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An Irishman in Napa

Walsh Whiskey

The Global Growth of Irish Whiskey

Patience in the Process

Golfing Tips and Insights from GolfTEC's **Joe Garrisi**

Discover Ashford Castle

Bespoke Travel with the **Halcyon Collection**

An American in Paris

A tribute to One of Golf's Greats, Billy Casper

Craft Beer for the Holidays

Australia's Sunshine Coast

Golf, Sun, Surf, Food & Wine

Recipes by

Chef Sally James

Editor's Note

Can you believe this is our third issue of **WeekendWineWatch**? We decided to take our readers on an exciting trip to Ireland and explore the nuances of the hot libation now...Irish whiskey.

We always try to provide exciting and interesting topics centered around the lifestyle of golf, wine, spirits, travel, and much more. We hope that you will also try one of Chef Sally James's recipes. These recipes are created just for this publication and center around the brands that support our programs!



We hope you will enjoy this exciting issue and share with your family and friends!

Cheers ~ **Bonnie Faith Skop**
Editor

Recipes & Stories by Chef Sally James

Sally James is an award-winning Australian chef, author, educator, radio and television presenter and a spokesperson for International food and wine. Her 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 101

Tiny Bubbles.

There are approximately 49 million bubbles in a standard sized bottle of Champagne. You can pick great Champagne by the size of the bubbles — the finer and thinner the bubbles, the higher the quality. Look for the “collerette” — these are the bubble trains on the sides of the glass.





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WINE 101

The color of the wine tells you about its geographical origin.

One of the things that you can tell by looking at the color of the wine is the region and climate where the grape vine is located. Darker shades of wine, namely the darkest reds and yellow whites come from warm climates. Lighter colors come from cooler climates and taste lighter.



**Au Contraire
Pinot Noir**
750ml



**Cote Mas Blanc
Mediterranee**
1 Liter



Recipe by
Chef Sally James

A beautiful pink coral color, Mumm Napa Brut Rose has vivid aromas of black cherries, red berries and citrus that introduce soft red fruit flavors that are rich and mouth-filling, yet retain the elegant character that is Mumm Napa's trademark. A beautiful partner for Asian food, especially with earthy notes such as in this noodle salad I created with the maitake mushrooms and soy honey pecans to add a salty, rich note for the wine to sparkle with.



Mumm Napa
Brut Rose

Rice Noodles with Maitake Mushrooms and Soy Pecans

Serves 4

- 6 Ounces Maifun rice noodles or preferred noodles
- ½ Pound Maitake mushrooms
- 1 Tablespoon grapeseed or olive oil
- 1 Shallot, finely chopped
- 1 Red pepper, thinly sliced
- 2 Tablespoons Mumm Brut Rose
- 2 Spring onions
- 3-4 Leaves fresh mint, torn
- 3-4 Leaves fresh basil, torn
- 1 Small Persian cucumber (or ¼ English cucumber,) sliced thinly

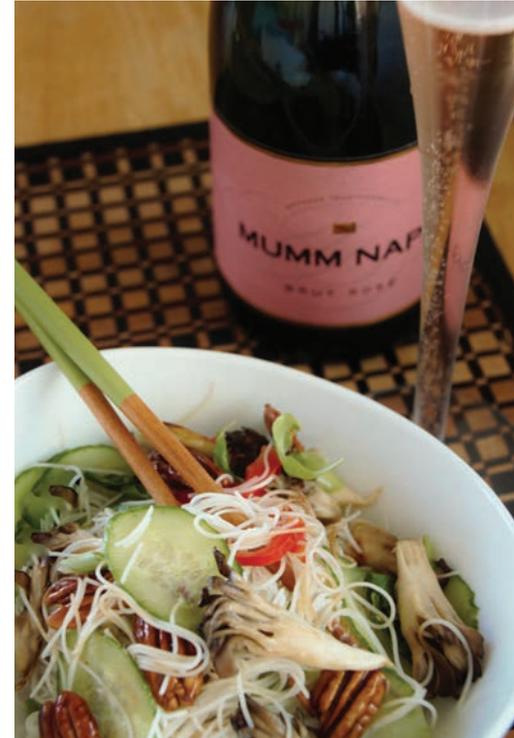
Soy Pecans

- ½ Cup pecans
- 2 Tablespoons honey
- 1 Tablespoon soy sauce

Cook the noodles according to directions on packet, drain well, and toss with a few drops of oil. Set aside.

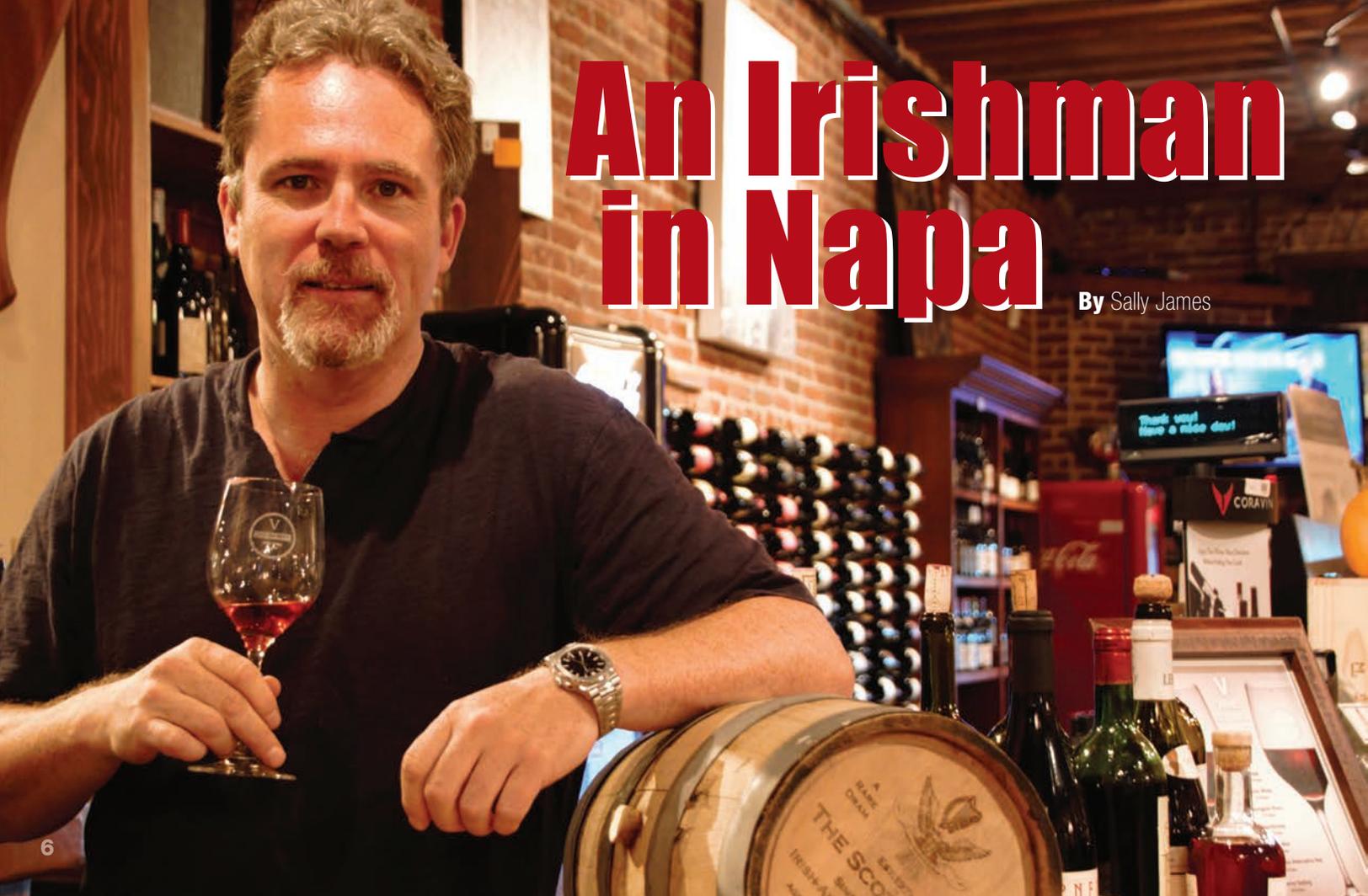
To make the soy pecans, heat a non-stick pan and add the pecans, tossing until starting to toast and become aromatic. Add the honey and soy, and remove from heat. Stir through to thoroughly coat the nuts, then transfer to a plate lined with baking paper to allow to cool.

Tear Maitake mushrooms into small florets with hands. Clean and reheat the pan, add oil, shallot and mushrooms, and cook over medium heat for 2-3 minutes, stirring, until starting to soften. Add red pepper and cook, stirring for one minute. Add wine and noodles and toss to heat through. Add onions, cucumber and herbs, then serve into bowls, topped with the soy pecans.



An Irishman in Napa

By Sally James



FOR SUCH A SMALL COUNTRY, IRELAND HAS PENETRATED THE WORLD LIKE NO OTHER COUNTRY.

It seems that countless people around the globe boast they have a little Irish in them, whether as an excuse to party extra hard on St Patrick's Day, or because it's actually true.

