; Chef Nico Chessa of Valentino Restaurant, Santa Monica. Photo: Faith Echtermeyer



Truffled Loch Duart Salmon Slow Cooked in Duck Fat with Braised Cabbage and Hedgehogs. Photo: Faith Echtermeyer

Over 500 weekend attendees joined in the fun, science and culinary creations of the rare and delectable black truffle—specifically the winter Périgord truffle: *Tuber melanosporum* (aka black diamond)—including winery lunches, a truffle orchard tour, a wild mushroom forage, a Truffles & Wine dinner prepared by Michelin star chefs and one big Marketplace.

The weekend kicked off with a welcome reception on La Toque's gracious

terrace, where guests sampled superb wines and delicious truffle appetizers while mingling with the hosts and special guests.

Saturday programs began with an entertaining keynote by Colman Andrews, co-founder of *Saveur* and the current editorial director of *The Daily Meal*, followed by the scientific-grower seminars, led by American Truffle Company experts/scientists Robert Chang, Managing Director, and Dr. Paul

Thomas, Partner and Chief Scientist. These sessions shed light on Dr. Thomas' world-renowned cutting edge truffle science and discussed the rapidly evolving business of black European truffle cultivation.

For lunch, guests were whisked off to the magnificent Silver Oak Cellars for a tasting, cooking demo and extraordinary truffle lunch prepared by Winery Chef Dominic Orsini, featuring black truffles: Wood Oven Flatbread and



Dining. Photo: Faith Echtermeyer



Truffled Mascarpone Crepe Cake with Sherry Brown Butter Sauce. Photo: Faith Echtermeyer



In the kitchen. Photo: Faith Echtermeyer

Sheep's Milk Ricotta, Frisée Salad—Local Trinity of Foraged Mushrooms, Quail Egg Croquette and Crispy Fingerling Potatoes; Duet of Iberico Pork—Vine Grilled Loin with Garden Brussels Sprouts, Slow Roasted Shoulder over Fresh milled Garden Dent-Corn Polenta; a Trio of Truffle Cheeses—with Winery-made Pan Forte and Ash-Cured Olives, and finishing with Petite Sweets. No time to dally – immediately following lunch, guests were transported to the Robert Sinskey Vineyards truffle orchard for a tour with everyone's favorite truffle hunting dog, Rico.

It was a full day, but the delicious fun was just beginning. After a break to freshen up, guests gathered again at La Toque for the spectacular Truffles & Wine dinner, hosted by Michelin star Chef Ken Frank, and featuring a multicourse truffle menu - each course prepared by a Michelin star chef and perfectly paired with wines from around the world (check out the menu).

Early the next morning, festival-goers had a chance to walk off the grand meal during the wild mushroom forage led by mushroom experts/scientists David Campbell, Stephanie Jarvis and Dr. Paul Thomas, with the hopeful promise that: "We'll see what we find and find what we see! With a little luck, perhaps we'll find Porcini, Hedgehogs, Chanterelles, or Candy Caps..." And what luck they had - the forest was abundant with living fungi!

The active foraging worked up a hearty appetite for the sumptuous truffle feast that Beringer winery Chef Maurine Sarjeant conjured with Michelin star guest Chef Nico Chessa of Valentino Restaurant, featuring black truffles: Citrus Marinated Arctic Char with Colatuta di Alici Pesto; Chick Pea Crepella with Forest Mushrooms; Handmade Kurobuta Pork Sausage with Soft Polenta & Poached Egg; and an Almond and Truffle Chocolate Tortino with Elder Flower Ice Cream and Fresh Berries.

The Festival culminated on Monday with a lively, grand finale Festival Marketplace at Oxbow Public Market, showcasing local wines, artisanal foods, cooking demos, delicious truffle menu dishes and a chance to win a black diamond (truffle, that is)!

Continued...

