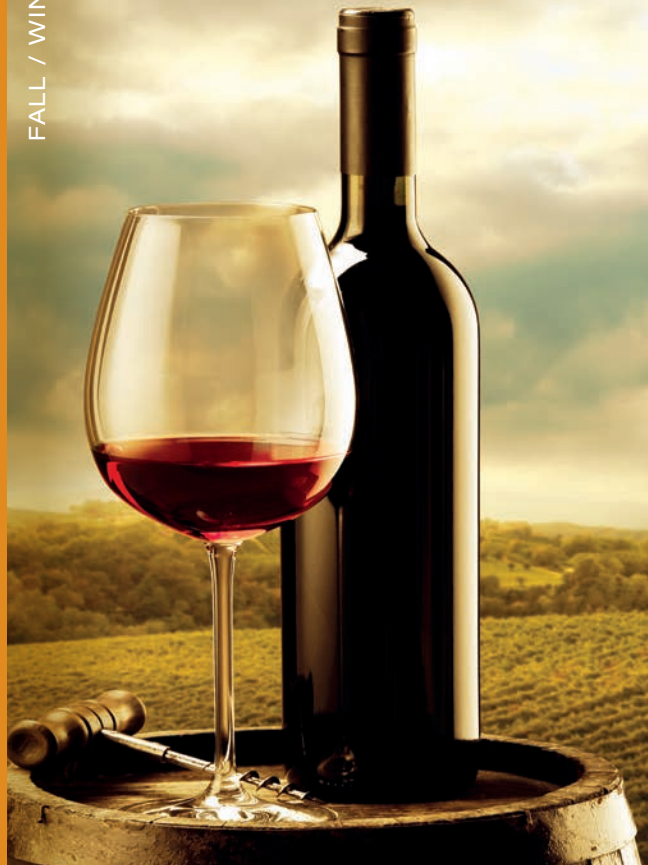
WeekendWineWatch®

EXCITING THINGS TO ENJOY ON YOUR WEEKENDS

FALL / WINTER 2014



ENJOY OUR **FREE PUBLICATION**

# When David Met Ali

**Halcyon Collections** – Bespoke Travel

# Where Scotch Meets Golf in Scotch-land!

A Regional Sampling

## The Sommelier's Summer Wine Bridge

Australian Winter Truffles

## The Wine Guys

A Brief Chat with the Experts

## Recipes by Chef Sally James

## Editor's Note

We are thrilled to launch our second edition of **WeekendWineWatch®** and send a special thank-you to our partners who have supported us in this endeavor.

On the following pages, you will enjoy unique recipes by Chef Sally James, and discover exciting places to travel, play golf, dine, watch a longstanding Broadway show or enjoy a libation or two on your weekends!

We hope you will enjoy and share this second edition with your family and friends!

Cheers ~ **Bonnie Faith Skop**
Editor

## Recipes by Chef Sally James

**Sally James** is an award-winning Australian chef, author, educator, radio and television presenter and an ambassador for Australian food and wine whose books and recipes have won international acclaim for food & wine pairing, health and creativity. Sally is the author of eighteen books, and travels around the United States as a guest chef and lecturer. She is cohost/creator of CRN's popular SlowLivingRadio, broadcast nationally.

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# WINE NOTE

**James Suckling on Puro Uno Sparkling Brut:** Rich and flavorful with lots of dried pineapple and honey, with hints of dough and pie crust. Full bodied and layered with lots of flavor and a long finish. It shows so much richness but wonderful depth of fruit. Dry, clean and complex. A blend of 75% Pinot Noir and 25% Chardonnay, and aged 24 months on the lees. 92 points.

**Puro Uno** Sparkling Rosé

**Puro Uno** Sparkling Brut

**Rutherford Hill**
Cabernet Sauvignon

**Santa Margherita**
Prosecco de
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# WINE 101

**There are two different styles of Prosecco: *Frizzante* and *Spumante*.**

Frizzante Prosecco is up to two 'bars' (or atmospheres) of pressure in the bottle. Very gentle bubbles and a very gentle style.

Spumante Prosecco can have up to four bars (or atmospheres) of pressure. More bubbles and more richness. Similar to a Champagne or a California Sparkling wine.

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# WINE 101

Sparkling wine isn't just one kind of wine. The brut (dry) category we drink most comes in four different styles, from light to heavy:

- Blanc de blancs
- Brut blends
- Blanc de noirs
- Brut rosé

**Ferrari Brut**
100%
Chardonnay

**Santa Rita**
Medalla Real
Cabernet Sauvignon

## Recipe by Chef Sally James

Fresh and lasting, with significant overtones of ripe golden apples, wild flowers and a subtle and delicate fragrance of yeast, Ferrari Brut from Trentino in Italy is a perfect wine for food. To follow the Italian heritage, I've chosen a pasta dish with the sweet and juicy corn, and with soft, rich, creamy ricotta cheese to pair with the wine's clean, ripe fruit finish.