One Irishman who clings strongly to his roots, though now an American citizen, and owner of a fabulous wine cellar in Yountville, Napa Valley, is Scott Lewis. Born in Limerick, to a chef father who once graced the kitchens of Ashford Castle, Scott lived and breathed Irish hospitality.

As a young boy, Scott remembers squeezing fresh orange juice at his dad's hotel in Limerick, then gradually working his way through all aspects of the hotel — dish washer, busser, bellman, and porter. Soon hotel life was pulsing through his veins, and it became inevitable that he would go on to train as a chef.

After graduating Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology in Galway, Ireland, Scott began an

Scott Lewis, owner of V Wine Cellar, stands next to his oak cask of Yellow Spot Irish Whiskey.

illustrious career in some of Europe's finest hotels, including the Dorchester, Lanesborough and Grosvenor in London, while continuing to further his hospitality studies at Ealing, in London, and Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

As fortune would have it, Scott was the winner in a Green Card lottery for residency in the US 25 years ago.

He first landed in Texas at the Crescent Court and The Mansion on Turtle Creek before going on to the Arizona Biltmore, several more 5-star properties, and finally ending in Yountville at Villagio Inn and Spa as Director of Food and Beverage.

Ready for a different pace of life and loving his new home, the time came when Scott decided that he had done all he wanted in the hotel world and was ready to start his own business where his passions lay — the world of wine. He has since created one of the Napa Valley's finest wine stores and bars, the V Wine Cellar, voted "2012 Best Wine Shop" in Napa Valley by Best of Napa Sonoma Valley and 7 X 7 Magazine.

V Wine Cellar (www.winecellar.com) boasts a lounge, tasting space, private dining, and outdoor patio. It is known as one of the Valley's leading venues for exclusive wine tasting events and blending seminars, with more than 2,000 varietals of wine and beer that are shipped to clients worldwide. Scott also travels the globe setting up wine cellars for discerning buyers and somehow finds time to make his own label, Pneu, in partnership with Gary and Cheryl Van Brunt.

And what does this Irishman in Napa like to drink? Scott's wine of choice is Pinot Noir, his favorite being his own Pneu, and also Paradigm. For white, he loves the Teeter Totter Chardonnay.

A tireless Irishman indeed! I ask Scott to bring us some memories and favorites from Ireland.

What is your first Irish food memory?

It would have to be either being taken into the beach in County Kerry to pick wild mushrooms and then making soup with them at home. Or helping my grandmother pick gooseberries, strawberries, and blackberries to make jam,

to serve with the brown (soda) bread we made with a lashing of Irish butter. I also will never forget when Dad would come home on a Friday night, after a few pints of Guinness, bringing his finds from the fish market to make the best chowder I have ever tasted. I loved to impress my parents as a kid, and I'd escape to the kitchen when they were listening to the thunder and rain outside, and concoct something with a sauce I'd dreamed up. I loved making sauces.

What food do you miss most and have to have as soon as you get home?

There's nothing quite like Irish Spring lamb, with its almost white flesh, and also a grass-fed Irish

beef roast on Sunday with Yorkshire pudding. And the tradition of morning tea with cake — my mother's fruit cake is something I have to have when I go home!

What is your first Irish whiskey memory?

My two grandfathers were very different characters, and I remember being with the more liberal one when I had a stomach ache. As my parents looked on and shook their heads, he gave me a shot of Paddy Whiskey to ease it, and it worked!

What is the first thing you must do as soon as you land back in Ireland?

I land in Shannon and head straight to Durty

Nellys for a pint of Guinness. In Ireland it's fresh, unpasteurized, creamy and has a wonderful texture. Then I know I'm back home! I'll order some Irish smoked salmon on brown bread to have with it. (www.durtynellys.ie)

What is your favorite whiskey trail for a weekend?

I would begin in Dingle at the Dingle Whiskey Distillery, in County Kerry, which is an incredible, small-production artisan producer making great pot-still whiskey. Then travel across to Midleton, County Cork, to visit Jameson, for a totally different experience. While you're there you can also visit to the new and old Midleton distilleries. A whiskey trail for me wouldn't be complete without going to Dublin to visit Teeling Distillery.



After all, Dublin was originally the epicentre of whiskey in Ireland, and while you're there you can visit some local pubs to do some more tasting with local food. Teeling is the first new distillery in Dublin in over 125 years, and is right back in the spot they started in 1782.

Speaking of bars and pubs for tasting, what are your top 3 recommendations for tasting whiskey?

Dick Mack's Pub in Dingle, the Palace Bar in Dublin and The Quays Pub in Galway.

What about for the best pint of Guinness?

Johnnie Fox in Dingle, the Spaniard Inn, Kinsale, and Dirty Nellys in Bunratty. They're all genuine

Irish pubs with traditional music, and the Brazen Head in Dublin — it's Ireland's oldest pub (after you've done the Guinness factory).

And if your penchant is for a glass of fine wine?

Definitely go to Dublin and hop from Fallon and Byrne (where you can buy wine and food as well), to Ely Wine Bar, and finish at Patrick Guilbauds, as it's also a 2-star restaurant if you want to end with a fine Irish meal.

If you were taking a new visitor for a week in Ireland, where would you go and what would you do?

We'd fly into Shannon, and drive straight up the coast to the Cliffs of Moher. You can drive up the

coast and see some of the most spectacular cliff sides in Ireland. I'd choose the Park House Hotel in Galway to stay, have a drink at Quays Pub and back to the hotel for dinner. The food is great there.

From there we'd head to Ashford Castle for a night, and do the falconry, then either go fly fishing or cruise across the castle's loch to the island. Naturally, we'd finish with a meal in their fine dining restaurant, the George V.

Next stop would be Dublin for two days, staying at the Shelbourne Hotel. We'd visit the Guinness factory, then enjoy some real Irish history and culture at Kilmainham Gaol and Trinity College. The next day we'd do a day trip to Newgrange, a Royal UNESCO site and prehistoric monument dating back to 3200 BC, making it older than Stonehenge or the Egyptian Pyramids.

The next two days would be at Kinsale, staying at Pier House, a really charming B&B right on the harbor. I'd head out for some music and food at the Bulman, which is full of tradition and history,

Charles Fort and James Fort, in Kinsale



and then on to the Spaniard for more music into the wee hours.

To work off the calories, the next morning we'd hike up to the Old Head lighthouse, and then go on a cruise up the coastline. Next day we'd eat at Bruno's Italian Restaurant or, if my guests were in for a meal of Irish finesse, we'd go to Fishy Fishy, owned by one of Ireland's leading seafood chefs, Martin Shanahan. Before we'd head out, I'd take them to two fascinating forts,

James Fort, and Charles Fort, two of the best preserved forts in Britain, dating back to the 17th-century.

Our final destination would be in Killarney, staying at the Castleross Hotel with Danny Bowe, the GM (who also happens to be the cousin of Robert Bowe, Sommelier for Ashford Castle — see story, page 24). We'd head to the Beaufort Bar for some genuine local food. Next day is a drive to Killarney National Park,

around the world-famous Lakes of Killarney, with three beautiful lakes, and waterfalls hidden in the surrounding rugged mountains. Muckross House and Gardens is a definite stop. It's a 19th-century mansion with all the furnishings of the

period and really takes you back.

Sadly, that would be the end of our trip, after a few pints and shots of Irish whiskey, with blood sausage, brown bread and some Tayto crisps!

Back home in Napa, what wine do you like to drink?

My favorite wine is Pinot Noir, and I love my Pinot, as my heart is in it. Ren Harris's Paradigm Pinot is also terrific, and for white, the Teeter Totter Chardonnay is amazing. I carry them at V Wine Cellar and ship anywhere if anyone's interested!



The Bulman Bar & Restaurant



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MIX 101

DISARONNO® SOUR

2 Parts DISARONNO®
1 Part Fresh Lemon Juice
½ Part Simple Syrup

Shake ingredients and strain
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with lime wedges.



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The Perfect Cocktails for Fall



Irish Mule

- 1-1/2 parts Jameson® Irish Whiskey
- 1 part lemon juice
- Top with ginger beer
- Build over ice, stir and serve

Absolut Mule

- 2 parts Absolut® Vodka
- 3 parts ginger beer
- 1 part fresh lime juice
- Build over ice, top with lime wedge

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Recipe by Chef Sally James

A beautifully balanced blend of Grenache Blanc, Vermentino, Chardonnay, and Sauvignon Blanc, the Côté Mas Blanc Méditerranée is vibrant with aromas of citrus and a hint of tropical fruits. Like the region, it's easygoing and friendly, conjuring warm sunny days, and perfect for a Mediterranean-style dish such as the Pasta Nicoise.



**Cote Mas Blanc
Mediterranee**
1 Liter

Pasta Nicoise

Serves 4

10 Ounces spaghetti or preferred pasta
16 Green beans, trimmed
¾ Pound fresh tuna
Freshly ground pepper
2 Slices prosciutto
Olive oil, for cooking
2 Cloves garlic, chopped
3 Vine-ripened tomatoes, chopped
1 Tablespoon capers, rinsed
Handful black pitted olives, roughly chopped
Juice and zest of 1 lemon
2 Tablespoons Côté Mas Blanc
4-6 Walnuts, crumbled
6-8 Fresh basil leaves, torn

Cook the pasta according to directions, adding beans in last 2 minutes, so both are al dente. Drain and set aside.

