



Singapore Airlines lets media in on its food and beverage innovations

By Maurice Arcache

Philippine Daily Inquirer

3:31 am | Friday, December 21st, 2012



THREE WINE MASTERS. United Kingdom's Steve Spurrier, Hong Kong's Jeannie Cho Lee and Australia's Michael Hill-Smith, taking a well-deserved breather after the final Food and Wine Pairing dinner at Long Beach Seafood restaurant.

The three fantastic wine tasters and consultants of Singapore Airlines— Steven Spurrier, Jeannie Cho Lee and Michael Hill-Smith—laid before us 10 glasses of wine for each of the media guests. They instructed us to taste each one, without us knowing what brand of wine we were tasting. We were told to rate them— bronze, silver and gold.

I made mistakes about the brands and even in giving them the ratings.

The wine experts gave each an opinion on what they thought of the wine brand we were tasting. I hit a couple of golds; the rest were silvers and bronzes.

There was the Burgundy 2009 and Bordeaux 2009. Then there were the 2003 Chandon and other excellent wines of 2003, 2006 and 2007.



PRIME Traveller-Russian Federation editor in chief Nadeshda Karavaeva

Vibrant Jennie Cho Lee explained, "If you have a perfect cork, it's good; otherwise it's not! A screw cap may look cheap but it cannot be accepted for the airline. It's an issue actually. And a plastic cork top, I would not recommend for a number of reasons."

Lee went on to explain that Burgundy is the hottest selling wine category in Asia. "It's become so expensive, but wine lovers will not think twice in purchasing it. In fact, at the auction at Sotheby's recently, a Burgundy 1945 went for an awesome \$124,000!"

Wow!

To the amazement of all the media guests, Lee concluded: "People are switching from Bordeaux to Burgundy. It can be accompanied with any kind of food from different Asian countries."

After that truly educational experience we drove off for the best dinner yet I have experienced in Singapore.



NZ Herald contributor for Viva, Bethany Walsh; Singapore Airlines VP public affairs Nicholas Ionides; Huffington Post and Conde Nast Traveler-USA blogger and contributor Lee Abbamonte; SIA wine consultant Steven Spurrier

The perfect wine or champagne complemented each of our to-die-for eight-course dinner menu.

We dined at the always-packed (make your reservations early) Long Beach Seafood restaurant at the East Coast Park. There were 12 of us in each of the three tables, with one of the wine pairing masters as our host and consultant.

In my table we had the adorable Jeanne Cho Lee as consultant, explaining each dish with the champagne or wine we were pairing it with.

Asian food and wine

Okay, check this out: Before we began this awesome dinner, Lee explained, “We precisely chose this seafood restaurant to prove that Asian food can be paired off perfectly with wine.” She further pointed out that one should banish the common thought that beer is the only drink for Asian cooking.

We started with the Air-flown Live Canadian Geoduck Sashimi with Superior Stock Steamboat. It was paired off with the exquisite 2003 Moët et Chandon Dom Perignon Brut, champagne, France.

“A typical white wine glass is perfect for this champagne, never a flute,” said Lee. After the first sip of the chilled champagne, the Sashimi was ecstasy. The refreshment factor of Dom Perignon sure beats any beer, dahlings.



MOI with Singapore Airlines public affairs executive Annabel Tan

“Tea is best thing to sip a bit between each wine served,” Lee pointed out.

Next course was the, Steamed Live Scottish Royal Razor Clam with minced garlic served on a huge bowl. It was paired off with 2007 Domaine William Feure Vallons, Chablis Premier Cru, France. Chablis is very refreshing, but it has to be a typical 5-year-old.

Then we dug into the Ginger and Spring Onion Deshelled Prawn. It was paired with 2007 Joseph Drouhin Charmes—chambertun Grand Cru, Côte de Nuits, France. A superb choice.

Next we had the restaurant's famous Black Pepper Crab, paired with 2011 Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough, New Zealand. This dish pairing had everyone practically clearing their plates. Magnificent!

Next, we had the popular Chili Crab, another unbelievable dish perfectly paired with a chilled Reichsgrab von Kesselstatt Piesporter Goldtropfchen Reishing Kabinett, Mosel, Germany.

You'd think that by this time we should be shouting, "Surrender!" No way, dahlings. We couldn't wait for the delectably boiled four-hour Special Roast Chicken. Paired with 2004 Chateaux cos d' Estournel, Saint-Estèphe, France.



JEANNIE Cho Lee explaining the wine-dish pairings

Then the pièce de résistance was the formidable Fragrant Coffee Rib. Yes! coffee rib, accompanied by Blanched Spinach with Trio-Eggs and Fried Rice with Silver Fish and Bean Sprout.

It was paired with 2007 Marchesi Mazzel Castello di Fonterutoll, cheanti Classico DOCG, Italy.

And finally, we had the refreshing Fresh Mango with Seasonal Fruit Platter, paired with 2009 Chateau Filhot, Santernes, France.

I have to thank Ranjan Jha, SIA's charmant general manager, and the dynamic Rita Dy, no less, for inviting me to this divine gastronomic and wine-pairing happening. Truly Singapore Airlines is one of the best, dahlings.

So whether you're traveling first, business or economy class on Singapore Airlines, you can always expect of fab culinary feast for both your taste buds and eyes. SIA offers world-class gourmet signature cuisine from their award-winning chefs from the culinary capitals of the world, plus an endless selection of exclusive wines and champagnes, especially designed to delight even the most discerning taste buds, dahlings.

Call Singapore Airline at 7568899.