**Ferrari Brut**
100% Chardonnay

# Capellini with Sweet Corn and Ricotta

Serves 4

½ Pound Cappelini or Angel Hair pasta
1 Tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
2 Cloves garlic crushed
Splash Ferrari Brut
Sea salt and ground pepper to taste
2 Ears corn, kernels removed
4-6 Tablespoons fresh ricotta cheese, to taste
6 Leaves basil, torn

1. Cook the pasta in boiling salted water as directed on packet, drain and set aside.

2. Heat olive oil in a large deep sauté pan over medium heat, add the garlic and cook 2 minutes or until soft. Add the corn and cook for another 3-4 minutes or until aromatic. Add the pasta, a splash of the wine and cook until the pasta is heated through. Season to taste and remove from heat.

3. Toss through the basil and serve into bowls. Scatter with the ricotta cheese and enjoy with the Ferrari Brut!

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Recipe by
Chef Sally James

The Medalla Real Cabernet Sauvignon from Chile, with its ripe red and black fruit aromas mingled with leather and spice, are perfect for a gourmet burger with spices and fruit of the Middle East. A touch of smoked paprika and a rich relish of fig and red wine are perfectly balanced by the wine's supple tannins and complex and persistent finish.

**Santa Rita**
Medalla Real
Cabernet Sauvignon

# Moroccan Burgers with Fig Relish

Serves 6

*Relish*

8 Ripe fresh figs, chopped (if not in season, try plums, or even pears are great)
2 Tablespoons brown sugar
2 Tablespoons Medalla Real Cabernet Sauvignon

*Burger*

1 ¾ Pounds ground lean beef
1 Shallot, peeled and diced
1 Teaspoon lemon zest
2 Tablespoons fresh parsley
½ Teaspoon each ground coriander and cinnamon
Freshly ground pepper to taste
Smoked paprika, to taste, for dusting

*To serve*

Goat cheese, bun of choice, lettuce

1. To make the relish, place all ingredients in a pan and simmer until thick and glossy. Set aside.

2. To make burger, place all ingredients in a large bowl and mix well (hands are great for this). Dust with smoked paprika. Heat a sauté pan or grill to medium high and cook 4-6 minutes each side or until cooked as desired.

3. To serve, toast the bread lightly on the grill if desired and spread with the goat cheese. Top with a lettuce leaf and place the burger on top. Spoon over the relish and enjoy with the Medalla Real Cabernet Sauvignon.

# THE NEW WORLD OF Sparkling Wine

**Author** | Sally James

*"Could I have a glass of sparkling wine, please?"*

*"Sorry, madam, we only have Champagne."*

*"Oh, alright, what Champagne do you have?"*

*"Well, we have Schramsberg, from the Napa Valley, and Roederer from the Anderson Valley. They are both lovely."*

*"H'mm," I think, hoping there are no French in earshot to cast daggers through the kind barman's heart!*

Sound familiar? In Australia it became taboo many years ago to mix the two distinctly differently named bubbly beverages, though there were many who continued to anyway. New World sparkling wines can be just divine and even quite similar to the "true" Champagne, made only in the French region that is its namesake. South Africa, Australia, the US, New Zealand and Argentina are among the countries who are really perfecting their art.

Other "Old World" sparkling wines that aren't Champagne seem not to struggle with this identity crisis. Think Prosecco, Cava, or even other French sparkling wine made in the Loire or other non-Champagne regions. And all have their own characteristics, whether in the size of the bubble, the sweetness or even the way they are traditionally served.

I have selected three regions of the world and three sparkling wines I think really speak to their terroir and are stunning examples of the New World of Sparkling Wine. And I've added a food pairing to illustrate their versatility throughout a meal.

## Oregon, USA

### Argyle Brut

A venture started as a joint project by Brian Croser, who makes the beautiful Croser wine in South Australia, and Rollin Soles of Argyle, this wine is truly reminiscent of a French sparkle, with fine yeasty notes and complexity.

This Oregon sparkling wine truly brings zest to life! The nose of lemon curd, raw honey, and almond biscotti harkens to the uplifting and refreshing palate to follow. With a fine mousse that buoys one up and flavors of Comice pear, custard, and marzipan that dance across your tongue, one cannot resist a grin as the effervescence slowly fades to a clean, minerally, citrus-toned finish.