Season the tuna with pepper. Heat a little oil in a large pan over medium high heat and add the prosciutto. Cook until crisp, then transfer prosciutto to a paper-lined plate. Add the tuna to the pan and cook for a minute or two on each side, for rare, or as preferred. Transfer to a plate.

Return the pan to the heat, adding a little more oil, and cook the garlic until soft. Add

tomatoes, capers, and olives, and cook for 1 minute. Add wine, lemon juice and zest, and the pasta, and toss to heat through. Toss in the walnuts and basil.

To serve, slice the tuna thinly and break up the prosciutto. Nest pasta into bowls and snuggle in the tuna and prosciutto.



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Walsh Whiskey

THE GLOBAL GROWTH OF IRISH WHISKEY

By Sally James



It was 1999, and Bernard and Rosemary Walsh were tiring of their city lives, Bernard having been in the technology sector for 16 years. Both were raised in farming families and had a longing to return to the land in some way. So they packed their bags and relocated to the county of Carlow, the second smallest of 32 counties in Ireland. A lush, rural area in the heart of Ireland's barley farms, Carlow is just an hour and a half drive south of Dublin.



Walsh Whiskey Distillery, Carlow

Both also had another passion, Irish coffee, and together they came up with the idea that perhaps they could start producing an Irish coffee of a standard that would meet their own personal tastes. Their goal was to make a concentrate, so venues could avoid the inefficiencies of the old method. The idea was inspired by Rosemary's time running a ski chalet in France, making countless Irish coffees for skiers. She believed

there had to be an easier and more efficient way to make consistently great drinks, and hence the birth of "The Hot Irishman."

The beginnings were humble. It was in their country home kitchen that they set about blending and tasting to create the perfect base. Soon their dedication brought dividends, and expansion was needed beyond the household walls.

The adventurous couple had traveled to Middleton to source a quality of whiskey they needed, and in 2001, purchased Urglin Glebe, a beautiful regency home almost 200 years old. This was to be the headquarters of the Hot Irishman Company for the coming 10 years. In 2005, they added a coffee cream liqueur to their line, with the idea of bringing the much maligned drink back to its pure and beautiful basics — incorporating, of course, the unsurpassable Irish dairy cream from grass-fed cows.

Before long they wondered: why not make their own whiskey, one that could help gain back Ireland's standing as number one whiskey maker in the world? It had been a quiet time for the beverage in Ireland, and Bernard thought they could be part of a resurgence of the industry. So, in 2006, he signed a long-term supply agreement with Irish distillers and laid down his first Irish whiskey stock for distilling.

As Bernard sees it, whiskey is "the wine of Ireland." His passion and drive for the highest-

quality ingredients and process soon saw his whiskeys — first the single malt, “The Irishman Whiskey,” and then the boutique and edgy “Writer’s Tears” — experiencing tremendous success throughout Ireland and an export market to 36 countries spanning four continents. In fact Writer’s Tears has just won gold in the 2015 Irish Whiskey Awards.

All of the Walsh Whiskeys are produced in

copper pots and are premium-quality whiskey, from single malts to premium blends of single malt and single pot-still whiskeys, rather than blended with grain. Using this mark of quality as its mantra, Walsh Whiskey Distillery has a dream of rediscovering the Old World methods that produced the “Champagne of whiskey,” delivering a much more aromatic quality.

“We Irish have great water, which is crucial for

making the best whiskey,” stated Bernard. He also points out, with a wink in his voice, “that is why you need to come to the country armed with a broly.”

Bernard and Rosemary have now partnered with Illva Saronno Holding S.p.A from Italy to expand to build a world class distillery in Royal Oak. Just 15 minutes away, and situated on a lush 40 acres of pastoral land perched on the picturesque Barrow River, the planned distillery will include a visitor centre in a restored 18th-century country house that will cater for 75,000 whiskey tourists by 2021.

Theirs is a story of inspiration and sure evidence that great things can begin in a small kitchen, as long as you have a dream and courage.

A bit about Irish whiskey

Irish whiskey has been the fastest growing spirit in the world in the last five years, growing from 4.4 million cases to 6.5 million since 2008. Drinks industry analysts expect that growth to continue,



with sales of Irish whiskey expected to double to over 12 million cases in the next five years.

If you were to compare Irish with Scotch, there are some underlying differences, allowing, of course, for regional and individual variations. Irish whiskey, firstly, is spelled with an “e” rather than Scottish “whisky.” According to Bernard, Irish whiskey is mostly triple distilled and rarely peated, delivering a smooth and complex whiskey with forward fruit and cereal. Scotch, on the other hand, is mostly double distilled and has a more peaty character, particularly from around Islay.

Historically, the first whiskey was documented in Ireland, as accounted in the Annals of Clonmacnoise in 1405, with Scotland’s first documented report later in the 15th century.

Bernard jokes that the Irish gave the Scots whiskey and the kilt. “They just forgot to tell them the latter was a joke!”

The Irishman Whiskey Sour

Ingredients

50ml Irishman Single Malt

50ml lemon juice

100ml sugar syrup

Maraschino cherry and slice of lemon or lime for garnish

Preparation

Pour the whiskey, lemon juice, and sugar syrup into a cocktail shaker with ice cubes. Shake well.

Strain into a chilled sour glass.

Garnish with the cherry and lemon.

Enjoy!



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Patience in the Process!

**Golf tips from GolfTEC Detroit's
Director of Instruction Joe Garrisi**

By Joe Garrisi





Joe Garrisi, Director of Instruction for GolfTEC Detroit, has been offering golf lessons for over 10 years. Much like chefs these days, Joe has noticed that many beginners want instant progress and have little patience for the learning process.

Here he gives some useful tips for when you're starting out.



There's a great deal of patience required when learning to play the game of golf. There is also frustration and humiliation that come along with it.

Understanding and accepting that there is a great deal of cause and effect involved with the golf swing itself, and multiple variables that make the game challenging, will help you become more tolerant of your progress. Factors such as weather, turf conditions, and mind state are just a few of these.

Many golfers pick up a tip from a friend or magazine and go to the range the next day to try it out. They may indeed be doing the drill or exercise correctly, but become frustrated when they don't get the results they're looking for. And many often will give up and revert to the old habit because they don't see the sense in hitting balls and embarrassing themselves.

For example, if you are working on changing the path of your swing, the first step will be to learn how to square up the club face

from a position you've never been in before. Once these new positions have been learned and you are comfortable with them, you now have the ability to fix the "chicken wing" your friends may have been telling you about, or other swing issues. (A chicken wing is when you shorten the left arm, for a right-hand golfer). You need to have the patience to work on the root cause, before you can get to the position you have been trying to change for years.

Some players may feel that a quick tip or pointer is all that they need, but the quick fix can come and go. The goal should rather be to monitor changes you make, and ensure that the mind and body are working together, allowing you to retain those movements for lasting changes. Your local GolfTEC center can offer you both the ability to work with a PGA certified golf instructor/coach and the option to practice before and after your next lesson using video and motion analysis, confirming that you are making the correct changes. Repetition is the name of the game. Everyone's goal is to be more consistent,

and the only way to be more consistent is to do it often.

As a GolfTEC instructor/coach, I have learned to be patient with my students, as I need them to be patient with themselves. Everyone these days lives busy lives, and the average person may only have time to hit a bucket of balls and play one nine-hole round a week. That is often not enough to see the progress most people are looking for during a season. Each individual golfer should ask themselves, “If I am taking lessons, am I going to play on the golf course today, or will I be practicing on the course?” If you are a player that only has time to practice on the course, that’s OK. Just understand that progress will take longer to be consistent as you’d like.

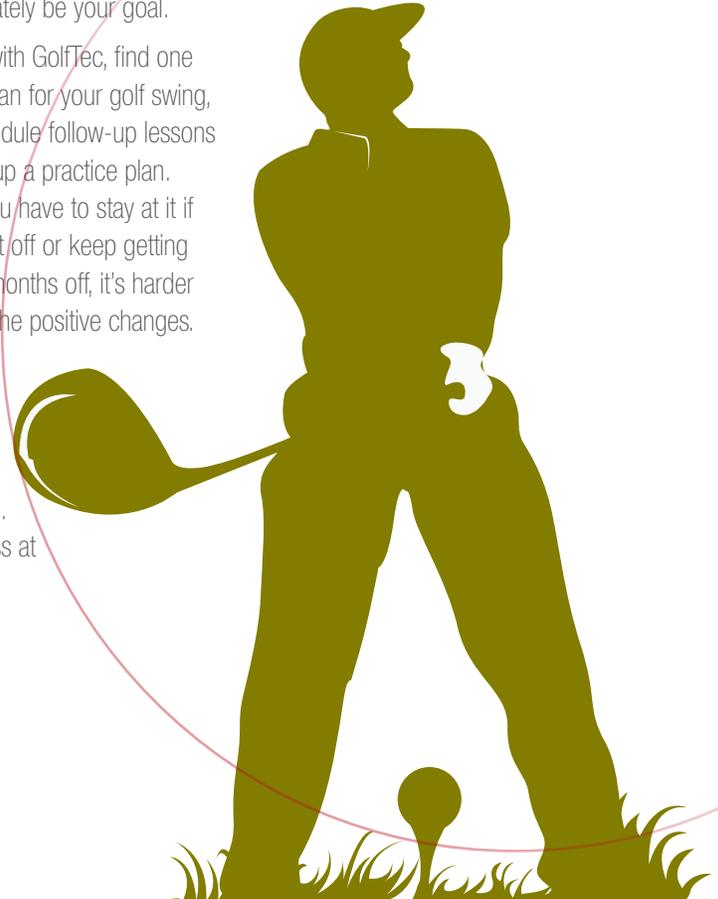
Make a commitment to yourself to work on your golf game in the months and years ahead. In most cases, in the first year a lot of information will be absorbed about the golf swing, and you will be in a constant state of learning. If you are trying to change a habit built up over time, you need to keep consciously “thinking” about your golf swing, and be patient. As repetition occurs, the mind and

body will start to understand, and you will then move toward the swing being more comfortable, and you don’t have to think about it. It becomes more natural. This will ultimately be your goal.

