

Lunch at Topiaries at Beaumont

MAIN COURSE:

Food and Wine Comments from Food and Wine Coordinator Patsy Cloake:

Vicki William's April Lunch provided another opportunity to get out of the city and enjoy the country environment of Samford on a very inclement day.

Topiaries at Beaumont flashed its verandah smile as you drove into park and immediately you understood this place has atmosphere. *Vicki* continued the touches of country hospitality by having innovative place cards to select and match, a book gift for everyone, curry plant deco and her "Dionysus" contribution to enhance the raffle.

Owner and maitre'd *Peter*, was most welcoming and generous with his time and hospitality. The canapés were stunning visually and extremely moreish – Fried Camembert & Berry Compote; Smoked Salmon & Carviar on Melba; Battered Fish Gujons with Tartare Sauce. The latter caused gasps as it was served in a glass with the tartare at the bottom – elegant! For the Gluten Free the antipasto with fish, hot chicken and spicy beef skewers was a great hit. *The accompanying bubbles a Di Giorgio NV Pinot Noir Chardonnay (www.digiorgio.com.au) was a sweet sparkling from this Coonawarra vineyard that served the canapés well.*

Entrée of Seared Scallops with Avocado, Salmon Caviar & Capsicum Jus was a wonderful meld of fresh flavours, salty but very tasty with a noticeable hint of paprika. The caramelised onion and garlic in the Capsicum Jus provided a wonderful depth of taste. There was debate at our table about how everyone liked their scallops done. But I thought that the whole combo was spot on in terms of presenting this dish. *The 2009 Kirrihill Celestial Clare Valley Riesling (www.kirrihillwines.com.au) was a good match and coming from the Watervale Region of the Clare Valley quite a differently sweet to the usual Rieslings from the region but I thought a very good wine. The 14.5 rating I thought too low as this wine had complex flavours, good length and considerable potential for cellaring.*

Lamb Back Strap served with Grilled Tomatoes, fresh Rosemary, Zucchini and Honey Port Sauce was succulent and tasty as were the accompaniments. *The 2006 Di Giorgio cabernet Merlot from the Limestone Coast in SA was a good marriage. The plummy sweet flavours of the merlot with the more robust cabernet makes this a good strong red and I thought deserved its 17 rating on the day. If you google this wine name you will get a great story about the gestation of this wine and its family producers.*

Dessert was so welcoming on a cool, miserable day – Crème Brulee with Strawberries and Ice Cream and Whiskey Anglaise - again a great combination and extremely well executed. As someone who has to avoid cream I love the lightness of milk-made **crème brulee and the depth of the milk-made Anglaise combined with the gelato style ice cream.** *The 2006 Woodstock McLaren Vale Botrytis Semillon is a very smooth but fresh and lively dessert wine whose rating of 93 from James Halliday is well deserved. (www.woodstockwine.com.au)*

For me this was a day of complete R & R in the country centered on a meal of impeccable food integrity thank to the chef, *Troy*. It is a privilege to experience the range of approaches to food offered through the Dionysus experience and what was written all over this meal experience was integrity of ingredients – something that as a cook and eater is at the heart of my philosophy. *Vicki's* wonderful organization and *Peter's* generous hospitality and a select choice of South Australian wines enhanced the experience