My pairing for this wine was a twist on an Italian appetizer classic - Prosciutto with thin slices of cantaloupe and a dollop of goat cheese wrapped around a breadstick. The combination of salt and sweet plays tantalizingly with the uplifted notes of the wine.

Mt. Hood towering over vineyards

## Gisborne/Hawkes Bay, New Zealand

### Sophora Sparkling Cuvée

First impressions are the striking bottle, its stark silver and green drawing you to the shelf. The wine doesn't let the image down. It is so New Zealand, and so stunning - fresh, vibrant and just gorgeous in my humble opinion!

Sophora symbolizes the natural beauty and excitement of New Zealand. Pristine growing conditions and abundant sunshine enhance the vibrancy of the sparkling cuvée. Bottle fermented, this cuvée of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir delivers a wonderful array of floral aromas and ripe fruit flavors. It is rich, luscious and layered with delicate bubbles.

The region has a classically cool climate with maritime influences and a long growing season. The strong silt and clay soils provide the natural vigor and water-holding capacity required to quickly ripen crops early in the season. Fruit is typically harvested early to ensure balance between ripeness and natural acidity.

I couldn't resist a classic pairing of simple sweet sautéed corn and silky grilled scallops with a touch of basil – simple and delectable, like the wine.

## Victoria and Tasmania, Australia

### Taltarni Brut Tache

I can't remember how long I have been enjoying this wine, being relieved and delighted when I found it freely available in the USA to bring me a taste of home and the quality I'd come to rely on.

Tache is a French word meaning 'stained,' referring to the pale salmon color of this enticing sparkling wine. The Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier grapes are estate grown at Taltarni and Clover Hill, Tasmania. Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier are picked by hand and Chardonnay at night to retain freshness and acidity. Specially selected Pinot Noir or Malbec is added to 'tache' the wine after disgorgement, resulting in a zesty sparkling wine of rosy hue and a refined freshness. Disgorgement is after a minimum of 18 months on lees in its original bottle.

*"The Non-Vintage Brut Tache is a delightful, well-priced sparkling wine composed of 52% Chardonnay, 41% Pinot Noir, and 7% Pinot Meunier. A dash of red wine liqueur is added to the finished triage wine at disgorgement to create the salmon pink color. The nose offers rose petal, peach, apricot, and wheat thin scents leading to a sparkler with a steady, persistent stream of small bubbles and red berry and nutty flavors. On the palate the wine is dry and refreshing, with a long, clean finish."*

90 Points – The Wine Advocate

I have indulged this wine with a full recipe for your enjoyment.

## Recipe by Chef Sally James

Taltarni Brut Tache is the ideal wine for all kinds of Asian dishes. Crisp and long in the finish, it balances out the spicy crust and richness of the pork. The berry flavor and nutty yeast bring together the bed of succulent noodles with nuts, chili, herbs and salt of the soy.

**Taltarni**
Brut Tache

# Thai-Cured Pork and Noodle Salad

Serves 4

1 Pound pork loin or filet
Thai green curry paste
4 oz Cellophane noodles
1 Small sliced chili
2 Sliced green onions
¼ Cup toasted cashews
½ Cup cilantro leaves
½ A lime
1 Teaspoon fish sauce
1 Tablespoon rice wine

Spread a 1-pound (450g) pork loin or filet with Thai green curry paste to taste; cover and refrigerate for flavors to develop. Cook 4 ounces (120g) cellophane noodles per packet instructions, drain and toss with 1 sliced red pepper, 1 small sliced chili, 2 sliced green onions, ¼ cup toasted cashews and ½ cup cilantro (fresh coriander) leaves. Toss with juice of ½ lime, 1 teaspoon fish sauce and 1 tablespoon rice wine. Heat oil in a heavy based pan and cook the pork on medium high heat for 4-5 minutes each side or as desired. Let rest for 5 minutes, then slice and serve over the noodle salad.

Bon Appetit! Sip by Sparkling Sip!

# Where Scotch Meets Golf in *Scotch-land!*

## A REGIONAL SAMPLING

**Author** | Sally James

Machrihanish Golf Course

## SPEYSIDE WHISKY TRAIL AND GOLF COURSES

Whisky distilleries were founded in an environment rich in the highest quality ingredients: pure, clear spring water and abundant supplies of fragrant golden barley. On the whisky trail of Speyside, you'll find more than half of Scotland's malt whisky distilleries, each with its own warm welcome and an invitation to see, smell, taste and absorb the magic of whisky, each following its own traditions, lore and recipes for everything from malting the barley to the height and size of its stills. The unique characteristics of each Speyside whisky distillery result in delightful, hand-crafted whisky from each one. All offer visitors a sample of the finished product, and some include an informative nosing and tasting while others give an insight into the complex art of blending whisky and malt. For example, in Dufftown, considered by many to be the heart of the Speyside whisky region, you'll discover the spectacular Speyside Cooperage, the only working cooperage in the UK. Here, you have the unique opportunity to witness the ancient art of creating whisky barrels using traditional tools and methods, and you can even have a go at making your own mini-cask. www.visitscotland.com/see-do/itineraries/malt-whisky-trail