When looking for a coach with GolfTEC, find one who will map out a game plan for your golf swing, monitor your progress, schedule follow-up lessons on a regular basis, and set up a practice plan. Like a gym membership, you have to stay at it if you want to keep the weight off or keep getting stronger. If you take a few months off, it’s harder to get it back and to retain the positive changes. Enjoy the game of golf, patiently learn to hit better shots each time you play to improve your game, and your scores will come down. You’ll have earned your glass at the 19th hole!

Joe Garrisi
Director of Instruction
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www.golftec.com
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Recipe by Chef Sally James

Au Contraire Pinot Noir from the Sonoma Coast has layers of cherry, raspberry and plum with a hint of violet, surrounded by subtle spice. It just seemed perfect for my favorite lamb dish, which beckons those berry notes and a touch of spice to partner the sage. A sauce made from the wine only furthers the marriage, and a bed of pea mash sits sweetly underneath, welcoming the silky tannins of the wine sauce. I like to use Australian lamb, as the meat is lean and mild and it is always grass fed. The racks are a nice size, too!



**Au Contraire
Pinot Noir**
750ml

Lamb with Pea Mash and Pinot Noir Sauce

Serves 4

- 8 Lamb cutlets (you can also buy a rack and separate the chops)
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1-2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 2 Tablespoons fresh chopped sage, or 1 tablespoon dried

Red wine sauce

- 1 Cup Pinot Noir
- 2 Tablespoons quince paste or plum jelly

Pea Mash

- 3 Cups peas (fresh or frozen)
- 2-3 Tablespoons milk or coconut milk
- 1 Teaspoon mint sauce

Trim any excess fat and sinew from the lamb. Season, brush with the oil, and press sage into surface. Set aside for flavours to develop.

To make the sauce, place with wine and paste or jelly into a small saucepan, bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer until it's a glaze consistency. Keep warm.

Heat a large non-stick pan over medium high heat, add lamb and cook for 4-5 minutes each side, or until cooked as desired.

While the lamb cooks, boil peas for 1-2 minutes or until just tender, and mash or puree with the milk and mint sauce. Season to taste.

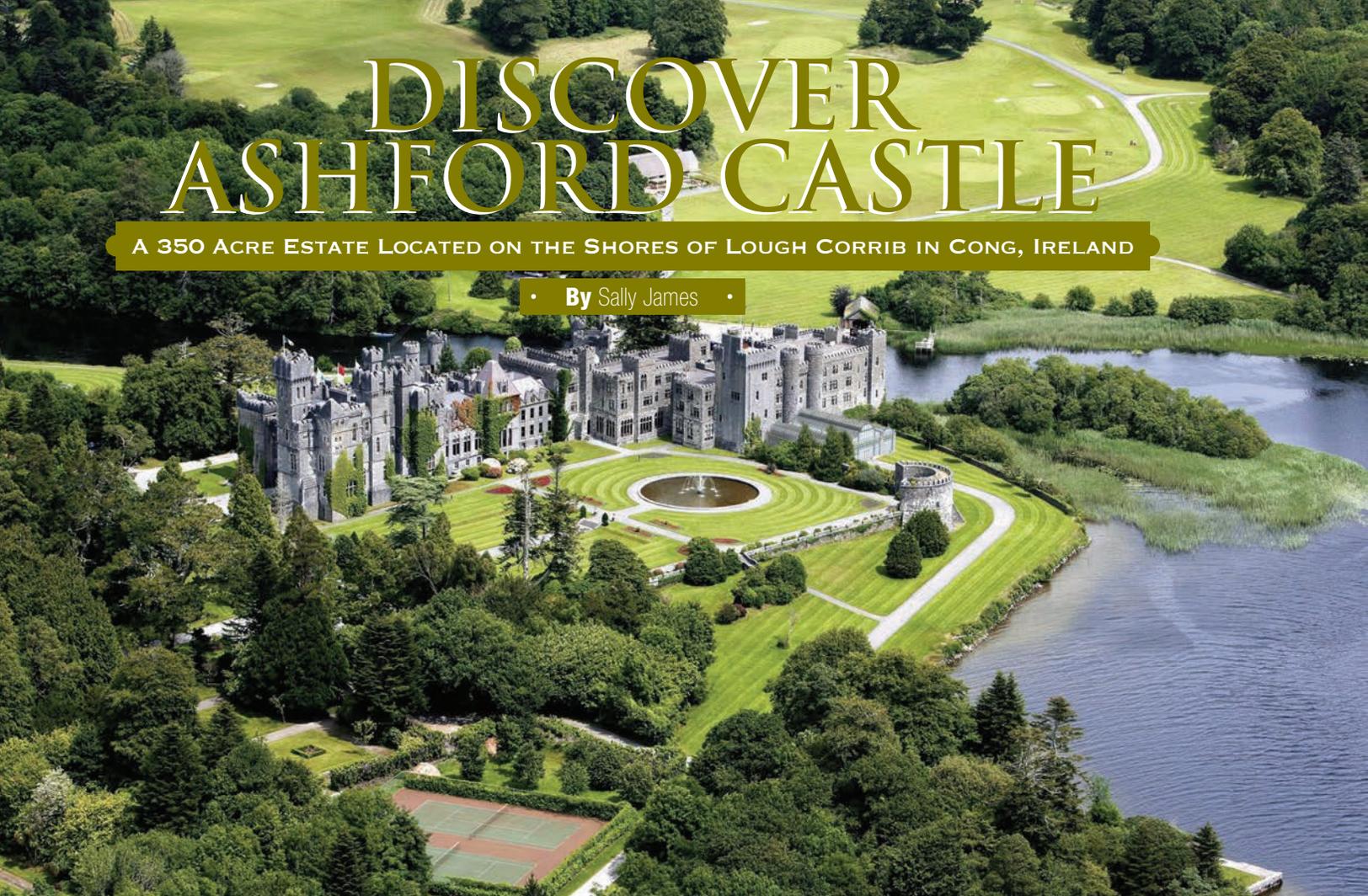
To serve, place pea mash on plates, top with the lamb, and spoon over the sauce.



DISCOVER ASHFORD CASTLE

A 350 ACRE ESTATE LOCATED ON THE SHORES OF LOUGH CORRIB IN CONG, IRELAND

• By Sally James •



FROM THE MOMENT YOU ARE GREETED BY THE GRANDLY ROBED FOOTMAN AT THE TOWERING GREYSTONE ENTRY ARCH THAT WELCOMES GUESTS TO ASHFORD CASTLE, YOU ARE ENVELOPED IN THAT WARM AND GENEROUS IRISH HOSPITALITY – RIGHT UP UNTIL THAT SAD TIME WHEN YOU HAVE TO DEPART THE MAGNIFICENT ESTATE GROUNDS.

A trip to Ireland would not be complete without at least one night at the iconic Ashford Castle, Ireland's oldest. This medieval castle turned 5-star hotel, proudly sits on 350 beautiful acres on the shores of Lough Corrib, and is just over two hours from Dublin, on the Mayo Galway border. With a history dating back to 1228, when it was founded by the Anglo-Norman de Burgo family, it is a castle in the truest sense of the word, even with its own moat, soaring turrets and resident ghost.

Throughout history, the castle passed through numerous illustrious hands, each contributing to its elaboration and character. In 1589, the Lord President of Connaught called it home, adding a fortified enclave. In 1715 the Oranmore and Browne family took ownership adorning

the property with a French-style chateau. Sir Benjamin Lee Guinness (of the famed beverage) purchased the estate in 1852, adding 26,000 acres of new roads, thousands of trees, and two Victorian-style extensions. He bequeathed the estate to his son, Lord Ardilaun, 16 years later. He was an avid gardener, and soon the property was surrounded by massive woodlands and landscaping.

In 1939, the public gained access to the castle when it was purchased by Noel Huggard, an experienced hotelier from Kerry, who brought the hotel notoriety as one of the most desired hotels in Europe. At this time the hotel was a playground for royalty, dignitaries, actors, British officers, and European elite who would come to enjoy its country pursuits — to fish, shoot and relax in the lush surrounds.