Frisée Salad of Black Truffles



*The Frisée Salad of Black Truffles: Local Trinity of Foraged Mushrooms, Quail Egg Croquette and Crispy Fingerling Potatoes
Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity*

This is a twist on a classic French recipe called Salad Lyonnaise. Instead of using bacon, we are adding a variety of foraged mushrooms to provide an earthy complement to the black truffle. For this salad, we will prepare the truffles in two ways; warm and raw, with the addition of egg croquette lending a luxurious richness to the salad.

I recommend serving this salad with our Twomey Pinot Noir, Russian River 2010.

Serves 6

8 eggs (2 beaten, the other 6 whole)
 1 cup all-purpose flour
 2 cups bread crumbs
 1 ounce fresh Black Truffles
 1 tablespoon Olive Oil
 2 tablespoons Shallots, minced finely
 1 lb Foraged Mushrooms, cut or torn into bite size pieces (Yellow-Foot, Hedgehog & Black Trumpet. You can substitute chanterelles, oyster-mushrooms, or shiitake)
 2 tablespoons Parsley, Chopped
 2 quarts canola oil
 4 red potatoes, 4 purple, 4 Yukon golds, boiled tender, strained and patted dry
 Salt and pepper to taste
 4 heads frisee lettuce, washed and trimmed of dark green tips, cut into bite size pieces
 3 ounces truffle cheese, shaved or crumbled
 Extra virgin olive oil
 1 lemon
 2 tablespoons Chives, sliced thin

1.) Fill a medium sauce pot with water and bring to a boil. Place eggs in strainer that will fit in the pot, and lower the strainer into the boiling water. Cook eggs for exactly 6 minutes.

2.) Remove the eggs from the pot and submerge into a bowl of ice water. Cool in the ice water for 10 minutes. Gently peel off the egg shells and lightly rinse, being careful to keep the eggs intact.
 3.) Coat each egg with flour, dip into the beaten egg mixture and then coat with bread crumbs. Put aside until ready to fry.

4.) Prepare the black truffles by using a vegetable peel and peel the outer rough surface of the truffles. Dice these peelings very fine and set aside to complete the salad at the end.

5.) Heat a large sauté pan over a medium-high heat. Once hot, add the olive oil, and then the sliced shallots. Give a quick stir, and once the shallots have toasted to a golden color, add the chopped mushrooms. Let them sauté together until all the moisture that is released from the mushrooms boils away.

Be sure to stir frequently. This should take 3-5 minutes depending how wet the mushrooms are. Once ready stir in the truffle peelings and the chopped parsley. Set the mushrooms aside in a warm place.

6.) Heat the canola oil in a high sided sauce pot to 350°F.

7.) Gently crush each of the marble potatoes, but leave them intact. Lower the potatoes into the hot oil and fry until crispy.

8.) Remove the potatoes from the oil and place onto a plate lined with paper towel. Season with salt and pepper.

9.) Wait for the temperature of the oil to return to 350°F. Place each breaded egg into the hot oil to fry until golden brown in color. Remove from the oil and place onto the plate with the crispy potatoes. Season with salt and pepper.

10.) In a salad bowl place the frisée lettuce, & truffle cheese. Toss the salad with olive oil, salt, pepper and a light squeeze of lemon juice to taste.

11.) To serve: Place a small pile of sautéed mushrooms onto the center of

each plate. Place the salad on top, then the crispy potatoes around the salad. Using a paring knife, make a small incision in the center of the egg, and with your hands gently break it open. The yolk will begin to ooze out of the center. Place the split egg on top of the salad and finish the dish with a sprinkling of chives on top and shaving the black truffles on top. Serve immediately.

This recipe is provided courtesy of Dominic Orsini, Winery Chef for Silver Oak, and Twomey Cellars.

Lunch at Silver Oak



Winemaker Daniel Baron greets the guests. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Chef Dominic Orsini demonstrates how to make the best truffle pizza. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



How to make your own Fresh Truffled Cheese

BY CHEF KEN FRANK, LA TOQUE

While cheese is an excellent vehicle for truffle flavor, it must be very fresh, as fresh truffles should be used quickly to enjoy them at the peak of their perfume. (Note that cheese marketed as “truffled” is typically an inferior product relying on the same chemical fakery as most “truffle oils” on the market.)

