

With Chef Lee McNish



With a fine brut on the feature list this month, I felt we should go a little decadent...and French! Voila, I offer you the Crolesquis. It may seem a little over the top - and very caloric - but these sumptuous croquettes are more than worth the effort and the extra calories. The textures are great, with crispness and a liquefied centre and of course, the combination of foie gras, truffle and Port is sublime. These can be served as an appetizer or as a light main.

Bon Appetit!

CROMESQUIS

Filling

- 75 oz. gelatine (@ 9 leaves or 3 pkgs)
- 3/4 cup Port
- 1/8 lb. foie gras, diced
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 3 tsp black truffle juice
- coarse salt
- black pepper, freshly ground
- 1/3 oz black truffle, finely chopped

Breading

- flour for dredging
- 3 eggs
- 3 egg yolks
- 1 1/2 cup fine white bread crumbs
- grapeseed or vegetable oil for frying

Filling

Whether using leaves or powder, dissolve the gelatine in enough cold water to cover. In a large saucepan over high heat, reduce the port by slightly more than half— about 8 to 10 minutes. In a very hot sauté pan, cook the diced Foie Gras for about 1 minute and set aside. Add the cream to the reduced port and bring to a boil. Add the truffle juice and return the mixture to a boil once again. Stir in the dissolved gelatine, salt and pepper and return the mixture to a boil. Remove from the heat and add the Foie Gras along with any fat that may be rendered out. Transfer to the bowl of a food processor and process for several minutes until smooth. Pass through a strainer. Sprinkle the chopped truffle over the bottom of a 2 quart baking dish, then pour in the Crolesquis mixture. Refrigerate for about 12 hours, until set. Cut into 1 inch squares.

Breading

Dredge the squares in flour and refrigerate for 8 hours. Beat together the eggs and the egg yolks. Dip the floured squares in the egg mixture and coat thoroughly in the bread crumbs. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Repeat the breading procedure (egg and bread crumbs) and return the Crolesquis to the refrigerator until service.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. In a large deep sauté pan or pot, heat the oil to 350°F. Quickly deep fry the Crolesquis until golden brown, drain, transfer to rack on a sheet pan, and finish in the oven for 3 or 4 minutes until heated through. Change the oil frequently as the bread crumbs will burn. Handle the Crolesquis very gently as the filling will have completely liquefied. Allow to cool slightly before serving. Expect that several of the Crolesquis will break during the cooking process and not be usable.



feature red / 2007 Organic Merlot

feature white / Cipes Brut NV

companion red / 2006 Cabernet Franc

second white / 2008 Organic Gewürtztraminer

The Humour of It

"I only drink Champagne when I'm happy, and when I'm sad. Sometimes I drink it when I'm alone. When I have company I consider it obligatory. I trifle with it when I'm not hungry, and drink it when I am. Otherwise I never touch it, unless I'm thirsty."

- Lily Bollinger
owner of famed
Champagne house

Scientifically Speaking

The pressure in a Champagne bottle can build up to 6 Bar or 88 psi. For reference, the pressure in a car tire is approximately 3 Bar or 45 psi.

On the Side

The BC Wine Club Journal

for July 2010

Bubble Your Pleasure

Whether you're celebrating an occasion or the return of hot sun, this month we have a special accoutrement to aid in the festivities; Summerhill's multi-international award-winning Cipes Brut!

Yes, we've added a little bubbly to our features list for July and in doing so thought we should also add an ultra-quick fact list for those less-studied in the sparkling realm (note: for much greater (and very interesting) detail visit www.champagnesabering.com).

The Basics

- Only sparklings hailing from France's Champagne region can carry the name 'Champagne'.
- Today, some of the world's finest sparklings come from Canada.
- Sparklings are best consumed between 6 and 10°C (42-50°F)
- Sparklings come in Extra-Brut, Brut, Extra-Sec, Demi-Sec and Doux
- Traditional sparklings are primarily made from Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and sometimes, as an enhancer, Pinot Meunier. Riesling and Pinot Blanc are also commonly used outside the Champagne region.

Fable & Fact

- *Veuve Cliquot Posardin* is a famed Champagne made more so by the widow Madame Cliquot (veuve means widow in French). She pioneered a revolutionary idea of storing bottles upside down, thus having the residue sink to the cork and allow for easy removal.
- Sabrage, the art of opening a bottle of bubbly with a sword, is said in tale to have been started by Napoleon's men, who employed the trick in efforts to impress a young Champagne house heiress.