Nineteen-fifty saw the arrival of film director John Ford to the west of Ireland, scouting a location for his movie, "The Quiet Man," starring John

Wayne and Ireland's own Maureen O'Hara. Ashford Castle won his vote, and the grounds became the backdrop for much of the movie. "The Quiet Man" plays daily in the hotel's own cinema to this day.

Yet another ownership change brought a picturesque 9-hole golf course when, in 1970, avid Irish-US golfer John A. Mulcahy became the new owner. Ashford Castle saw two new ownerships following this before coming under the caring hands of Bea and Stanley Tollman of the Red Carnation Hotel group in 2013. They undertook a massive refurbishment and





enhancement to restore the fabric of the buildings and bring the castle back to its historical grandeur. Included in the renovation were a cinema, archery range, wine cave, equestrian centre, fishing, falconry and tree climbing facilities — just to name a few of the activities guests can now enjoy in their castle escape.

Among the guests to grace the corridors of Ashford Castle over the years are George V, Queen Mary, George Harrison, John Lennon, Oscar Wilde, John Wayne, Princess Grace and Brad Pitt, to name a few. And awards abound — 2015 Virtuoso Hotel of the Year (the first Irish hotel to be shortlisted in this acclaimed industry voted award), Number 3 Best Hotel in the World by *Travel and Leisure* in 2015, and Number 4 in the Top Resorts in Europe by *Condé Nast Traveler* Readers' Choice Awards 2015.

Ashford Castle is where you will experience that warm Irish hospitality, polished service and 5-star luxury, amidst exquisite décor, plush fabrics and antiques, individual touches and unique artwork. You'll be surrounded by some of Ireland's most beautiful woodland and landscaped gardens, where you can roam at

your own pace, or partake of some of the vast range of activities offered, from a boat ride on the lough, falconry, or more strenuous pursuits such as cycling and kayaking. The property boasts what some would say is the best trout fishing in Europe, whilst the nearby Cong River is frequently hailed as having the best salmon fishing in Ireland.

And for food and wine experiences, you have every choice at your fingertips. Try an ornate high tea in the Connaught Room, or a pre-dinner beverage in the Wine Cave, housed in the original coal bunker and underground walkway. Here, you can peruse the hotel's extensive collection of vintage wines while absorbing the atmosphere of another time. Dine like a royal in the lusciously formal George V Dining Room, where Chef Philippe Farnieau crafts what he describes as "Irish produce with French heart," or partake of traditional rustic Irish fare at Cullen's at the Dungeon.

To bring you more of the castle's essence, I interviewed three of the hotel staff, asking their picks for a day at Ashford Castle.





Niall Rochford

General Manager

Niall was just 16 when he entered the hospitality industry. It wasn't long before he realized this industry was his calling, warming to the caring

nature required to be successful. After graduating in hotel management in Dublin, Niall worked at every given opportunity to gain experience, including 11 years at Ashford's sister castle, Dromoland. His passion is customer and team care, and he describes his 14 years with Ashford as a privilege, rather than a job. To him, Ashford is a hotel of character and characters, with an "OMG" moment around every corner. But more so, it's a real castle with genuinely caring people.

For Niall, the falconry is a must. In fact, it's the oldest established falconry school in Ireland. Follow this with a cruise on the lough, either the history cruise or one that docks at Inchagoill Island, where a local musician will entertain you with music, stories, and song.



Philippe Farnieau

Executive Chef

Philippe is a chef with world-class experience, from his beginnings as trainee chef at the famous Grand Vefour, a Michelin 2-star restaurant

in Paris, before moving onto Le Bristol. Having left his native country of France and the city of Paris in 1998, Phillippe came to Ireland to work in a number of the country's finest hotels (K-Club, Dromoland Castle, Hayfield Manor, and Mount Falcon) before joining the Ashford team in April 2015.

At Ashford, he has the pleasure of extensive gardens to grow much of his produce, supplemented by local organic suppliers, and farmers of grass-fed lamb, gleamingly fresh oysters, and lobster and salmon minutes out of the water. Overseeing the property's restaurants, he has huge diversity in offerings — traditional dishes such as Irish stew in the dungeon, European and South African influences in the cottage (South Africa from the Red Carnation influence), and

dining with finesse in George V. Breakfasts are a highlight, buffet style, with elaborate platters of smoked fish, Irish cheese, eggs in all styles, black and white pudding, ham cooked overnight, bakery items, smoothies and juices — just for starters.

For Philippe, an ideal day at Ashford would be a long stroll around the gardens, foraging for edible flowers, and finishing the day with a cocktail in the Wine Cave — while someone else prepared dinner for him at George V.



Robert Bowe

Restaurant and Wine Program Manager

Robert has been with Ashford for over 28 years, starting his career as a waiter, before moving up to oversee

room service. Being extremely interested in wine, Robert would come and assist the sommelier on his days off, and in 1992, his dedication paid off: He was given charge of the hotel's wine program. At that time there

was a wine boom happening, and their cellar grew from 200 to 900 bins in just five years. A very exciting time for Robert, indeed! While in Robert's hands, Ashford became the first hotel in Ireland to win *Wine Spectator's* Award of Excellence in 1999. And no wonder, as he sources the best he can find from each region of the world.

Guinness and cider are not overlooked, both having an extensive in-house program, and Robert works with local microbreweries to help create the quality of brew his clientele desires.

Irish whiskey is featured in the Billiard Room with tasting flights for guests to compare with Scotch. Being his favorite, you'll often see Yellow Spot on that list.

Over the last 15 years, Robert has noticed a much greater interest and knowledge in wines in their guests, who take time to read the labels while browsing the extensively stocked Wine Cave. This is his favorite "room in the house" undoubtedly. The long limestone tunnel maintains the perfect temperature for storing wine, and oozes a wonderful historical ambience.

Since the hotel has been under the ownership of Red Carnation, Robert has had the joy of working with their own South African boutique winery, Bouchard Finlayson, makers of a range of award winning New and Old World style wine from the Hemel-en-Aarde Valley (translated, Heaven-and-Earth), just half an hour south of Cape Town.

For Robert's day at Ashford, he'd check in early, rent a bike and ride to the local village, Cong, where they'd enjoy lunch. Then he would return for a cruise before retreating to the calming and ultimately peaceful spa, with panoramic views from the conservatory across the lough. He'd

indulge in one of their signature treatments, perhaps the four hand massage featuring two therapists, or the Indian Head Massage, I wonder.

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An American in Paris

*A New
Musical*

**A BRIEF INTERVIEW WITH
CANDY OLSEN AND
BRANDON URANOWITZ
ABOUT THEIR TIME IN PARIS**

By Sally James



Experience Broadway's fresh and breathtakingly beautiful new musical about a young American soldier and a gorgeous French girl, set against the bustling backdrop of the most romantic city in the world, in the production the *New York Times* calls "Pure joy!" and "A triumph! A rhapsodic marriage of music, movement and romance."

Directed and choreographed by Tony Award® winner Christopher Wheeldon, *An American in Paris* features the timeless songs of George and Ira Gershwin, including "I'll Build A Stairway to Paradise," "I Got Rhythm" and "The Man I Love." As the *Wall Street Journal* says, "Once you've seen it, you'll find it hard to settle for less ever again."

The cast of *An American in Paris* returned recently from Paris, where they performed, and, one of them, Candy Olsen, stayed on for a month to immerse herself in the city, while taking dancing classes to stay fit. We take time out to find Candy's favorite spots in Paris, which she first visited at the age of 19. Thoughts and memories of Paris add a sparkle to her voice that is infectious and palpal.

Another cast member, Brandon Uranowitz, who plays Adam, a struggling concert pianist, adds a few of his own highlights from the trip.

Candy Olsen a native California girl, has had an illustrious dancing and performing career starting from a very young age.

As a professional dancer, Candy has performed in dozens of productions, including Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Phantom of the Opera* national tour as a swing/Meg Giry understudy, the tango dancer in Hal Prince's national tour of *Evita*, the national tour of *Spamalot*, the Las Vegas production of *Sinatra Dance with Me* by Twyla Tharp, and the national tour of *Come Fly Away* as Kate/Babe. Candy has had the pleasure of being an original cast member of Celine Dion's *A New Day* in Las Vegas directed by Franco Dragon, and recently performed in Cirque du Soleil's *Scalada, Mater Natura* as the character Red Dragon, in Andorra.

You can also catch Candy as a series regular on television in A&E's hit reality show, "Storage Wars: New York," as The Flame.

When she's not kicking her heels on Broadway, you'll find her poring over endless glasses of wine and books while studying to become a sommelier in the American Sommelier program in New York.

What was your immediate impression of Paris when you landed for the first time?

It was one of those OMG moments, being surrounded by such history like I'd never seen. I couldn't believe how well-crafted everything was. I loved the islands like the Île Saint-Louis Island on the Seine, and the string of bridges, all so different in their decoration.

What was your favorite place to enjoy a coffee and watch people? Any café or bistro on rue Montorgueil in the 1st Arrondissement. It's lined with restaurants, cafés, bakeries, fish stores, cheese shops, wine shops, produce stands and flower shops, and is where Parisians gather to socialize while doing their daily shopping. I love how Parisians would sit outside at cafes, even on a chilly winter day, under blankets with heat lamps warming from above.

