

Highlights of Napa Truffle Festival 2013



Something wonderful. Photo: Greg Wright



David Campbell primes the foraging group.
Photo: Greg Wright



Comparing notes and fungi finds. Photo: Greg Wright



A treasure trove of fresh fungi. Photo: Greg Wright

Save the Date for the fourth annual Napa Truffle Festival, January 17-20, 2014 – check the website for updates: www.napatrufflefestival.com

Truffles & Wine Dinner at La Toque



Crostino of Black Garlic and Truffled Duck Liver. Photo: Faith Echtermeyer



The Michelin Star Chefs gather around Robert Chang and Dr. Paul Thomas – from left to right: Chef Michael Tusk of Quince, San Francisco; Chef Marco Gubbiotti of La Bastiglia, Spello, Italy; Robert Chang of American Truffle Company; Chef Ken Frank of La Toque, Napa; Dr. Paul Thomas of American Truffle Company; Chef Nico Chessa of Valentino Restaurant, Santa Monica. Photo: Faith Echtermeyer



Truffled Loch Duart Salmon Slow Cooked in Duck Fat with Braised Cabbage and Hedgehogs. Photo: Faith Echtermeyer

Over 500 weekend attendees joined in the fun, science and culinary creations of the rare and delectable black truffle—specifically the winter Périgord truffle: *Tuber melanosporum* (aka black diamond)—including winery lunches, a truffle orchard tour, a wild mushroom forage, a Truffles & Wine dinner prepared by Michelin star chefs and one big Marketplace.

The weekend kicked off with a welcome reception on La Toque's gracious

terrace, where guests sampled superb wines and delicious truffle appetizers while mingling with the hosts and special guests.

Saturday programs began with an entertaining keynote by Colman Andrews, co-founder of *Saveur* and the current editorial director of *The Daily Meal*, followed by the scientific-grower seminars, led by American Truffle Company experts/scientists Robert Chang, Managing Director, and Dr. Paul

Thomas, Partner and Chief Scientist. These sessions shed light on Dr. Thomas' world-renowned cutting edge truffle science and discussed the rapidly evolving business of black European truffle cultivation.

For lunch, guests were whisked off to the magnificent Silver Oak Cellars for a tasting, cooking demo and extraordinary truffle lunch prepared by Winery Chef Dominic Orsini, featuring black truffles: Wood Oven Flatbread and



Dining. Photo: Faith Echtermeyer



Truffled Mascarpone Crepe Cake with Sherry Brown Butter Sauce. Photo: Faith Echtermeyer



In the kitchen. Photo: Faith Echtermeyer

Sheep's Milk Ricotta, Frisée Salad—Local Trinity of Foraged Mushrooms, Quail Egg Croquette and Crispy Fingerling Potatoes; Duet of Iberico Pork—Vine Grilled Loin with Garden Brussels Sprouts, Slow Roasted Shoulder over Fresh milled Garden Dent-Corn Polenta; a Trio of Truffle Cheeses—with Winery-made Pan Forte and Ash-Cured Olives, and finishing with Petite Sweets. No time to dally – immediately following lunch, guests were transported to the Robert Sinskey Vineyards truffle orchard for a tour with everyone's favorite truffle hunting dog, Rico.

It was a full day, but the delicious fun was just beginning. After a break to freshen up, guests gathered again at La Toque for the spectacular Truffles & Wine dinner, hosted by Michelin star Chef Ken Frank, and featuring a multicourse truffle menu - each course prepared by a Michelin star chef and perfectly paired with wines from around the world (check out the menu).

Early the next morning, festival-goers had a chance to walk off the grand meal during the wild mushroom forage led by mushroom experts/scientists David Campbell, Stephanie Jarvis and Dr. Paul Thomas, with the hopeful promise that: "We'll see what we find and find what we see! With a little luck, perhaps we'll find Porcini, Hedgehogs, Chanterelles, or Candy Caps..." And what luck they had - the forest was abundant with living fungi!

The active foraging worked up a hearty appetite for the sumptuous truffle feast that Beringer winery Chef Maurine Sarjeant conjured with Michelin star guest Chef Nico Chessa of Valentino Restaurant, featuring black truffles: Citrus Marinated Arctic Char with Colatuta di Alici Pesto; Chick Pea Crepella with Forest Mushrooms; Handmade Kurobuta Pork Sausage with Soft Polenta & Poached Egg; and an Almond and Truffle Chocolate Tortino with Elder Flower Ice Cream and Fresh Berries.

The Festival culminated on Monday with a lively, grand finale Festival Marketplace at Oxbow Public Market, showcasing local wines, artisanal foods, cooking demos, delicious truffle menu dishes and a chance to win a black diamond (truffle, that is)!

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Frisée Salad of Black Truffles



*The Frisée Salad of Black Truffles: Local Trinity of Foraged Mushrooms, Quail Egg Croquette and Crispy Fingerling Potatoes
Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity*

This is a twist on a classic French recipe called Salad Lyonnaise. Instead of using bacon, we are adding a variety of foraged mushrooms to provide an earthy complement to the black truffle. For this salad, we will prepare the truffles in two ways; warm and raw, with the addition of egg croquette lending a luxurious richness to the salad.

I recommend serving this salad with our Twomey Pinot Noir, Russian River 2010.