**Boat of Garten Golf Course.** Designed by one of the grand masters of golf course architecture, James Braid, "The Boat" is not only renowned as a demanding test of sporting skill but also a magnificent setting for the game. Always wonderfully presented, the course has been dubbed "the Gleneagles of the North" and, ever popular with visitors from both home and abroad, has become firmly established as a "must" for those enjoying a golfing tour of the Scottish Highlands. www.boatgolf.com

## MACHRIHANISH GOLF COURSE DUNES AND SPRINGBANK WHISKY

**Springbank Distillery** is unique, being the oldest independent family-owned distillery in Scotland. Founded in 1828 on the site of Archibald Mitchell's illicit still, the Springbank Distillery is now in the hands of his great great great grandson, Hedley G. Wright. Owned by Mr. Wright's J&A Mitchell & Co Ltd, Springbank is the only distillery in Scotland to carry out the full production process on the one site. One hundred percent of the traditional floor malting, maturation and bottling is done at the distillery in Campbeltown.

Known and loved amongst whisky enthusiasts the world over, Springbank is produced using lightly-peated barley and a unique two-and-a-half-times distillation. This gives the whisky a character all its own, making it stand out as a must-have dram on anyone's shelf.

**Machrihanish Golf Course** has become well known in the last few years mainly because of its exceptional first hole, which requires the round's opening shot to carry the Atlantic. It is a tough start, particularly into a breeze. The course is set in wonderful dunes in the small village of Machrihanish, which is situated on the western side of the remote Kintyre Peninsula. This is where the sky is big, the sunsets are dramatic and the air has been warmed by the Gulf Stream. Its relative inaccessibility has saved it from becoming more commercialized.

It is a joy to play and, most of the time, very quiet, allowing the visitor to relish the ups and downs of the fairways and the tussle with undulating greens. There are also arresting views across to the islands of Jura and Islay, which provide a delightful backdrop on an idyllic summer's day with the firm Machrihanish turf underfoot, the majesty of the dunes, and wheeling seabirds providing the only sound.

## PERTHSHIRE DISTILLERIES AND GLENEAGLES GOLF COURSE

**Glenturret Distillery, The Hosh, Crieff.** The Glenturret Distillery is located on the banks of the Turret River two miles northwest of Crieff in Perthshire. Guided tours, tastings, an audio-visual presentation and an exhibition are offered, together with a tasting bar, restaurants and shop were you can sample the award-winning Glenturret single malt.

**Blair Athol Distillery and Visitors Centre, Pitlochry.** At one of the oldest working distilleries in Scotland, enjoy a leisurely conducted tour followed by a dram of the distinctive Blair Athol 12-year-old single malt.

**Edradour Distillery, Pitlochry.** The smallest distillery in Scotland offers a guided tour with a real insight into the traditional methods of whisky making. Finish it off with a sip of their signature Edradour 10-year-single malt whisky.

**Gleneagles Golf Course.** Set within the gentle beauty of 850 acres of Perthshire countryside, this five-star Leading Hotel of the World is home to three championship golf courses, a sparkling, award-winning spa and an exhilarating array of outdoor activities. Gleneagles hosted the Ryder Cup in September 2014.

Gleneagles Golf Course

## ISLE OF ISLAY – SCOTCH AND GOLF WITH THE OCEAN BREEZE

The Isle of Islay is also called Queen of the Hebrides. With 8 working whisky distilleries, the stunning scenery, amazing wildlife and all the friendly people, Islay is a five-star holiday destination. Islay is a centre of "whisky tourism," and hosts a "Festival of Malt and Music" known as Fèis Ìle each year at the end of May, with events and tastings celebrating the cultural heritage of the island.

The whiskies of the distilleries along the southeastern coast of the island, Laphroaig, Lagavulin, and Ardbeg, have a smoky character derived from peat, considered a central characteristic of the Islay malts, and ascribed both to the water from which the whisky is made and to the peating levels of the barley. Many describe this as a “medicinal” flavor. They also possess notes of iodine, seaweed and salt. Caol Ila, on the northern side of the island, across from Jura, also produces a strongly peated whisky.