And in the evening, go to the trendy Hotel Costes. It

has an amazing nightlife and bar for people-watching.

Did you have a favorite late-night bar with music?

I devoured the speakeasies. My favorites were the La Candelaria in the Marais, a Spanish-inspired taqueria with a bar out the back, and

Moonshiner in the Bastille, which you get to through a pizzeria. The Experimental Cocktail Club in the Marais is great too, though hard to get into, as it's one of the first to kick off the craft cocktail scene. At the Aux Trois Maillets,

there is a wine cave with live music with visiting International performers, dancing on tables, and lots of drinking. A must!

Favorite restaurants for fine dining and a relaxed casual meal? For fine dining, I

An American in Paris, Candy is on the left, and Brandon is in the center, raising the bottle. Photo by Matthew Murphy.



loved Verjus. Compared with others, it was less pretentious, and the flavors of dishes were exquisite and simple. It's just near the Louvre and has a wine and tapas bar on the ground floor, with just a few small tables upstairs serving the seven-course menu. The servers were wonderful — really passionate.

For a more casual meal, aside from grabbing a baguette, and breaking off chunks bit by bit, which you have to do many times in Paris, I found myself always going back to Le Comptoir du Relais St Germain. It was always bustling, has an extensive menu, and magnetic energy. The Clown Bar Bastille and Frenchie to Go are also fabulous.

For coffee, it has to be Foundation Coffee in the Marais, and for breakfast I'd choose Claus, and Rose Bekery in the Marais.

Best wine bars? Le Baron Rouge in the Bastille has 300 to 400 wines by the glass, and O'Chateau in the 1st Arrondissement has the best wine-tasting class ever. Expensive, but worth the dough, is Le Garde Robe — do a wine tasting with cheese pairing.

Best markets? In the Bastille, there is the outdoor market, Marche d'Aligre. My favorite flea market was Marche Aux Puces St Ouen.

Favorite hotel that you'd recommend to your friends? On the high end, I'd recommend a hotel where my parents stayed, Hotel Le Meurice. It's right next to the Louvre and is incredible in every way. It's truly French luxury, even with an Alain Ducasse Michelin 3-star restaurant, le Meurice. But, believe it or not, they are famous for their burger, which my dad proudly ordered six times.

Hotel Costes is modern, fun, classy, and has a great spa. Their late-night bar is dark, red, small and packed, with a great atmosphere. Loved it!

Favorite area of Paris to shop and roam? The Belleville district near the Bastille, around the 11th and 12th Arrondissements, is fascinating, with hip shops, terrific food, authentic bakeries, and not as expensive as the more touristy areas. I also loved scouring the Marais passageways.

What is your favorite French wine region and wine/s? Wow, that's hard. I love the Pinot

Noirs of Burgundy, and also Beaujolais from the Gamay region.

If you had to take a friend for a weekend in Paris and surrounds, what would you do? We'd begin with a pastry at a café, then explore the Marche aux Puces St Ouen, then head to northeast Paris to the Parc des Buttes-Chaumont, a park with amazing views over the city. It has a lake and waterfalls in the cliffs, and a café to sit and take it all in. We'd either catch a train to Epernay Champagne or the Loire then, and rent a car to visit the wineries.

If you could choose one thing you'd like to transport from Paris back to the US, what would it be? An endless supply of authentic French baguettes that you can pick up for one euro, or the equivalent. Their texture is like nothing here.

Brandon Uranowitz. Born in New Jersey, Brandon Uranowitz is an American stage and television actor, best known for one of the lead roles in *Baby It's You!*, the Broadway musical that tells the story of singer Florence Greenberg. Before that, Brandon had the role of Mark on the national tour of *Rent*. He was a 2015 Tony nominee for his featured performance in *An American in Paris*. He has also starred in film and television, in "Stage Fright," "Inside Amy Schumer," and "Law and Order: Criminal Intent."



What was your favorite place to enjoy a coffee and watch people? How did you know this was my favorite activity? I could do this anywhere, really, and enjoy myself. But my favorite place was in the Marais, called "Le Loir dans la Thèière." They had delicious coffee and a wonderfully eccentric patronage. They also had some of the best pie I've ever had in my life.

Favorite area of Paris to shop and roam? I could spend entire days wandering around the Marais and slipping into all the small shops. I'd go bankrupt, but the vibe over there is special and totally my style.

What is your favorite French wine? I'm mad for a delicious Cabernet Sauvignon or Bordeaux.

If you had to take a friend for a weekend in Paris and surrounds, what would you do? I love being in Paris without a plan. Just wandering and seeing where the day takes me is my favorite. But, some must-sees would be the Musée d'Orsay, Saint Chapelle, the catacombs, shopping in the Marais, the Pompidou, and the Palais Garnier. But a weekend wouldn't be enough!

If you could choose one thing you'd like to transport from Paris back to the US, what would it be? The architecture.

***An American in Paris* LINKS:**

www.hotelcostes.com

www.candelariaparis.com

www.lephysionomiste.fr/bar/moonshiner

www.parisbymouth.com/experimental-cocktail-club

www.lestroismailletz.fr

www.verjusparis.com

www.hotel-paris-relais-saint-germain.com

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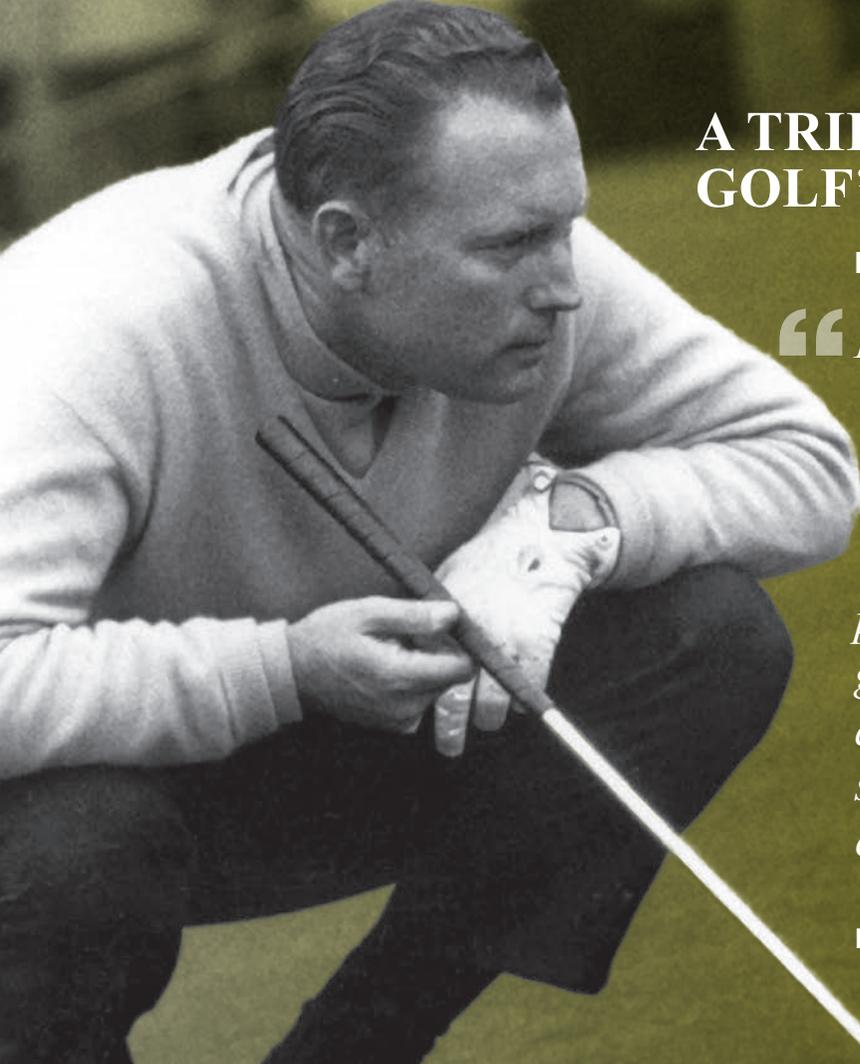
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www.marcheauxpuces-saintouen.com

www.dorchestercollection.com/en/paris/le-meurice



A TRIBUTE TO ONE OF GOLF'S GREATS, BILLY CASPER

By Sally James

“*My goal in life is to help my fellow man and touch people's lives in a positive way wherever I go. I believe that youngsters, the future of our great country, are our most precious commodities. Through golf, they learn the importance of discipline, family and invaluable life skills necessary to compete in an ever-changing world.*”

Billy Casper 1931 - 2015



Born William Earl Casper Jr. on June 24, 1931 in San Diego, Billy Casper started his golfing career as a caddie before going on to be one of the most prolific tournament winners on the PGA Tour from the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s. Sadly, he passed away this year, leaving behind him a remarkable career and lasting impression on many of the world's golfing greats.

Billy's father started him in golf at age 5, where he caddied at the San Diego Country Club to earn money for playing golf. After graduating college, he spent a semester at the University of Notre Dame on a golf scholarship, and then returned to San Diego to marry his wife, Shirley, in 1952. Casper competed frequently as an amateur against fellow San Diegan Gene Littler before turning professional in 1954.