You will need one small wheel of very fresh, mild cow’s milk soft-ripened cheese. Brillat-Savarin from France or Mt. Tam from Cowgirl Creamery in California are both excellent choices. With a piece of fishing line, cut the cheese into three thin disks, each about 1/2-inch thick. Finely chop fresh black truffle and sprinkle on the top of each cheese disk, then reassemble the cheese, stacking the disks back together. Wrap in cheese paper and refrigerate for 48 hours to allow the truffle flavor to fully infuse. The cheese will keep for about a week - ready to eat!

www.latoque.com

Continued...

Beringer winery lunch



Winery Chef Maurine Sarjeant and Michelin star Chef Nico Chessa of Valentino Restaurant collaborate in the kitchen. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Citrus Marinated Arctic Char with Black Truffle and Colatura Di Alici Pesto. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Robert Chang and Wanda Hennig toast to good health and bon appetit. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity

What are Truffles?

Truffles are a kind of 'underground mushroom' that grow on the roots of certain tree species. They are highly prized by top chefs and connoisseurs around the world for their exquisite flavor and command exceedingly high prices.

There are hundreds of species of truffles, but the fruiting body of some are highly prized as a food. The 18th-century French gastronome Brillat-Savarin called these truffles "the diamond of the kitchen". Edible truffles are held in high esteem in French, Spanish, northern Italian and Greek cooking, as well as in international haute cuisine.

Truffle Lore

- Truffles are legendary aphrodisiacs – "...the musky scent is said to stimulate and sensitize the skin to touch." - gourmetsleuth.com
- Truffles insight bad behavior – "...there have been gunfights, thefts, accusations of wide spread fraud, even mysterious disappearances of highly trained dogs." - foodreference.com
- Truffles are the ultimate food - "... we were aware of an odour gradually coming towards us, something musky, fiery, savoury, mysterious, -- a hot drowsy smell, that lulls the senses, and yet enflames them, -- the truffles were coming." - William Makepeace Thackeray



Rico the truffle hunter. Photo: John Bonick

Marketplace at Oxbow Public Market



Ca'Momi selling fresh black European truffles.
Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Oxbow's Cheese & Wine Merchants' house-made truffled Mt. Tam.
Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Ca'Momi's truffled pizza. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Cooking demo at Kitchen Door. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



C Casa's truffled wild mushroom and goat cheese enchiladas. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Lauren Ackerman pours tastes of her Ackerman Family Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Savory mushroom-truffle bread pudding at Model Bakery. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity

Digging up dinner: Get in on the growing trend and raise your own veggies

JOAN CASANOVA – BONNIE PLANTS

Across the country this spring, more Americans will be cutting out sections of lawn, retiring flower beds, building raised vegetable beds and turning their spare time over to gardening. Many of them will be first-timers, inspired to try their hand at tilling the soil for economic reasons as well as the many benefits gardening offers.

In addition to pruning your grocery bill, raising your own veggies offers the benefits of freshness, flavor, convenience, healthful exercise, socialization opportunities and the ability to have more control over what your family eats.

So if you're ready to try your hand at picking your own produce this year, roll up your sleeves, dig in, and arm yourself with this helpful advice from the experts at Bonnie Plants:

***Pick your plot:** Most vegetables thrive when they get plenty of sun, so pick a plot that gets at least six to eight hours of direct sun every day. It's OK to plant leafy greens like lettuce and spinach in shadier spots, but get them in the ground early in the cooler part of the season. Tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers and squash will do best in the hotter months.

***Think outside of the box planter:** Get creative with space. You don't need a huge yard to plant a veggie patch. Try planting lettuce under tomato vines, or mix veggies into flower beds among the bright blooms.

***Give veggies a raise:** Try raised beds, they're quicker than planning out a plot. Raised beds will enable you to use near-perfect soil, better organize your garden, improve drainage and provide



easier access for maintenance. Time saving tip: Use transplants instead of seeds.

