

PENINSULA

A man wearing a white short-sleeved shirt, khaki pants, and a white bucket hat is captured in the middle of a golf swing on a green. He is holding a golf club, and a large cloud of sand is kicked up from the ground around him. In the background, a cityscape with various buildings and trees is visible under a clear blue sky.

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**Rolling Hills'
Scottish link**

David Kidd

Taki's take

Terranea's taste

Coleman's keys

Peninsula Gift Guide



Farm to Terranea

by Richard Foss

Chef Tim Wood prepares California Kurobuta pork shoulder with grated fresh truffle. Photo by Stephanie Cartozian

“We are venturing into **uncharted waters** with different flavors and textures...” – Terranea Chef **Bernard Ibarra**

Most of the people who attended the Third Annual Farm-to-Terranea Celebration of Food and Wine at Terranea last month probably didn't give much thought to the way that the event was put together. You just bring together a lot of good food and beverages and turn chefs and sommeliers loose on it, and people will have a great time, won't they?

Anyone who has ever managed a large event knows otherwise. Executive Chef Bernard Ibarra mused thoughtfully over the breakdown of traditional ideas about pairing food and drink.

“People no longer just listen to authority figures about what we should and should not like. We are venturing into uncharted waters with different flavors and textures, and leaving it up to ourselves to see if we like it or not. It would be arrogant of me to try to change people's minds, but I can expose them to what is out there.”

Resort Wine Director Szymon Piechaczek agreed and gave an example, based on one of the dinners on the first evening. That evening was called “A Study Of Pork,” and featured five chefs. Each was given a different cut of pork and challenged to serve it in a way that accented its best qualities. As wine director, Szymon provided both traditional and unexpected offerings.

“I do want people to experience a new approach to a food and wine fes-

tival, but it's a holistic approach. Some people are so guided by tradition that they never think of experimenting. For the Study of Pork we provide wines that can all work and let them find the one that they really like. One of the wines is Mumm Napa sparkling wine, which is not what you usually think of with pork, but it has the citrus and acidity to cut through the fat content.”

A Champagne-style wine with pork? The resort's Beverage Director Aloys Scheer was involved with an even more unusual event.

“Our Japanese whiskey dinner begins with a cocktail and moves on to include tastings of the spirit, neat. The menu is predominantly seafood in an Asian style, which works with these soft-spoken whiskeys. This is an extension of something we have done before at the resort, introducing people who think of liquors and cocktails just as after-dinner items to the ways they can be part of a meal.”

One theme that runs through the event is the idea of using local products, which is possible to a degree that may surprise even locals. There are farms and wineries hidden in the hills of the Peninsula, and Bernard Ibarra had a chance to get some hands-on experience at one of them.

“A couple of weeks ago we went to Villa Oneiro and harvested olives and pressed them for olive oil, so for the first time we have Terranea olive oil. It's beautiful extra virgin oil, unbelievable, and we have the olives in some



Wine Director Szymon Piechaczek, Executive Chef Bernard Ibarra and Beverage Director Aloys Scheer. Photo by Richard Foss

Chef Dushyant Singh of The Camby in Phoenix creates pork frankfurters with crisped black-eyed peas. Photo by Richard Foss

of our other dishes. We have the salt we gather right here on the property, and we blend it with herbs grown here, and we make smoked salt too. We also have what we call our moving back yard, the sea right behind the resort. We use as much as we can from what Mother Nature provides us with right here."

Some of those local producers attended the event, including the roaster who produces the resort's signature coffee and winemakers Dimitri Bizoumis from Villa Oneiro and Jim York of Catalina View. Beverage Manager Scheer noted that while there aren't any distilleries on the Peninsula, they use as many local ingredients as possible in their cocktails. Ibarra, a Basque who grew up in a wine-loving region, sounded just as enthusiastic about the cocktail revolution.

"The cocktail component of the event is new this year, but that is such a dynamic part of the culture now. We are using what grows in the Peninsula in our drinks as well as our food. We have always been utilizing them in the kitchen, but at the bar it is new."

Speaking of local produce brought up the question of whether this event is primarily for local people, or whether there are ambitions to make it something larger. Scheer suggested that it is already a little of each.

"The event is for local people but is already becoming a regional event. We have chefs coming from San Francisco, Carmel, Seattle, and San Diego, and they have spread awareness of this weekend through their clientele. It has a great potential to grow."

Szymon suggested that as it does, it could benefit more than just Terranea.

"We have many guests who are coming to this event from Hollywood, from Malibu, and for many it is their first time to the area. They are not just seeing this event at Terranea, they are discovering the other attractions of the Peninsula, and they will come back."

Abigail Parera, Virna Bolang, Andrew Long, Chef Tim Wood and Jessica Wood. Photo by Stephanie Cartozian

Wherever the guests came from, they had a wide range of events and seminars to attend. Szymon characterized these as partly educational and partly entertaining.

"In the entertaining category I would put our recreation of the famous "Judgment of Paris" dinner of 1976, which will include representatives of Chateau Montelena and Stag's Leap Wine Cellars. In the educational category, I would put our event evaluating the wine styles of the Old World. That's focused on discovering the regional wine styles, and people can learn a lot from that."

On the weekend of the event, that balance of intellectual understanding with basking in the experience was on full display. The "Study of Pork" on Friday night was a great example. The chefs were all accessible, explaining to anyone who was interested how they had created each recipe to enhance the natural flavors and textures of the cut they had been assigned. Some of the presentations were elegant and stylish, like Chef Tim Wood's California Kurobuta pork shoulder with grated fresh truffle. Others were more down home. Chef Dushyant Singh of The Camby in Phoenix created delicious pork frankfurters and served them in a bun alongside crisped black-eyed peas, a plate that looked like something you might get at a ballpark but tasted amazing. Between trips to the food stations guests sampled beer, cocktails, and wine, including that Napa sparkler that did indeed go superbly with pork. It was an education for those who cared to get one, and a great meal for those who just came for the experience.

Moving on through the weekend, guests could attend a seminar by women winemakers, a seafood and Champagne brunch, and a celebration of the legacy of Robert Mondavi. Or they could just stroll the grounds at Terranea, enjoy the views, and think about what they would eat and drink next. **PEN**

Selman and Pauline Shaby, David Buckley and Chef Paul McCabe. Photo by Stephanie Cartozian

