

With Chef Lee McNish



This month I've chosen a classic from south western France - Cassoulet. This is a great dish and nearly every town in the region has its own unique Cassoulet recipe. There are also endless discussions on how to make the crust. No matter what recipe you choose, as long as you begin with white beans and fatty meats you will end up with a great tasting dish. After all, it's just bean stew.

Most recipes serves 12 to 14 people so I have cut down the recipe to serve 6 to 8. This is a very rich dish so I like to serve it with a nice light salad of spinach or water crest with orange or citrus. This recipe takes a little time but is well worth the effort.

LEE'S CLASSIC CASSOULET

- 4 ½ cups, dried white beans (Navy) (soaked over night in cold water)
- 2 medium Spanish onions
- 2 cloves
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled
- 4 sprigs, fresh thyme
- 4 sprigs, fresh flat parsley
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 sprig, rosemary
- ½ lbs pork belly (skin on)
- ½ lbs boneless lamb shoulder
- Sea salt & fresh cracked pepper
- ¼ cup duck fat
- 1 ½ lbs pork sausages
- ¾ cup dry white wine
- 4 beefsteak tomatos – cored & chopped
- 2 tsp tomato paste
- 2 duck legs – cooked and cooled
- ¼ cup bread crumbs

Drain the beans, discarding the soaking water. Place the beans in a large saucepan and cover with fresh water. Cut one onion in half and skewer each one with a clove. Add to the pan with 2 garlic cloves, thyme, parsley, rosemary and bay leaf. Bring to a boil over medium heat then reduce to a simmer and skim away and discard any foam on the surface. Simmer the beans uncovered, until just tender (not cooked) for about 1 hour. While the beans are cooking, remove the skin from the pork belly and cut into ½ inch cubes and set aside. Now cut the actual pork belly into 1 inch cubes and the lamb shoulder into 1 ½ inch pieces and set both aside. Season the lamb and pork with salt & pepper. Heat 2 tbsp of the duck fat in a frying pan over medium heat. When hot, add pork belly and lamb and brown on all sides. Transfer to a plate. Pierce the sausages with a fork then add to the same pan and brown. Transfer to a plate a cut into 4 pieces each. Chop the remaining onion and add to pan and cook on low heat until soft. Add remaining garlic, add wine and bring to a boil to deglaze the pan, making sure to get all the caramelized pieces left over from browning. Stir in the tomatoes and tomato paste and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove the skin from the duck legs and set aside. Remove the meat from the bone, discarding the bones, and set aside. When the beans are cooked, drain and reserve the cooking liquid. Transfer the beans to a large bowl, discarding the onion halves and herbs. Pre heat oven to 300°F. Stir the reduced tomatoes into the beans and season with salt & pepper. Put about half of the bean mixture into a large Dutch oven. Now place the pieces of pork skin, pork belly, lamb and duck on top, making sure that the different meat are evenly distributed. Pour the remaining bean mixture over the meat then push the remaining sausage pieces into the top. Pour enough of the bean cooking liquid into the oven so that the beans are almost covered. Use half the bread crumbs and sprinkle on top and dot the top with the remaining duck fat. Bake uncovered for 3 hours, braking up the breadcrumbs every hour with the back of a spoon while adding the rest of the breadcrumbs. If the beans become dry, add a little of the cooking liquid.

On the Side

This Months Selections from Noble Ridge

- feature red / 2006 Meritage
- feature white / 2008 Pinot Grigio
- companion red / 2007 Pinot Noir
- companion white / 2008 Chardonnay

The BC Wine Club Journal

for June 2010



The BC Wine Club Grapevine

Bits & Bites from the BC Wine Scene

And the Winner Is... The All Canadian Wine Championships have just announced which Canadian wines were judged to be the best of the best for 2010. Out of a record 1,143 wines entered, the BC Wine Club was thrilled to learn many of our feature selections earned top honours including: Desert Hills '06 Syrah Select - Six pack offer (Trophy, Red wine of the Year), Eau Vivre '07 Pinot Noir (Gold), Road 13 '08 Honest John's Red (Gold), Cassini Cellars '07 Maximus (Gold), Noble Ridge '08 Chardonnay (Gold), Seven Stones '07 Standing Rock Meritage (Silver), Quinta Ferreira '06 Merlot (Silver). Congratulations to all of these fine wineries for their outstanding achievement.