***Feed natural plant food:** Since one of the reasons for growing your own vegetables is to control exactly what your family consumes, be sure to use all-natural, safe products in your gardens like Bonnie Plant Food, which is derived from oilseed extract such as soybean seed extract. Research shows plants are healthier and more vigorous using organically based foods, rather than chemical based options.

***Water Wisely:** One inch of water weekly is adequate for most vegetables. Soaker hoses or drip systems deliver water efficiently and keep foliage dry, fending off leaf diseases.

***Pick your Produce:** Be sure to pick the right plants. To maximize your grocery savings and ensure successful gardening – choose vegetable and herb plants that are easy to grow, useful in a variety of dishes, and produce high yields throughout the season. Some sure-fire winners include:

* Tomatoes – The most popular home-garden vegetable in Ameri-



ca, tomatoes are hard to beat in terms of taste, health benefits and versatility. Bonnie Original Tomato can easily yield 50 pounds of tomatoes.

- * Yellow squash and zucchini – Although their growing season is shorter than tomatoes, squash are very productive. You'll pick them every day once the season starts.
- * Lettuce – As long as the weather is mild, leaf lettuce will keep on producing. If you eat lots of salad, growing your own lettuce can save you lots of money.
- * Cucumbers – Grown in a cage or on a trellis, a single cucumber plant can produce 5 to 10 cukes. You can get two or three plants on a cage that is just 18 inches in diameter and 4 feet high, so that's a yield of 15 to 30 cucumbers from a slice of ground no bigger than an end table.
- * Specialty peppers – Price specialty peppers like jalapeno, or even regular chili peppers in the grocery store and you'll be inspired to try growing your own. Hot peppers are especially high yielding and productive in areas with a long, hot summer.
- * Herbs – Expensive in the grocery store, fresh herbs are easy and economical to grow. Plant one each of sage, rosemary, mint, thyme and chives, and at least three plants of basil. There are several varieties of basil. Good choices are Sweet, Cinnamon, Thai and Boxwood basil, each with a unique taste. ❀