**The Machrie Golf Links.** Laggan Bay, Islay is a majestic location, but real golfers are more interested in the golf course than anything else. Set in the dunes of Islay, Machrie was laid out in 1891 by Willie Campbell, who instantly fell in love with the course upon viewing the land before him. The main features of this links are the number of blind holes and blind shots that have to be negotiated from undulating, tight fairways onto wonderful, rolling greens. The views to the bay are another aspect that has made the Machrie the favorite it is today. This golf course will test all aspects of your game. And the greens will test your chipping and long putting ability. There is a reason why the Scots invented golf on links land, Machrie land.

The Machrie takes its name from the Gaelic word Machair, which means the links, and it is the traditional Scottish links. Planet Golf rates The Machrie as a strong candidate to join its list of the top 100 courses on Earth. And says its magnificent Hebridean bay is one of the most beautiful locations in world golf.

The Isle of Islay

# The Sommelier's Summer Wine Bridge

## AUSTRALIAN WINTER TRUFFLES

**Author** | Sally James

Jeff Prather, wine director, lecturer and author, was at first amazed when I placed an aromatic, plump black winter truffle in his hands. After all, it was 100°F outside, in the unusually hot start to our summer.

Jeff was unaware of the spawning Australian truffle industry, but when he thought about the country's success and excellence in olive oils, cheeses, wine and other "Euro-centric" products, it made perfect sense. And, impressed by the truffles' pungent and fresh aroma, Jeff thought they were every bit as good as the European varieties he had tried.

His mind drifted to corn, peas, tomato, salad, risotto and asparagus – a whole new world! How wonderful to be able to add the deep earthy top note to light summery dishes!

Whisking his prize home, he first rustled up some King trumpet mushrooms with scallops and a tarragon butter sauce with the truffles. Then

he played with some more flavor combinations. At Ca Momi Enotica, Dario DeConti suggested their simple buffalo mozzarella pizza. He tried it. It worked, naturally! And then as he started to bring in a wine pairing, it was like a light bulb went on, and one that could open the door for lovers of "big" wines during summer months.

He reflected on the wine he had chosen for his scallops the night before, an unoaked Chardonnay. Yet while savoring the dish, Jeff and his wife really thought something with more depth, such as a Montrachet or Pinot Noir, would be great.

Jeff realized that adding truffles to light and whimsical summer dishes gave them much more affinity with bolder wines than one would normally choose.

"For sommeliers with guests who prefer bigger wines, truffles are the perfect bridge," proclaimed Jeff. "It really allows you to get more creative with wine pairings where, without the truffles, you'd be more limited to lighter varietals."

Jeff suggested that with dishes such as the pizza, it would normally be a wine such as Verdicchio, Soave or Falanghina, but with the truffle, you could well pair it with a Valpolicella, Chianti, Barolo, Arneis or Pinot Noir.

A seafood risotto with truffles would bring lighter reds into the picture, and a grilled summer seafood salad with truffles could be just delightful with a Red Burgundy. This led us to salmon, a fish that is just beautiful with truffles and is frequently paired with light Pinot Noir with low oak and tannin levels. Adding truffles to the dish can bridge the palate divide to warmer climate, more heavily oaked wines, whereas most only suggest a Pinot Noir in the red field.

A summer staple, the classic Heirloom Caprese, is lovely with Verdicchio and Sauvignon Blanc. Add truffle, add a Beaujolais.

In a word, or should I say, in Jeff's words, "the truffles add richness to wine choices for the whole summer menu - a real delight for sommeliers."

Jeff Prather

Here is Jeff's scallop dish to enjoy with your own choice of wine.

## Scallops with King Trumpet Mushrooms and Australian Truffles

Serves 4

6 Scallops
4-6 King Trumpet mushrooms, cut into pieces about the same size as scallops
Enough butter to cover scallops, plus a few tablespoons extra
3 Cloves garlic, crushed
2 Tablespoons fresh tarragon leaves
Juice of ½ lime
Australian winter truffles, shaved

In a small saucepan pan that is about the size that will hold the scallops snugly in a single layer, place the scallops and cover with water. Pour out the water and measure. This is how much butter you need to melt. Pat dry the scallops and set aside.

Melt the butter in the pan over a low heat, add the scallops, cover and allow to cook without boiling for 10-12 minutes or until opaque.

While scallops are cooking, heat the extra butter in a sauté pan over medium high heat, and add the mushrooms. Cook until browned, then flip over and cook other side, adding more butter if necessary. Keep warm.

Remove scallops from pan and keep warm. Add garlic, then the tarragon and lime, and stir over low heat. Simmer 3-5 minutes or until flavors have infused the butter and tarragon leaves are soft.

Arrange mushrooms and scallops on plates and surround with the sauce. Shave truffles over the top and enjoy with the wine of your choice – deep and aromatic or light and vibrant – experiment and find your own new favorite pairing!

