

Traveling with Sweeney

A Taste of Burgundy in California Wine Country

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Sometimes the recipe for a special evening is created in a surprising and exceptional way. French flavors, California wine, charming hosts, new friends, and a remarkable venue provided the ingredients for our lovely evening in Santa Rosa, California hosted by Fallot Mustard and DeLoach Vineyards. For several hours, we experienced a bit of the Burgundy region of France in Sonoma County's Russian River Valley, enjoying the blend of both of these amazing regions.



Warm and welcoming decor at DeLoach Winery

Having just returned from our [trip to Provence](#), Mr. TWS and I had already set our sights on a return visit to France and we were particularly interested in the Burgundy region. Our desire to go there became even more sharply focused with this event. From the moment we were warmly greeted at the winery with a glass of sparkling wine to the end of our evening bidding *au revoir* to our companions, we were immersed in a feeling of Burgundian *joie de vivre*.

The charming hosts

Jean-Charles Boisset

Jean-Charles Boisset grew up in the wine business in Burgundy where his parents established the Jean-Claude Boisset winery in 1969. Over the past several years, he has acquired numerous wineries in Napa and Sonoma, including Raymond Vineyards, Buena Vista Vineyards, and DeLoach Vineyards (where wines are produced using traditional **Burgundian techniques**). Jean-Charles enthusiastically regaled his guests with stories of his personal experiences and background, his wineries, and the partnership with Fallot.



Top: Jean-Charles Boisset and DeLoach wines Bottom: Marc Désarménien and Fallot mustard

Marc Désarménien

Now the General Manager of Fallot Mustard, Marc Désarménien is the grandson of Edmond Fallot, who founded the company in 1840 in Beaune, France where the mustard mill is still located. It is the only family-owned mustard maker in Burgundy. Under Marc's leadership, Fallot continues the traditions and recipes that have been passed down through generations of his family while introducing original products with flavors from around the world. Fallot is also taking a key role in revitalizing mustard seed cultivation in Burgundy which declined after World War II.

The partnership

Fallot and DeLoach have been working closely together to create the “[Magic of Mustard and Wine](#)” experience offered at DeLoach. Similar to our evening's activities, demonstrations, and tastings, this tour covers the history of the production of both wine and mustard, includes hands-on mustard-making using mustard seeds from Burgundy, and ends with a sampling of mustard-inspired dishes paired with DeLoach wines.

The venue

We could only imagine the beauty of the 20-acre vineyards surrounding us since we arrived after dark, but we didn't anticipate there would be so much to catch our attention in the winery itself. The mix of elegance, art, and the avant-garde was striking, and I'd like to spend more time exploring it all sometime.



Wine barrels at DeLoach Winery

There is a very special room at the winery that really captured my attention, particularly since it was so unexpected. It's what Jean-Charles describes as "his room", reflecting his fun-loving and rather devilish spirit as well as more than a hint of sexiness. Screens on the walls of the dimly-lit room run clips of his favorite films, including the James Bond series. A luxurious long table and chandelier await guests to special event dinners who may opt to don one of the colorful wigs also on display in the room. Other art, crystal, and artifacts are found throughout.



Colorful wigs, elegant dining table with chandelier reflection, and sculpture in the JCB Room

The mustard

Fallot has a colorful and wide range of mustards incorporating diverse seeds, spices, herbs, wine and other flavorings (even gingerbread). The most surprising flavor that we were introduced to at dinner was Fallot's recently introduced Napa Valley Pinot Noir mustard.

After a brief presentation of the basic principles of mustard-making by Marc, we were set to work with our own mortars and pestles, mustard seeds (direct from France), DeLoach Chardonnay and coarse salt.



Working on our own special mustard creation with French mustard seeds and California Chardonnay

There were two other couples sharing the table with Mr. TWS and me, and it was clear that one of the couples were going to come out on top of the light-hearted competition. The experts of Fallot were kind as they tested our sample and just said that the seeds needed more grinding. Actually, we really deserved far more severe criticism. We were even awarded certifications of “Ambassadors of Burgundy Mustard” — for at least trying.

The preparation

Another highlight of the evening was getting a behind-the-scenes look at the meal preparation that was taking place in the DeLoach kitchen. We were very curious about the dishes being made using Fallot mustards in each recipe. It seemed that it might be a bit of a challenge to include mustard in the dessert, even for Chef Michel Cornu, the Chef des Cuisines for Boisset Family Estates and a well-known culinary master in Napa Valley. Chef Cornu was quite entertaining as he described the preparation.



With Chef Michel Cornu in the kitchen of DeLoach Vineyards

The cuisine

Everyone was in good spirits as we found our places at the elegant tables, looking forward with eager anticipation to tasting Chef Cornu's creations.



I had the pleasure of sitting next to Marc at dinner and enjoyed talk of his family history and the Fallot mustard operations today. Around me were guests from various backgrounds and places, most of whom had been attending the [Winter Fancy Food Show](#) in San Francisco earlier in the day. As our hosts and a few of the guests were from France, I loved listening to the accents and occasional conversations in their native language. The five-course meal was exquisite with each creative course having deliciously unexpected flavors.



The menu

Each course was perfectly paired with DeLoach and Buena Vista wines. Clockwise from top left:

Capuccino de lentille verte (lentil soup) et foie gras à la moutarde de noix (walnut mustard)

2012 DeLoach Vineyards O.F.S. Chardonnay

Noix de Saint Jacques (scallops), au floret de chou-fleur (cauliflower), fumé de moutarde au curry de madras (curry Mustard)

2012 DeLoach Vineyards Hawk Hill Chardonnay

Epaule d'agneau (lamb) pressée, cote d'agneau persillé à la moutarde de pinot noir (Pinot Noir mustard)

2012 DeLoach Vineyards Estate Pinot Noir

Petit soufflé de comté, julienne d'endive et comté, dressing à la moutarde de Chablis et betterave rouge (Chablis and beetroot mustard)

2012 DeLoach Vineyards O.F.S Zinfandel

Crème brûlée à la moutarde de pain d'épice (gingerbread and honey Dijon mustard), sautée de butternut squash caramélisée à la graine de moutarde (seed-style white wine mustard)

Buena Vista Winery Cream Sherry

The tradition

The setting, food, wine, people, and French accents were enough to make the evening memorable for me, but there was another aspect that added to the joyful gathering. I had never before heard of the Burgundy tradition of “Ban Bourguignon”, a boisterous and totally fun ritual of clapping, hand waving, and singing “la, la, la, la, la...” that we repeated several times. The shame is that we don’t have a video of this — but we were so excited being part of it and trying to keep up with the others (several of whom had prior practice) that it didn’t cross our minds at the time.

We indulged in gourmet dishes, drank fine wine, laughed, sang, made new friends, and became mustard ambassadors! What could be better than that?

Thanks to Fallot Mustard and DeLoach Vineyards for their gracious and delightful hospitality.

For more information:

In Sonoma County, California, visit [DeLoach Vineyards](#) for tastings, tours, and events.

In the Burgundy region of France, visit [Fallot Mustard](#) mill, boutique, and museum.