

TidBITS



PERFECT PAIRINGS: *Benjawan Wisootsat at her meal with 11 courses paired with 11 wines and set against 13 jazz numbers at Plaza Athenee Hotel.*

Of wine and song

Since wine and food are perfect accompaniments, Benjawan Wisootsat took the combination one step further and paired them with music.

To introduce her "fin company's" second selection of boutique wines at the Plaza Athenee Hotel, Benjawan chose the food and music, and worked with Glaz Bar jazz singer Macee Miller and Reflexions chef Martin Faist to create a memorable combination.

There were 11 wines, 11 courses and 13 songs at the selection's premier last week. And now the only problem is recreating the evening at Glaz Bar since the wines are exclusively sold at the Plaza Athenee.

What makes these wines unusual is that they're often unusual grape varieties from small vineyards run by artisan winemakers. The wines for this edition, which ranged in price from Bt1,950 to Bt8,900 a bottle, are exceptional particularly when paired with food. (The full boutique menu has 16 selections.)

The evening opened with "I Got Rhythm" and closed with "So Wonderful", and moved from whites to reds with "La Vie en Rose".

A highlight among the whites included a Jurg Saxer 2004 Sauvignon Blanc "Creation Nadine", which was paired with crispy snow fish and tomato ragout, and, naturally, the song "Nadine". Among the reds, a standout was Leo Hillinger's exceptionally smooth 2005 Blaufrankisch QbA, an Austrian wine bursting with berry flavours, that was paired with a rich porcini mushroom cappuccino broth and "When the World Turns Blue".

Even more stunning was Schneider's intense, fruity 2004 Black Print Cuvee QbA Trocken, a complex combination of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot served with tender slices of venison with parsnip ragout. The song: "Old Black Magic".

The *Wine Spectator* rates Lavadores de Feitoria's 2001 Tinto "Tres Bagos" Douro DOC a solid 88 points.

This Portuguese wine's spice-laden taste proved a fine counterpoint to warm camembert in a corn flour crust with a cinnamon berry sauce.

Robert Parker rates Telmo Rodriguez's 2002 "g" Gago DO Toro an 88, calling it supple-textured and alluring. It was a fine match with beef tenderloin rosemary mashed potatoes and a pink peppercorn sauce.

Miller sang "Fly Me to the Moon" as the 2002 Grande Cuvee "Nouvelle Vague" TBA No 7 was served with petit fours. It was a fitting and lovingly rendered number, ideal for a sweet wine that Parker rates a stellar 96 points for its bouquet "of apple jelly, pineapple, litchi, mango and banana with overtones of cherry and marzipan".

Fin's collection of wines is exceptional. Their character is enhanced by food and, undoubtedly, music. This is a rare opportunity to sample some outstanding selections from countries not associated with wines, like Portugal, Austria and Switzerland.

— HAL LIPPER, THE NATION

fin
fabulous is needed