A two-time US Open winner (Winged Foot, 1959; Olympic Club, 1966) and Masters champion (1970), Billy's PGA Tour record is one of the most prolific. His 51 victories are surpassed by only a select few, and he won at least one tournament in 16 consecutive years (1956-1971). Billy won nine times on the Senior PGA Tour, including the US Senior Open (Hazeltine, 1983).

Commonly referred to as "the best putter on the planet," he played on eight consecutive Ryder Cup teams, amassing more points (23.5) than any other American. He won the Vardon Trophy five times, was inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame in 1978 and the PGA Hall of Fame in 1982, and named one of the Top 20 players in golf history by *Sports Illustrated*.

After his playing career, Billy was a designer for many golf courses, including The Highlands, The Palm and Eagle Crest in Sun City Summerlin, Nevada. As of 2011, his management company, Billy Casper Golf, was the second-largest operator of golf courses in the United States, and managed more than 140 golf facilities.

While his playing accomplishments clearly make him one of the greatest golfers of all time, his commitment to family makes him a role model to all. Revered by fellow PGA and Champions

Tour players, Billy was known for his unwavering sense of humor, generosity, and zest for life.

In 1992, he founded the Billy Casper Youth Foundation, and for more than 20 years hosted the annual Billy's Kids Golf Classic and Corporate Cup at San Diego Country Club. The tournament raised more than \$3,000,000 for the Boys and Girls Clubs of San Diego, Junior Achievement of San Diego, the Down Syndrome Connection, the San Diego Junior Golf Association, and other non-profit organizations.

In 2010, Billy received the PGA Distinguished Service Award, the PGA of America's highest annual honor, to which he said, "You never expect anything like this, and when you take a look at those who have been named before me on this

award, it is truly humbling. I think how fortunate a person is to have a skill that gives one the opportunity to travel and build relationships with so many people around the world."

During his heyday, Billy toured Asia in support of American troops. He also played golf with several US presidents as well as kings, princes, and other royalty and dignitaries worldwide. Playing in the Hassan II Golf Trophy in Morocco at the invitation of the king for more than three decades, Billy was proclaimed the country's official golf ambassador, helping spur significant growth of the game among juniors.

Among his lesser-known skills were as an actor, performing a cameo in *Now You See Him, Now You Don't*.

Surrounded by his loving family, Billy passed away on February 7, 2015. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Shirley Franklin Casper, 11 children, six of whom are adopted, and 71 grandchildren and great-grandchildren. His extended family includes more than 7,600 employees of Billy Casper Golf.





CONSIDERING CRAFT BEER & ITS BREWERS

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



By Jennifer Massolo



There's little doubt that most Americans are aware of the rise in popularity of craft beer. Whether it's community news from local craft breweries or international news, not a week goes by without word on the latest seasonal release or insight into a large brewing company buying a craft brewery to get a piece of the action. However, why has this category of alcoholic beverages risen so quickly and significantly over the last few decades? What is the appeal? Could the world of craft beer be likened to that of wine, with cicerones (equivalent to the sommelier), traditional brewmasters' methods, and seasonal special releases that have complex palates on which experts opine and publish reviews daily? The answer, I believe is yes.

According to statistics from the Brewers Association, in 1978 there were a mere 89 breweries in the USA, compared with 3,464 in 2014. Of those, 3,418 were craft and broken down to be known as regional breweries, microbreweries or brewpubs. Craft beer sales within the overall beer sales category have risen

from 5% in 2010 to 11% in 2014 and show no signs of slowing down. This has caused much unrest for the few very large producers, simply because the rate at which sales of craft beer are increasing is unsettling to them.

But what exactly is a craft beer and why is it so appealing? While there are legal definitions including volume limits, craft beer is generally defined as small, independent, traditional. Each of those components contributes to the reasons why America loves its craft beer. Small, independently owned businesses are making full-flavored beers from recipes and styles that are steeped in tradition and also highlight the unique creativity of today's craft brewers.

Another major factor in the appeal of craft breweries is that they are local. Of course, anything can be local depending on where you live, but the nature of craft beer is often about community. Breweries usually set up

their operations on the outskirts of town or in the local dockside or warehouse district, and after getting their brewhouse in order, will open a taproom or restaurant and offer on-site sales such as a growler program. Then, the community shows up to volunteer, work, taste, eat or just buy, and it becomes a place the community's residents want to support. From

SMALL, INDEPENDENTLY OWNED BUSINESSES ARE MAKING FULL-FLAVORED BEERS FROM RECIPES AND STYLES THAT ARE STEEPED IN TRADITION.

beer geeks to hipsters to seasoned and new beer drinkers, the craft brewery is a cool place to be and to support these days.

My love for craft beer began at home in Vancouver, as my dad was a hobbyist, home brewer. I fondly remember the smells, especially when a batch turned to vinegar! That love turned into a 20+ year career in the wine & spirits industry that, three years ago, led me to start a company that concentrates on supporting artisan brewers and distillers

through consulting, event planning, and writing. I really enjoy being a part of my local craft beer community here in Miami, which, while relatively young, is thriving. I also get excited to try local craft beers when I travel. I did just that on a recent trip to Wisconsin, which to many is the home of beer in the USA.

Whether up in cold Wisconsin or down in hot Miami, the fall and winter seasons can be the most exciting for beer makers and drinkers alike. Lakefront Brewery in Milwaukee, which opened its doors in 1987, really blazed a trail in that region. It has been credited with opening up people's palates by introducing them over almost three decades to beers such as their Pumpkin Lager, Pumpkin Ale aged in brandy barrels, Holiday Spice Lager at a whopping 9.4% ABV, and their first ever fruit beers back from 1987, Cherry Lager.

Peter Schnebly, founder of Miami Brewing Company (MBC) in Homestead, Florida, says that "pumpkin beers are at an all-time high, with so many cool beers being made from this cool squash." MBC, like Lakefront in Milwaukee, is

making a pumpkin beer and aging in barrels in the form of their Jacked up Jack O' Spades which is an Imperial Pumpkin aged in Jack Daniel's whiskey barrels. While MBC is a mere four years old, Peter has been running Schnebly winery since 1977, so moving into the craft beer business was easy for him "because I love beer." He adds, "I also knew that many couples had one wine lover and one beer lover so we would solve the issue with one stop."

One of the benefits of local craft breweries is

their approachability. Many have tap rooms where you can enjoy a beer on the brewing premises, learn from the experts on site, and be surprised with what you gravitate to. Luis Brigoni, founder of Wynwood Brewing in Miami, says "we've seen people come in and start with La Rubia, an American Blonde Ale and the lightest beer we make and then end happily with a Porter." Luis also commented: "Ladies are more open to trying unfamiliar styles of craft



beer than men sometimes, which is great to see.”

The guest experience is very important to craft brewers and this is especially true at Ale Asylum in Madison, Wisconsin, which has a tasting room that is open to the public. “We have what we refer to as the Tasting Room, which includes a food menu and full bar. This has not only been a great revenue stream for our business, but it also allows us the luxury of communicating to our customers firsthand how passionate we are about our brewery. Our serving staff go through an extensive beer school and are required to go several of our brewery tours before taking an exam.” Ale Asylum also creates unique labels for each of its beers. “All of our beer logos have to pass what we call the tattoo test: If it wouldn’t look good as a tattoo, it’s not going on a label.”

When looking for craft beers to enjoy or buy as gifts this holiday season, consider a few things. Beer, just like wine, can be paired with food.

Wynwood Brewing’s, Luis Brigoni advises that “you don’t want one to overpower the other. IPA’s are great with spicy or

rich foods, as they are very full bodied.” Also consider supporting your craft brewers and buying directly from them if possible; many

THE WORLD OF CRAFT BEER HAS BECOME SOPHISTICATED – ATTRACTING NOT ONLY TRADITIONAL BEER DRINKERS BUT, MORE AND MORE, THOSE WHO APPRECIATE FINE CRAFTSMANSHIP AND ARTISTRY.

have growler programs of 32, 64 or 128 fl. oz. brown glass vessels that you can return to purchase refills from your local brewer.

Will craft beer stand the test of time? Most brewers think so, as their supporters grow in number, their spaces grow in size, and their creativity abounds. Wynwood Brewing has doubled its production from last year to this year, and Lakefront Brewery will expand in 2-3 years on a property across the street and believes “the sky is the limit; we will grow to meet the demands of our drinkers.”

What seems to have given longevity to the craft movement are the growing interest and community that have formed around craft beer. We have seen this in the wine world with, for

example, visits to wineries, cult wines and their followers, wine clubs, and surely the role of the sommelier in restaurants. Now, the craft beer

world is well on a similar path with the cicerone, a beer tasting expert, followers of craft brewers for the limited releases, a growing number of craft beer clubs, and surely visiting the tap rooms of craft brewers.

The world of craft beer has become sophisticated — attracting not only traditional beer drinkers but, more and more, those who appreciate fine craftsmanship and artistry. Try mixing up your holiday meals and cocktail parties with selections of interesting craft beers. Or organize a tasting with friends of some holiday, seasonal releases at home, or at your local brewer’s tap room.