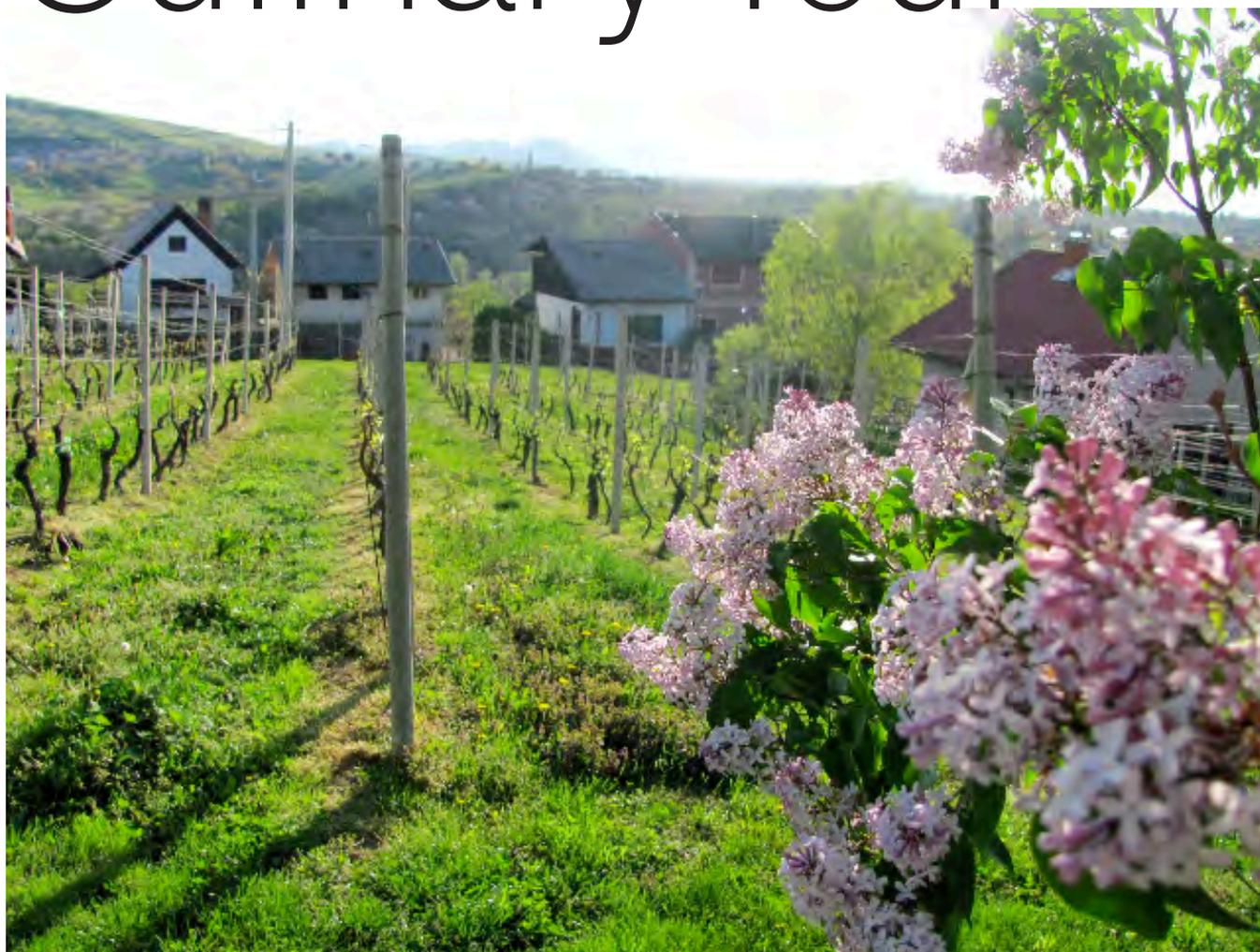


Bonnie Plants offers a wide selection of vegetables and herbs in eco-friendly, biodegradable pots; just tear off the bottom of the pot and stick it in the soil. Biodegradable pots not only protect varieties from transplant shock, they save tons of plastic pots from entering landfills.

For more gardening advice and tips visit www.bonnieplants.com



Croatian Wines Highlight a Culinary Tour



Vineyards at Zlatne Gorice

English writer Geoffrey Chaucer described April as the welcomed month, ending the drought of March and bringing forth spring flowers and new growth. American poet T. S. Eliot called it the creulest month, breeding lilacs out of the dead land and reminding us that nature rejuvenates while we only age.

It was mid-April in Croatia and the skies had opened up, bathing the land in much needed rain and returning nature's bounty. Lilacs, narcissus, crocus and daffodils were fragranting the air; the farmlands, vineyards and trees were sprouting and the nightingales, kings of avian love songs, were "maken melody," leading the high flying brotherhood in celebrating the new season of hope and expectation.

It had been 17 years since the fighting ended, but scars were still visible amidst the new blooming economy and the return of tourism.

Bullet riddled homes and buildings pepper the landscape, even in Zagreb, the country's capital. Some are left as reminders, others have been repaired or are in the process of healing and some have been abandoned and are fading slowly into the landscape. Over 12,000 Croats died in the conflict and 40,000 were wounded.

About the size of West Virginia, Croatia is shaped something like a turkey wing, with the Adriatic's Dalmatian Coast pointing down towards Dubrovnik at the feather tip, and Zagreb lies just east of the crook in the wing. The country is bordered to the North clockwise by Slovenia, Hungary, Serbia, tucked under the wing is Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro shares a slip



Spring in the bucolic countryside



Lilacs were featured in the markets



Many of the police formed the Croatian army that defeated the Serb invasion in 1995

of land on the Adriatic. The country is 87% Catholic.