What's On Pour This Month

Feature Winery



Plus Lee McNish

On the Side

Pairings

Volume 4, Issue 7

Et Tu...Brut?



Unlike Brutus, the experienced sabreur knows the true strength of the sword lies in its ability to open, not stab. Conscious are they of the fact sabrage is a celebratory rite; an act as amusing today as it was in the days of Napoleon.

The following is the sabering method used by the practiced and observed on a fine eve in Whistler:

- Remove foil completely from neck of well-chilled bottle of sparkling.
- Loosen wire cage, slide up, and tighten around the next lip of the bottle.
- Tie one end of a long string to wire cage, the other to your waist.
- Hold the bottle by the base, thumb in punt and tilt about 30°
- Lay the back side of the sword blade on the seam side and practice sliding up to the annulus.
- Once confident, slide up forcefully, contacting the base of the annulus where the seam meets it.
- The cork and annulus should break away cleanly - Pour generously into crystal flutes

Note: This fanciful act was performed by a professional sommelier - attempt at own risk

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There is always fascination with the different. A magnetic pull compelling us to explore and understand what it is that makes the person, place or item so unique.

In the case of Summerhill Pyramid Winery, it might just be a true magnetic force that has the many drawn. A mesmeric, north pole aligned force held within its Cheops-styled pyramid. A force emanating from a perfect structure of both Pi at Phi, that reaches for the Okanagan sky, and implores all to 'Come hither'. Perhaps *this* is the reason Stephen Cipes' winery is the most visited in all of Canada, was named Canadian Wine Producer of the Year, and has been a premier destination since its founding in 1991...or maybe it's just because they have great wine.

Regardless of the reason you're compelled to visit, much can be gained once you're there.

For those searching for a Canadian certified organic wine, Cipes' winery is one of the few that can boast certification in both vineyard and production cellar. Nowhere to be found in Summerhill wine, even in the smallest trace, are herbicides, pesticides or chemical fertilizers.

Historian buff? You're sure to appreciate the 'First Contact' site on the winery grounds. Celebrating the settlement of the Okanagan, Summerhill has recreated the Mallam House; a fine log structure that was home to one of the area's early European settlers. It also features a replica 'Kikuli', a winter home of log and earth created and used by predecessors of the Westbank First Nation.

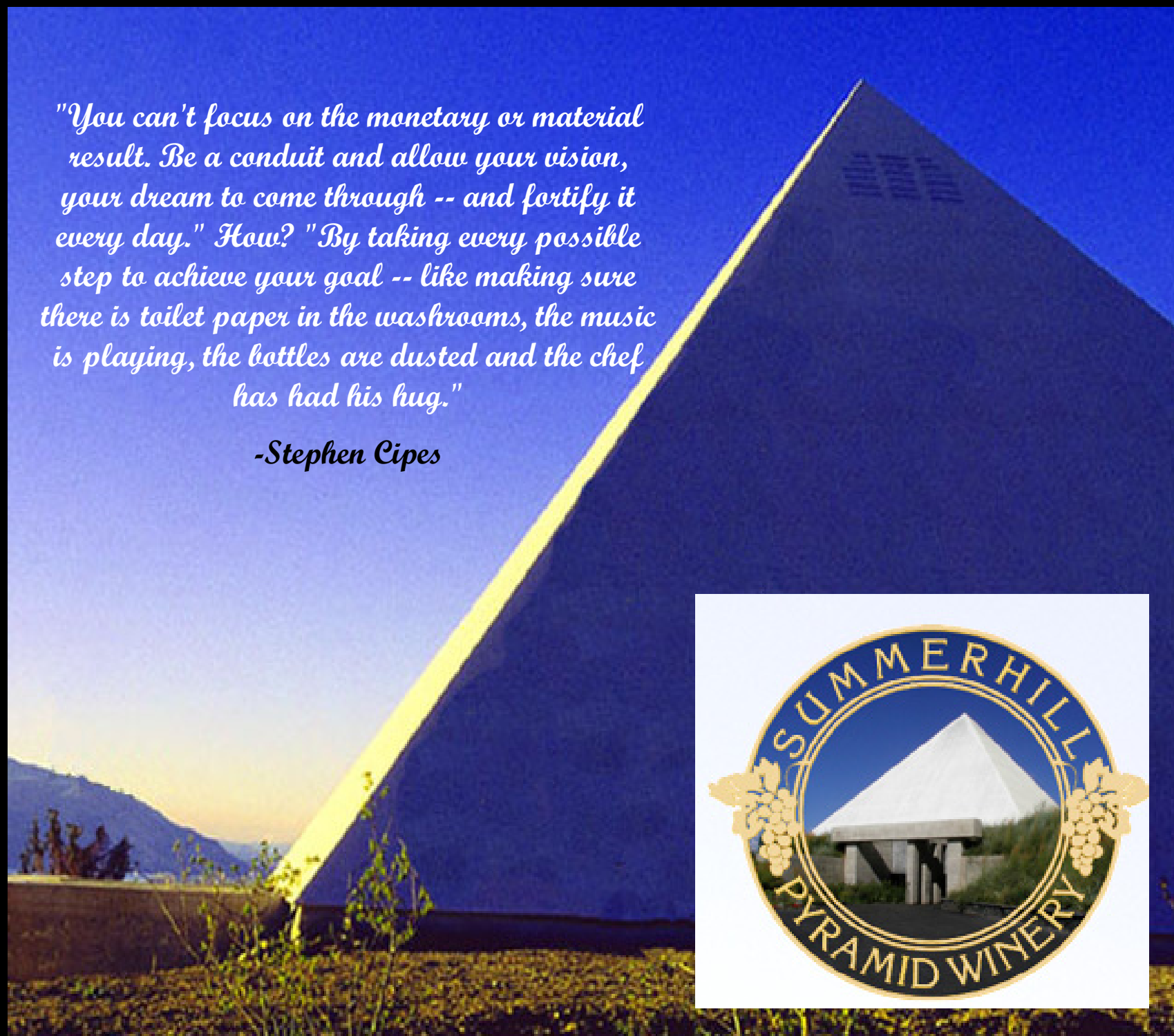
Intrigued by mysticism? Cipes believes his wines gain much from their stay in the mystically aligned pyramid and are 'infused with the music of the spheres'. Thought-provoking tours challenge one to think beyond the ordinary as they sip award-winning wines.