Australia's Sunshine Coast

Golf, Sun, Surf, Food & Wine

By Sally James



I feel that familiar tug in my chest and tear in my eyes as the plane slowly descends over Sydney Harbour, the ferries bobbing through the deep blue water, leaving a crisscross of white tails on the surface. The harbour's eyes sparkle up at me, the opera house gleams from the morning sun reflecting on its white sails, and the majestic Harbour Bridge sits proudly adjoining north to south Sydney.

It's a view of which I will never tire.

Noosa Beach, Queensland.



On this trip, however, I am heading north to Queensland, specifically to Australia's Sunshine Coast. Just to the north of Brisbane, it's often bypassed when tourists flock to the Great Barrier Reef. To me, this is not a destination to overlook. Pristine, white sand beaches with surf for all levels of swimmers and board riders ("surfies"); a food scene to rival any Australia has to offer; trendy boutiques and rustic markets; lush rainforests and everglades; white-water rafting; dolphin, whale and koala watching; quaint rural towns; and a cult coffee scene — all with that relaxed, friendly Aussie vibe, and a "She'll be right, mate."

And golf? Yes, golf, for all levels, within minutes of these activities. Here are a couple to get you started.



Noosa Springs Golf and Spa Resort

www.noosasprings.com.au

Noosa Springs Golf and Spa Resort is just minutes from famous beaches and the Noosa's iconic Hastings Street. Designed by Graham Papworth, it is one of Australia's top 10 golf courses, with year-round beautiful weather, a luxury boutique-style resort, restaurant, and spa. The 18-hole undulating course promises to enthrall players of all levels with its natural aesthetic beauty and its remarkable design that boasts spring-fed lakes and native flora, plus resident koalas, kangaroos and birdlife. Surrounded by picturesque Lake Weyba and Noosa National Park, it provides a relaxing haven, only three minutes from Hastings Street and famous beaches.



Peregian Springs Golf Course

www.peregianspringsgolfclub.com.au

With more of a native parkland setting, Peregian Springs Golf Course was designed by Phil Scott. The 62-acre golf course is quite flat and easy to walk. However, the water features on course, combined with some intimidating bunkering, challenge golfers of all abilities.



A Taste of Life on the Sunshine Coast

So what can a long weekend—or better still, a week—hold amid golfing on the Sunshine Coast? Here are a few of my highlights.



Noosa

Make your first stop the town of Noosa. Perched neatly on a beautiful expanse of beach, it reminds me of a beachy Aspen with a small-town, eco-friendly vibe. There's nothing quite like waking up at one of the seaside resorts to the sound of waves, and rays of sun peeping over the horizon. Get your day off to an energetic start with a run or stroll up the beach to the boardwalk that threads its way through the National Park, tracing the coast and giving glimpses of small inlets and coves where surfers enjoy their morning ritual. Finish with a dip in the ocean and you are revived, fresh, and ready for a day of discovery.

For breakfast, my favorite option is to head to Aromas on Hastings Street, a Noosa institution. With the aura of a Parisian café, Aromas is designed for sitting and taking life slow. You can choose an organic smoothie and bircher muesli, or more hearty options, with designer plates of eggs, bacon, grainy toast and “mushies.” Enjoy with a seriously crafted cappuccino or flat white while you people-watch alongside locals catching up on news with the local paper.

Devils Kitchen, Noosa National Park, Queensland.

Hastings Street is Noosa's "strip." On one side, cafés and restaurants spill onto the sand, the line between bathers and diners indistinct. Daytime is a mecca of shopping for all tastes. Edgy beach boutiques meet international designers, local artisans show off their jewelry and crafts, while children grasp their parents' hands, their chins dripping with handmade ice cream. The wide, tree-lined walkways attract the local bush turkeys, which wobble their way among the shoppers, oblivious, and providing amusement for visitors.

Local mixologists pride themselves on foraging local ingredients, of which there are many. Start your night at the award-winning Miss Money Penny's, which pairs its ultra-creative cocktails with Mediterranean cuisine, and even offers mixology courses. Dine at the casually chic Berardo's on the Beach or Bistro C, where you'll enjoy creative local cuisine. For a romantic moonlit dinner, try Sails Restaurant, whose white tablecloths and flickering candles provide a dreamy foreground to the lull of the rolling waves. No matter where you dine, you can be assured the fish will be fabulously fresh, the oysters gleaming, and scallops tasting of

the ocean. Grass-fed lamb and beef come from the lush green hills surrounding the town. Local exotic flavors such as ginger, kaffir lime, and saffron that infuse the cuisine with Asian notes give chefs fodder for playfulness. Don't leave without enjoying a simple surfside beer-battered fish and chips before diving into the ocean to wash off your fingers. A Noosa must.

River Cruisin'

If you're a nature lover, one of the many cruises is a must. Local charter boats offer a variety of experiences, including a few hours puttering on the canals and waterways to "ooh and ahh" at the amazing architecture, spot native birds and wildlife, and take a short fauna walk. And be assured, your morning or afternoon tea on the boat is like you've gone

home to your grandmother and you're the favorite — it's quite the spread with the tropical fruit, scones and "biscuits" (aka cookies), tea, coffee, and cold beverages, served up with a string of jokes and local facts from the captain. Noosa Ferries Eco Cruises depart every day from Noosa's jetty. A day cruise will take you to the Everglades Wetlands, which, like Florida's, have earned the title of UNESCO Biosphere of Global Significance for untouched rich history and natural beauty. Here a true Aussie BBQ will be the order of the day.





Family Fun for Ginger Lovers

www.gingerfactory.com.au

Just half an hour from Noosa, the Ginger Factory is the world's largest operating ginger factory, with a theme park feel featuring a 100-year-old cane train that puts its way amid the ginger forest, and an indoor, Disneyesque boat ride where you follow the Gingerbread Man around the world, *Pirates of the Caribbean* style. Find him if you can! Learn the entire workings of a beehive in action, wander amongst the huge variety of ginger growing in their beautifully landscaped tropical gardens, and, yes, purchase ginger-just-about-anything.



Market Heaven at Eumundi

www.eumundimarkets.com.au

Even non-market lovers seem to get lured in by the vast variety of goods and foods at the Southern Hemisphere's largest outdoor market, the Eumundi Markets, a short drive farther on. You'll find original artworks, sculptures, furniture, handmade toys, homewares, and skincare, as well as cutting-edge fashion and jewelry by local designers, all guided by the ethos of "we make it, bake it, grow it, sew it." The aromas of ethic and local cuisines waft through the air from produce stands, standout coffee and chocolate, and locally made ice cream, of course.

When you're ready for a break from shopping, head across to the Bohemian Bungalow, housed in a quintessential Queensland bungalow, with white louvered windows. It's laid back and art deco-ish, and boasts a menu and coffee list as bohemian as its décor. With names like "Stairway to Heaven" (sweet potato, roast corn, cumin and coriander fritters) and "Field of Dreams" (local field mushrooms and wilted spinach with goat cheese, poached egg and truffle oil on sourdough), and an eclectic mix of wicker furniture and engulfing sofas, it's the ideal place to watch life pass by.

Narrows Escape Rainforest Retreat

www.narrowsescape.com.au

www.spicersretreats.com/spicers-clovelly-estate

Weave your way inland through lush green countryside with panoramic views over the entire Sunshine Coast and, to the other direction, the outstanding Glasshouse Mountains, which look like a green Mars, their hills rising abruptly and disorderly out of the flat green plains. In no time you'll be in the quaint rural village of Montville, where it feels like time



has passed and someone forgot to tell them to hurry up. There'll be no fast walking here, and who would want to, anyway, with the eclectic mix of galleries, vintage wear, fudge and chocolate shops, and cafés.

The town is also home to lush rainforest and a huge dam, nestled into the valley. And up an unassuming driveway you'll enter another land at the magical Narrow's Escape Rainforest Retreat. Romance is in the air here, with the log cabins snuggled beside a gurgling brook and a spa bath perched to one side of the lounge room, beckoning. A hammock swings on the deck, locally made chocolates welcome you on the bed, and the towels are the most plush I have ever experienced. It all beckons you to relax and revive. And, the breakfast hamper is

beyond wonderful, with fresh, warm, morning croissants delivered to order.

For dinner, head up to the **Long Apron at Spicer's Clovelly Estate**, an upscale French Provincial-style boutique hotel. It's small and intimate, the service polished and friendly, and the chef's creations amazing. Chef Cameron Matthews draws from his local surrounds and farmers, foraging daily for local flowers and herbs. Even the honey, cheese, seafood, and meat are from the surrounds. I can describe as nothing less than culinary mastery what he then produces: some of the most exquisite dishes, both aesthetically and flavor-wise, I have experienced. Not pretentious but playful, with a passion to detail. This is a meal that will stay with you for a long time.



For more information on the region, visit:

www.visitnoosa.com.au

www.visitsunshinecoast.com.au

Getting There: Qantas fly daily from Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York and Dallas. Your vacation begins when you board, with that friendly, relaxed Australian service and seasonally changing food designed by Australian celebrity chef Neil Perry. The selection of boutique Australian wines will not disappoint, either.

www.qantas.com.au

Dessert at Long Apron at Spicer's Clovelly Estate.

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