I was to explore the continentally influenced central and eastern regions. This is the breadbasket of the nation, formed between the Danube and Sava Rivers, which flood the farmlands on a regular basis, leaving nutrient rich deposits that over the years have created a deep, rich and black topsoil in the Slavonia plain. It grows amazing produce from potatoes to tomatoes, grains to grapes, greens and grasses for meadowing animals. Delicious cheeses are a result.

The proximity to the Adriatic provides an abundance of seafood and the love of pork produces some of the best hard sausage I've ever eaten, especially the spicy kulen, which is ubiquitous and hangs from rafters throughout the country. The local farmer's markets were filled with delicious produce from these fertile fields.

Nearly a million people live in the capital and surrounding area, one-fourth of the country's population. The nation has the most dynamic economy of any of the post-Yugoslavia countries and is slated to join the EU in 2013.



Walking and public trams are the best way to navigate Zagreb

English is widely spoken, but it helps if you know a few phrases in Croatian. Hello is "dobar dan" or informally "bok," thank you is pronounced "vala," wine is "Vino," beer is "Pivo," say "Zivjeli" when you raise your glass, "ne" is no and yes is "da," which to the uninitiated ear seems to be the most used word in the language. I used it a lot when ordering Pivo and Vino, Zivjeli! Also widely enjoyed is the fruit brandy. I especially liked the blueberry, honey and plum brandies, called "Sljivovica." My favorite wine was Grasevina, similar to a dry Riesling, and beers were Pan,



The rich soils are still tilled in traditional ways by many farmers





Wonderful fresh flowers and produce can be found in the local farmer's markets



The deliciously spicy Kulen sausage is but one of many dried pork products



Sarma, stuffed cabbage with horseradish and broth

Karlovacko and Osjecko. Croatians are the 15th leading consumers of beer per capita. I had my share at the Bulldog pub in Zagreb. Beware if you are a non-smoker, there are no restrictions on cigarettes.

Among its more noted accomplishments, Croatia quarried the stone used to build the American White House, the tie (Cravat) was invented here along with the fountain pen, mechanical pencil and the country's greatest scientist was Edison's rival Tesla, who has streets dedicated to him all over the country. And yes, it is the original home of the Zinfandel grape.

I had arrived during the 4th Annual Wine Gourmet Weekend. Thousands jammed the venues over the three day event, which featured hundreds of vineyards. These are sophisticated growers who make world-class wine, especially the whites. It is also where the Zinfandel grape had its origin. It was brought to Italy's southern boot region of Puglia and then transported to America in

the mid 1800s when emigrating Italian winemakers settled in California. It was a secondary grape that never reached its full potential in Europe, but was perfected in America.

Croatian-born winemaker Mike Grgich was one of the winemakers to put America on the map in 1976 at the infamous tasting in Paris, when his Napa white from Chateaux Montelena and Stag Leap's red beat the French in a blind tasting.

I met George Taber during my tour, author of "Judgement of Paris" which chronicled the tasting and became the basis for the movie "Bottleshock." He was the Paris AP journalist who covered the event and reported it to the world.

Traveling east of Zagreb, I visited a number of boutique, medium and large size vineyards which were uniformly excellent. In Kutjevo I had lunch at Krauthaker vineyards and was served Sarma, a delicious stuffed cabbage in a broth with horseradish sauce, and I couldn't get enough of the fried bread



The Baroque square in Varazdin

that absorbed the juices. That evening I dined at the oldest wine cellar in Croatia, Kutjevo winery.

In Slavonski Brod I tasted the elegant wines of Cikulin vineyards and in the lovely village house Sobe Tankic the family entertained us with traditional music while we dined on homemade sausages, cheeses and a feast of national dishes from shepherds stew to fish paprikash, a delicious meal prepared with red peppers and wine.

Traveling east again through black soiled fields with crops pushing up as far as the eye could see, I headed for the wine road through the Baranja Hills and the largest vineyard in the area, Belje. I had lunch in the Belje cellar in Knezevi Vinogradi, built in 1526. Try their Grasevina, it's available in the U.S. www.beljie.hr.

