



certainly have passed on adding the scotch bonnet marmalade. The Riesling with its crisp finish was a good choice for the dish. According to Chef Staib this dish was served to the Mayor of Chongqing in Szechuan Province China and was the most popular item on the menu for the 2005 inauguration of the Victoria Anna – the newest Yangtze River cruise ship in Victoria Cruises’ luxury fleet.

The West Indies Pepperpot Soup followed served in a coconut shell atop a bed of sea salt and accented with a carefully selected, almost pristine, specimen of Jamaica’s rich fauna. This hundreds-of-years-old Jamaican recipe comes from Miss Betty, a woman of undetermined age who makes traditional Jamaican cuisine on the banks of the Rio Grande in Port Antonio, Jamaica. It is the most popular soup on the menu at Staib’s City Tavern restaurant in Philadelphia. In July 2000, Staib served this soup to hungry Parisians during Semaine Américaine, a celebration of French-American friendship. The Annie Lane Riesling accompanied the course and with its subtle floral notes and mineral earthy tones complemented the texture of the soup.

The Snapper Doré Tomato-thyme rundown, served on a bed of rice and peas and adorned with fine pieces of tomato and thyme for garnish was an immediate hit. Light and flavourful the nuances of the dish awoke parts of the palate to that point not yet engaged. Chef Staib related when the dish was served to Harry Belafonte and Al Roker at New York’s Cipriani at a scholarship benefit dinner in 2006 for the University of the West Indies. Belafonte so impressed with the taste and authenticity of this Jamaican dish asked to see the chef, only to be visibly surprised when Staib appeared from the kitchen earning the retort from Roker “What...you think white men can’t jerk?”

The intermezzo was refreshing, serving to both cleanse and cool the palate on what was a very still Jamaican summer night. The sour sop sorbet was served as one scoop atop a block of ice in what was certainly the most eye-catching presentation of the evening.

The entrée of Blue Mountain Coffee Rubbed Beef Tenderloin comprised a blue mountain bordelaise, taro root galette, curried choc ho paupiette, ackee-habanero tomato fresco, followed and Staib’s introduction whet the appetites for what sounded to be a complex but interesting combination of flavours. Of all the dishes this was the least beloved as the complexity of the flavours was initially promising but the strong after-taste of the coffee seemed to overpower the other flavours leaving a bitter taste in the throat. This was matched to the Chateau St. Jean Merlot which was quite easily the best of the group offering a good bouquet and good forward fruit, very drinkable and not too strong on the palate. This wine is a winner and should pair well with food, especially cheese.

A cheese plate of stilton, chèvre, brie, nuts and dried fruit followed accompanied by the Beringer Knight’s Valley Cabernet Sauvignon – a fairly balanced good drinking wine.

Dessert was an audacious choice of Blue Mountain Coffee infused Crème Brûlée, Chocolate Banana Fondant and Jackfruit Bavarois on a Ginger Cookie. In the interests of thorough coverage all were sampled and truth be told this was simply sinful indulgence. The evening ended with a strong cup of Jamaican Blue Mountain Coffee and with a gentle breeze starting to blow it seemed a fitting end to an evening of excellence that delivered well beyond expectations. The service throughout the night was crisp and precise while still maintaining the unique Caribbean charm – a perfect balance.

The evening was enjoyable and the food impressive, clearly demonstrating the importance the Sandals group places in providing a high quality dining experience. In conversations afterward it was clear that Chef Staib, Amando Pizzuti and all those who played a part in the evening’s gourmet extravaganza impressed these seasoned food and lifestyle critics with an evening of Caribbean elegance and fine dining of the highest international standards.



# WELCOME TO ST. LUCIA

Rosemary Parkinson



St. Lucia’s rich cultural heritage of England, France and Africa add wonder to this picturesque volcanic rain forest island first named Ionaunaloa” and “Hewanmora” (where the iguana is found) by the Amerindians. With folk dances such as Konte, Katumba, Solo and Belair, all inherited from the days of slavery; festivals such as “Jounen Kweyol Etenasyonal” (International Creole Day) and “La Rose” (flowers), the St. Lucia Jazz Festival that attracts thousands of people worldwide, St. Lucia has become the island to visit.