And finally, for the mystic-deniers, the simple fact Kelowna's Summerhill Estate Winery has garnered countless medals for its wines, both at home and internationally is reason enough for further investigation.

It stands to reason Summerhill wines would be crafted by a man whose gift for creation was as natural as the surrounding lands. Enter Vernon-born Eric von Krosigk. Grandson of an orchardist and son of Okanagan Spring Brewery's founder, Eric's need to create something from the earth's bounty was innate.

"You can't focus on the monetary or material result. Be a conduit and allow your vision, your dream to come through -- and fortify it every day." How? "By taking every possible step to achieve your goal -- like making sure there is toilet paper in the washrooms, the music is playing, the bottles are dusted and the chef has had his hug."

-Stephen Cipes



Intrigued by the vine while still a teen, the young von Krosigk sought an apprenticeship opportunity in Germany. At the ripe old age of 21, Eric left for the land of the Rhine and superior sparkling wine. Here, he worked for a grape research station, at two well known family wineries on the Mosel, and completed his apprenticeship as a vintner. He also gained accreditation in Beverage Engineering from the University of Geisenheim and spent six years of service on the AP Commission (the official German quality tasting panel) before returning home to Canada.

In 1991, Eric joined with Stephen & Wendy Cipes to create Summerhill Estate Winery. Together they would grow and establish this world-class winery and for them he would create many superior wines. For a spell, he would leave Summerhill to help establish fine wineries such as Red Rooster, Adora Estate Winery, and Victoria Estate (now Church and State), but would return to the fold in 2006 to successfully transition the Summerhill cellar and gain certified organic status.

As for Stephen Cipes, his life story is a series of ever-evolving novella. Fantastical to some, inspiring to others, but always, always interesting.

A former New York developer, his belief in nature life had him living green and incorporating it into his structures decades before it became fashionable. If Leadership in Environmental Design (LEED) existed then, Cipes would be its apostolate.

In 1986, Stephen came to the Okanagan and found here his nature Shangri La. He would purchase 60 acres of land, re-plant it with European varietals, and do everything within his power to ensure those vines would thrive naturally and their gorgeous terroir be protected.

Over the next two decades he would create a winery, build a pyramid, install a restaurant and win top international wine awards against some of the fiercest competition in the world. And he would do so without ever compromising his vision or values.

What's next for the man of boundless energy? Try a 'six-star' accommodation that will be more than just sustainable, it will be an emissary of natural development. A place where one actually nurtures the land. A perfect place for a man who may not be down to earth, but who is certainly of it—and it is an earth he cares for deeply.