Jeff discovered his new favorite with the dish ranged from a Chassagne Montrachet to a more delicate Central Ottago or Tasmanian Pinot Noir. Or, if New World is your fancy, he suggests a rich Russian River Chardonnay or Viognier from Virginia such as the Horton.

*Cheers*

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# WHEN DAVID MET ALI

## HALCYON COLLECTIONS
BESPOKE TRAVEL

**Author** | David Eck

Chance often plays a part in business. When, nine years ago, David Eck played host to seven guests in a private hospitality suite at Chelsea Football Club one wintry Saturday afternoon, Saif ul Haque – familiarly known as Ali – was one of those guests. That's when the pair first met.

Shortly afterwards, they became industry colleagues working together on joint promotions in their respective companies. Then they became friends.

Timing is another important factor in business, and Saif was looking for a new challenge at the same time that David was returning from a short-term overseas hotel project in East Africa. Talks took place over a glass of wine or two and Halcyon Collections was born in January 2012.

Launching a new travel business was always going to be challenging, and setting up during a global recession was a kind of madness, but they did it anyway. Three years on, Halcyon Travel Collections has established itself as a reputable luxury, bespoke tour operator turning dreams into reality for travelers with tailor-made itineraries.

Halcyon covers the world, from Britain and Ireland to India and South Africa to Australia and New Zealand, expertly organizing short breaks, honeymoons, weddings, celebratory travel, bespoke holidays, adventure and incentive itineraries. Their customers are not restricted to the UK and are growing worldwide.

> "We're a small, very personable tour operation in which both Saif and I handle each itinerary from start to finish..."

So what exactly is different about Halcyon? We put the question to David.

"We're a small, very personable tour operation in which both Saif and I handle each itinerary from start to finish," he said.

"Our own travel knowledge is pretty huge and we are a bit traditional in the age of social media and online sales. We actually enjoy meeting clients face-to-face over a cup of coffee or a glass of wine, sitting and talking through what someone is looking for. One 20-minute conversation is so much more productive than ping-ponging

Tiger Blue Anchored at Pulau Wayag Raja Ampat, Indonesia

50 to 60 emails for the kind of answers you need to create the perfect, tailored holiday. When a coffee or wine meeting is not likely, we Skype – Skype is such a wonderful tool. I'm surprised so many people still haven't caught on to it.

"It sounds like a cliché but we are genuinely passionate about the hospitality business and we love adding little touches to the experiences we create. Perhaps a private wine tasting session with a sommelier, a complimentary heli-flip, an airport lounge pass for someone flying economy, a private garden tour or simply a glass of Champagne upon arrival with a room upgrade. The surprise factor is always appreciated. Our contacts worldwide are immense and we enjoy fabulous relationships with travel suppliers who help us make things happen for our clients."

## So, who books through Halcyon?

"Most of our travelers are private individuals booking a holiday for couples and family. We also create company incentives – our most recent were trips to South Africa and Iceland for groups of 20. South Africa was amazing and with the currency exchange right now, it's incredibly good value for money."

## What is Halcyon's favorite kind of tour?

"We particularly love those that are close to home: tours that combine London, the English countryside and a visit to the Emerald Isle – Ireland. During three days in London, Saif and I will personally take you out on a private walking tour of little-known London gems – we call it a London Safari – followed by a pub lunch or dinner at one of our own favorite restaurants. You then get to see beautiful Dorset, stopping off at Stonehenge, and experiencing a mind-blowing gastronomic dinner with a wine matching at Summer Lodge Country House Hotel and Spa. There are two nights in Dublin to take in some traditional Irish music and then we end up in the glorious 350-acre estate of Ashford Castle, where there are falconry, archery, equestrian and fishing activities, among other things. It's a unique 11 day/10 night itinerary and huge fun."

## What's next for Halcyon?

"More of the same," David says, "but look for The British Empire Grand Tour, which is a guided historical world tour – it's going to be epic and fascinating and long, too. The full tour will be around 90 days."

Halcyon has created a "Toast to Humanity" ground tour itinerary in South Africa, which is now featured on its website. There is, of course, an emphasis on private tours and gourmet wining and dining in the Winelands.

**For more information:**
Website: **halcyon-collections.com**
Through the site you can access their blog and digital "Passport" brochure.

Email: reservations@halcyon-collections.com
Tel: London + 44 207 193 2363

When contacting Halcyon, please mention "Toast to Humanity," which will arrange a surprise "wine treat" for your holiday booked through them and a 5 percent discount when booking a privately designed Halcyon holiday.