Serves 6

8 eggs (2 beaten, the other 6 whole)
 1 cup all-purpose flour
 2 cups bread crumbs
 1 ounce fresh Black Truffles
 1 tablespoon Olive Oil
 2 tablespoons Shallots, minced finely
 1 lb Foraged Mushrooms, cut or torn into bite size pieces (Yellow-Foot, Hedgehog & Black Trumpet. You can substitute chanterelles, oyster-mushrooms, or shiitake)
 2 tablespoons Parsley, Chopped
 2 quarts canola oil
 4 red potatoes, 4 purple, 4 Yukon golds, boiled tender, strained and patted dry
 Salt and pepper to taste
 4 heads frisee lettuce, washed and trimmed of dark green tips, cut into bite size pieces
 3 ounces truffle cheese, shaved or crumbled
 Extra virgin olive oil
 1 lemon
 2 tablespoons Chives, sliced thin

1.) Fill a medium sauce pot with water and bring to a boil. Place eggs in strainer that will fit in the pot, and lower the strainer into the boiling water. Cook eggs for exactly 6 minutes.
 2.) Remove the eggs from the pot and submerge into a bowl of ice water. Cool in the ice water for 10 minutes. Gently peel off the egg shells and lightly rinse, being careful to keep the eggs intact.
 3.) Coat each egg with flour, dip into the beaten egg mixture and then coat with bread crumbs. Put aside until ready to fry.
 4.) Prepare the black truffles by using a vegetable peel and peel the outer rough surface of the truffles. Dice these peelings very fine and set aside to complete the salad at the end.
 5.) Heat a large sauté pan over a medium-high heat. Once hot, add the olive oil, and then the sliced shallots. Give a quick stir, and once the shallots have toasted to a golden color, add the chopped mushrooms. Let them sauté together until all the moisture that is released from the mushrooms boils away.

Be sure to stir frequently. This should take 3-5 minutes depending how wet the mushrooms are. Once ready stir in the truffle peelings and the chopped parsley. Set the mushrooms aside in a warm place.

6.) Heat the canola oil in a high sided sauce pot to 350°F.

7.) Gently crush each of the marble potatoes, but leave them intact. Lower the potatoes into the hot oil and fry until crispy.

8.) Remove the potatoes from the oil and place onto a plate lined with paper towel. Season with salt and pepper.

9.) Wait for the temperature of the oil to return to 350°F. Place each breaded egg into the hot oil to fry until golden brown in color. Remove from the oil and place onto the plate with the crispy potatoes. Season with salt and pepper.

10.) In a salad bowl place the frisée lettuce, & truffle cheese. Toss the salad with olive oil, salt, pepper and a light squeeze of lemon juice to taste.

11.) To serve: Place a small pile of sautéed mushrooms onto the center of

each plate. Place the salad on top, then the crispy potatoes around the salad. Using a paring knife, make a small incision in the center of the egg, and with your hands gently break it open. The yolk will begin to ooze out of the center. Place the split egg on top of the salad and finish the dish with a sprinkling of chives on top and shaving the black truffles on top. Serve immediately.

This recipe is provided courtesy of Dominic Orsini, Winery Chef for Silver Oak, and Twomey Cellars.

Lunch at Silver Oak



Winemaker Daniel Baron greets the guests. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Chef Dominic Orsini demonstrates how to make the best truffle pizza. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



How to make your own Fresh Truffled Cheese

BY CHEF KEN FRANK, LA TOQUE

While cheese is an excellent vehicle for truffle flavor, it must be very fresh, as fresh truffles should be used quickly to enjoy them at the peak of their perfume. (Note that cheese marketed as “truffled” is typically an inferior product relying on the same chemical fakery as most “truffle oils” on the market.)

You will need one small wheel of very fresh, mild cow’s milk soft-ripened cheese. Brillat-Savarin from France or Mt. Tam from Cowgirl Creamery in California are both excellent choices. With a piece of fishing line, cut the cheese into three thin disks, each about 1/2-inch thick. Finely chop fresh black truffle and sprinkle on the top of each cheese disk, then reassemble the cheese, stacking the disks back together. Wrap in cheese paper and refrigerate for 48 hours to allow the truffle flavor to fully infuse. The cheese will keep for about a week - ready to eat!

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Beringer winery lunch



Winery Chef Maurine Sarjeant and Michelin star Chef Nico Chessa of Valentino Restaurant collaborate in the kitchen. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Citrus Marinated Arctic Char with Black Truffle and Colatura Di Alici Pesto. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Robert Chang and Wanda Hennig toast to good health and bon appétit. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity

What are Truffles?

Truffles are a kind of 'underground mushroom' that grow on the roots of certain tree species. They are highly prized by top chefs and connoisseurs around the world for their exquisite flavor and command exceedingly high prices.

There are hundreds of species of truffles, but the fruiting body of some are highly prized as a food. The 18th-century French gastronome Brillat-Savarin called these truffles "the diamond of the kitchen". Edible truffles are held in high esteem in French, Spanish, northern Italian and Greek cooking, as well as in international haute cuisine.

Truffle Lore

- Truffles are legendary aphrodisiacs – "...the musky scent is said to stimulate and sensitize the skin to touch." - gourmetsleuth.com
- Truffles insight bad behavior – "...there have been gunfights, thefts, accusations of wide spread fraud, even mysterious disappearances of highly trained dogs." - foodreference.com
- Truffles are the ultimate food - "... we were aware of an odour gradually coming towards us, something musky, fiery, savoury, mysterious, -- a hot drowsy smell, that lulls the senses, and yet enflames them, -- the truffles were coming." - William Makepeace Thackeray



Rico the truffle hunter.
Photo: John Bonick

Marketplace at Oxbow Public Market



Ca'Momi selling fresh black European truffles.
Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Oxbow's Cheese & Wine Merchants' house-made truffled Mt. Tam.
Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Ca'Momi's truffled pizza. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Cooking demo at Kitchen Door. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



C Casa's truffled wild mushroom and goat cheese enchiladas. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Lauren Ackerman pours tastes of her Ackerman Family Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity



Savory mushroom-truffle bread pudding at Model Bakery. Photo: Janna Waldinger|Art & Clarity