In the little village of Zmajevac, which is home for migrating storks who build huge nests on specially designed poles, I dined and drank

in the old Josic wine cellar which was converted into a restaurant. We were serenaded by a Croatian mariachi-style band which moved from table to table playing familiar folk songs that locals joyously joined.

Traditional folk music, dance and the costumes and hair preparations that accompany them are widely appreciated and practiced, especially in the countryside.

In the town of Ilok, Croatia's eastern most city, I did a wine diner at Stari Podrum cellar restaurant and sampled at Principovac Estate winery. Local cuisine was also tasted at Zlatne Gorice, a country estate that overlooks the vineyards.

Varazdin was once the capital of Croatia and next to Prague, its elegant Baroque central square is the most intact in Europe.

The Baroque city of Vukovar was heavily damaged during the war and the scars are still visible. It lies along the Danube across from Serbia. The



Medieval pathways lead to the three different levels of Zagreb



The bomb riddled water tower at Vukovar



Folk arts are enjoyed by young and old



Fishing in the Danube River under a medieval fortress

bomb-damaged watertower looms over the town as a reminder of war's toll and a tour of the local cemetery is sobering with all the graves installed between 1991 and 1995.

WHEN YOU GO

In Zagreb I stayed at the Astoria Hotel and the impressive Palace Hotel

www.palace.hr, which has a storied history and a long list of celebrity guests from Bobby Fisher to Sophia Loren and Orson Welles. In Slavonski Brod I stayed at the Art hotel which lies on the Sava river, the border with Bosnia-Herzegovina, and in Osijek, Hotel Osijek, www.hotelosijek.hr, a modern building along the banks of the Danube River.

All the hotels provided free access to the internet.

And for all the fauna and flora that promise so much in the spring, it was delivered in Croatia, truly a land of great bounty, expectation and hope. National Geographic Traveler says Croatia is one of the top 20 destinations in the world.

For information on Croatian wines see the website www.winesofcroatia.com run by Cliff Rames, sommelier at the Plaza Hotel in New York and of Croatian descent. The Croatian National Tourist Board, www.us.croatia.hr, 212-279-8672, can provide maps, brochures and housing information. ❖



JOHN BLANCHETTE IS A FREELANCE TRAVEL WRITER, TELEVISION PRODUCER AND OWNS A PUBLIC RELATIONS COMPANY IN SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA

WHO WE ARE

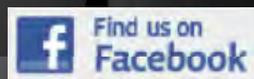
The American Institute of Wine & Food® is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and public charity founded on the premise that gastronomy is essential to the quality of human existence. The AIWF was established in 1981 by the late Robert Mondavi, the late Julia Child, the late Richard Graff and others to provide a forum for the study and enjoyment of gastronomy.

The AIWF is dedicated to promoting health and well-being through the enjoyment of good food and drink and fellowship that comes from dining together around the table. The American Institute of Wine & Food® is one of the few national organizations with the unique combination of dedicated wine and food enthusiasts and professionals. Wine and food enthusiasts get to meet and learn from renowned chefs, winemakers, authors, culinary historians, and food producers, while industry professionals have the opportunity to know and understand their core consumers.

The AIWF grants culinary scholarships to aspiring students and AIWF's signature program Days of Taste® program, which reaches out to thousands of children each year. Our focus and main objectives are to build a food and nutrition vocabulary, understand that locally grown ingredients are the freshest, and gain the experience to contrast flavors and develop taste memories.

Today, the organization has 18 chapters with over 3,000 members in the United States. Membership is open to all, as our organization offers something for everyone. We have a strong core of values, offer innovative programs, member benefits, and unique local events. AIWF is the resource for anyone who loves to enjoy great cuisine.

We cordially invite you to join us!



To learn more about The American Institute of Wine & Food® or to join our Organization, please visit www.aiwf.org

(831) 250-7595 • (800) 274-2493 toll-free • members@aiwf.org

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