# The Wine Guys

## a brief chat with the experts

**Author** | Sally James

## Albino Silva, Restaurateur

The internationally critically acclaimed Albino Silva has received rave reviews for his signature "Progressive Portuguese" cuisine, a culinary style that masterfully reinterprets classical Mediterranean cuisine using globally sourced artisan products and organic small-farm producers.

Beginning in 1985, in his pursuit to explore influential global culinary traditions, Albino combined his creative spirit and strong business acumen to design and launch an impressive roster of restaurants, across America and Canada. Starting with the elegant Chiado, he went on to open 4 other restaurants, including the contemporary Senhor Antonio Tapas and Wine Bar and the popular Adega Restaurant. This

led to the coveted "Independent Restaurateur" hostelry award and the distinguished Medal of Honour, from the Association of Restaurants of Portugal, in recognition of his achievement in forwarding the Portuguese Culinary Arts. In 2003 Albino was knighted with the Comendador from the House of the Republic of Portugal, an honour that was conferred by the President of Portugal for promoting Portuguese Gastronomy and Culture in Canada.

**What was your first wine experience?** I was probably 5 or 6 years old when I used to participate in the process of harvest, pressing grapes with my feet on open lagares in the family farm. I remember enjoying being engaged in the entire process.

**How does wine fit into your career now?** Wine is intricately and vitally woven into my career, but it is so much more. I am a hospitality professional, I am a restaurateur, a chef, a sommelier, a pastry chef, a bartender, a host, a server, a consultant for this platform. I was also a member of the faculty of the The Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York during the years 87/88/89. But wine seems to find its way into every aspect.

**What is your most memorable wine experience?** I have many, but the one that probably will be most rewarding took place two weeks ago. I harvested my first vintage of Alvarinho from my own vineyard that I planted, cultivated, and did first harvest this year.

**Who has been your greatest influence or mentor?** My mother, who was a great cook, great mom, and great girl. My father, who was a fantastic pastry chef, great father, and very good man.

**How do you like to relax when you're not working?** Far too many options, but the reality is that I still work a lot. The golf course probably takes the cake.

**What countries do you most love to travel to for the wine experience?** Portugal, Spain, Chile, Argentina, Canada, Greece — these are the only ones I have travelled to and associated wine to the process. I love them all.

## Sommelier Charlie Arturaola

is legendary in culinary and oenological circles. A charismatic wine expert, Charlie approaches his life's passion with expert knowledge and contagious enthusiasm. His unique presentations are enjoyed around the world.

Charlie is the president of the Miami-based Grappolo Blu Inc., where he lectures, conducts educational tastings, acts as an expert appraiser for insurance companies, consults with foreign importers, and mentors new members of the wine community. His fluency in five languages has taken him from Brazil to Bordeaux and from Montefalco to Patagonia, allowing him to deliver his passion for wine in Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese and English.

In 2010, Charlie starred in "El Camino del Vino," a fictionalized documentary. In the film, he is at the Masters of Food and Wine in Mendoza, an event he originated and of which he is the founding sommelier.

Charlie has been honored with the 2012 International Wine and Spirits Competition Communicator of the Year Award, sponsored by Vinitaly. The award recognizes an individual whose communication skills in the last 12 months have made an exceptional contribution toward promoting and increasing public awareness and interest in wines and spirits.

He is currently working on a television pilot with the director of the film, Nicolas Carreras. A second movie is also being discussed.

**What was your first wine experience?** It was really helping my father to cut grapes in Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay. At the end of our apartment was a long pergola, and from that pergola my father used to make wine from there every year! These were such strong memories for me and I treasure them very much.

**When did you know you were destined for a career in wine?** It was in my early 20s and I was the maitre d' for a large cruise ship crossing the Atlantic toward Europe. My food and wine director told me that because of my language skills he needed my help to source and purchase wine for the ship. We needed new suppliers, and since the ship was based in Europe, we needed more European wines. We were docked in Madeira, Portugal, and because I spoke Portuguese, I was able to negotiate great prices. My director was so pleased with my selection, so I said to him, "Wait until you see what I paid for them. I got them at such amazing prices." His response was, "You are a wine guy!!!" And I've never looked back.

**What is your most memorable wine experience?** Really it was traveling the world at such a young age and watching people pay thousands of dollars on great wines. In my early 20s, I was seeing the world, absorbing wine cultures and it was one amazing experience after another!

**What is your favourite food or wine indulgence?** Because of the movies I am in, I rarely get a chance to be home with my lovely wife, Pandora. So when I do, anything that she cooks is such a treat! She likes to cook something and then challenge me to what wine I would pair with the cuisine she is preparing. It's a way for us to connect on another level as husband and wife; that's the beauty of wine.