NY Loves BC - The word is out; our wine country is well worth a visit. In the June 10th edition of New York Times Magazine, travel writer Sara Dickerman proclaims a visit to the Okanagan is well worth the trip. Dickerman declares it a 'prime winemaking region' and 'gloriously scenic'. She feels though some wines are quite opulent, 'for the most part Okanagan wine is not about grandeur, but readily accessible pleasure, much like the surroundings.'



Stellar Sell Out - Congratulations to the lucky members who worked fast and ordered our Crimson & Canadian Collections. At record pace, savvy aficionados snapped up these 'Stellar Six Packs' filled with multi-award winning wines. Unfortunately, due to the strong demand, we are now sold out. Look for more special offers to come.

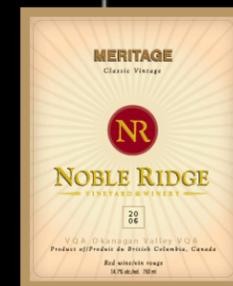


A (Re) fine Read - With this month's selections, the BC Wine Club is pleased to include the inaugural edition of *Wineries Refined*. Publisher & Editor, Richard Curtis, explains the magazine will "share the beauty that is the Okanagan Valley, celebrate the character of the industrious, good natured people who live here and showcase the award winning wine industry that has been making noise worldwide for years now." We hope you enjoy this lovely, informative magazine as much as we did.



What's On Pour This Month

Feature Winery



Plus Lee McNish

On the Side

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There are only a handful of wineries we've chosen to revisit. A small group whose wines are so superior, iconic or definitive of BC's emerging excellence, they deserve a second taste. Noble Ridge is a member of this rarified group.

From winery inception in 2001, Jim and Leslie D'Andrea have gone to great lengths to ensure the wines of their Okanagan Falls winery meet exacting standards. Both carry International Sommelier designation so the bar is always set high. It is of little wonder then that each flight, since their first in 2006, have had critics raving.

The Calgary couple knew their vineyards, with a micro-climate that boasts 2,050 hours of sunshine annually, were well suited to vines bearing fruit of noble heritage. It is an interesting fact that Okanagan Falls share the same parallel as France's famed Champagne region. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, Malbec and Chardonnay grow vigorously here in sustainable vineyards that are also home to a good variety of wildlife that includes Black Widow spiders and Rattlesnakes.

Okanagan Falls sits on the northern tip of Canada's only true desert so vines planted here in the glacial moraine-laden soil must work hard for nutrients and water. This, in addition to employed cropping techniques, ensure the fruit of Noble Ridge vines is rich and full flavoured.



NOBLE RIDGE

VINEYARD & WINERY



*The future
of Old World Excellence*



Noble Ridge's dynamic General Manager, Lynette Sahara, is very excited about the 2010 touring season. With the emergence of Okanagan Falls as a premier wine destination, things are really heating up at the winery. And with Noble Ridge regularly winning awards internationally, the winery is on many a wine tourist's list.

Sahara also notes there are a few new reasons people are making their way to the winery that sits among the Fall's scenic hills and valleys. Since we last checked in with the ever-friendly Noble Ridge crew, the winery has added picnic lunches to their list of offerings. Now, in addition to tasting their outstanding wines, the winery also serves up Mediterranean inspired picnic lunches to enjoy on their scenic ridge, or to take away in platter form. Platters include a wonderful assortment of cheeses from Poplar Grove Cheeses, cured meats, antipasto, fresh fruit and baguettes.

Noble Ridge also hosts special events through the season. This past May, the winery kicked off the season with a special visit and book signing event with the legendary John Schreiner. This fall, they'll host their annual Harvest Work Day & Lunch in the Barrel Room. Always a sold out occasion, the day includes working the harvest in the field, learning about the winemaking process and, finally, sitting down to a great Mediterranean meal catered by Bogner's Restaurant and featuring Noble Ridge's fine wines. Be sure to reserve your spot for this special day with the good people of Noble Ridge.