**Have you always worked in the wine industry—any other hidden talents?** Well, believe it or not, I love to play the congas while I am listening to Cuban music at my home. Music is very relaxing for me. I never thought that acting was my next career move, but now I am starring in my second movie: *The Duel Of Wine.* I am happy to be able to combine the passion for wine and the art of moviemaking. You can learn more about the movie at www.theduelofwinemovie.com

# DLynn Proctor, MS

Born in Dallas, Texas, DLynn Proctor began his career in wine and food working in restaurants while he was in high school. Fast-track forward via an amazing array of restaurants and wine bars in LA, travel around the world learning about wine and working harvests, and becoming wine director for Wolfgang Puck and other restaurant groups. DLynn Proctor, MS, is now Penfolds Winemaking Ambassador in the Americas. He was one of the featured sommeliers in the movie Somm, having his life followed for nearly 3 years while he negotiated the onerous task of becoming a Master Sommelier.

**What was your first wine experience?** My first experience was watching an impeccably dressed gentleman holding a bottle high as though it were a treaty to end a war. He had a white serviette draped over his forearm. I was mesmerized.

**What is your most memorable wine experience?** I have been fortunate to have many memorable experiences, but acting as chef sommelier for the Thienponts (owners of Le Pin and VCC) may take the cake.

**What gives you the biggest kick out of your job?** Being able to reach so many cool people in the Americas and tell the story of Australia and Penfolds. We are only 170 years old, and I feel like I have been there for every day of it.

**Your favourite food or wine indulgence?** I have a soft spot for gnocchi and Nebbiolo. I am rendered pretty much useless around them both. And if you ask for a type of gnocchi… any!

**Have you always worked in the wine industry?** I have always worked in wine and hospitality, but I was once a pretty good classical guitarist. Now I'm rusty and out of shape, and not sure if I have the discipline to train my fingers again. Any other hidden talents? Hidden talents would probably be painting acrylic on canvas as well ice skating (hockey skates, of course). I played in a league for a while.

**Who has been your greatest influence or mentor?** I wish I could say I had one person. I am an absorber of all of the great people I see daily. Every wine professional and sommelier has their own style and embodiment of sophistication and success.

**What would be the first 5 wines on your dream wine list?** 1962 Penfolds Bin 60A, 1964 Conterno Monfortino, 1980 Krug Clos de Mesnil (birth year), 1959 Moulin Touchais (stared at 5 bottles of it for 6 months before I ever opened one), 1989 Trimbach Clos Ste Hune Hors Choix.

**What countries do you most love to travel for the wine experience?** Italy and Oz are tied for 1, with the Loire, Champagne, and Burgundy rounding it out. The Aussie wine experience is like no other.

## Rajat Parr, MS

Partner/Proprietor, Sandhi
Partner/Proprietor, Domaine de la Côte

Born in Calcutta, Rajat Parr credits his uncle in London for first introducing him to the world of wine. Trained as a chef, food was his first love, but wine became his true passion, working with acclaimed Master Sommelier Larry Stone, then the Mina Restaurant Group, where he became Wine Director, and then partner in San Francisco's coveted RN74 Wine Restaurant. Now a winemaker and partner of Sandhi, near Santa Barbara, and Domaine de la Côte Winery in Oregon, Rajat has found his true home. To Rajat, winemaking is fulfilling and complete, reliant on Mother Nature and 100% intuition, an exciting challenge that he embraces with zeal.

**What was your first wine experience?** With my uncle in the UK. We drank some inexpensive Bordeaux.

**When did you know you were destined for a career in wine?** I was always curious, but after I finished a wine course at the CIA (Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park), I was really interested. So I took a leap of faith and moved to San Francisco to go work for Larry Stone.

**What is your most memorable wine experience?** The first sip of wine that turned on the light in my mind was 1986 Raveneau Chablis "Les Clos." After that, the only thing I focused on was Burgundy.

**What gives you the biggest kick out of your job?** When I was a sommelier I used to love tasting new wines and spreading the knowledge. Now I don't taste as many wines but I still get mesmerized if I have a new wine. As a winemaker, I now get intrigued with how the wines change in barrel during the aging. It's fascinating!

**How do you like to relax when you're not working?** Watch old NBA basketball games (especially the LA Lakers) on TV. And hang out on the beach with my dogs.

**What would be the first 5 wines on your dream wine list?** Boudignon Savennieres 2012, Dauvissat Chablis "Sechet" 2012, Metras Fleurie Ultime 2011, Ganevat Trousseau Plein Sud 2011 and Hirotake Cornas 2011.

**What country do you most love to travel to for the wine experience?** France. They have mastered the art of growing grapes and making wine. It's inspirational.

**Sandhi**
Bentrock Chardonnay

**Sandhi**
La Côte Pinot Noir

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