

New York Cork Report

September 21, 2011

Local Food and Wine Celebrated at 2011 HARVEST East End

By Dave Seel, Long Island Food Correspondent

Saturday night was a cool one. Fall was definitely in the air for the 2011 HARVEST East End Fall Tasting. White tents gleamed against a slightly overcast sky on the fields next to Mecox Bay Dairy.

The event, presented by Food & Wine and organized by the Long Island Merlot Alliance and the Long Island Wine Council, raised over \$30,000 for East End Hospice, Group For The East End, and The Peconic Land Trust. It also offered those attending to taste some of the wine and food from the region's growing wineries and restaurants. As 1770 House Chef Kevin Penner put it, "This kind of thing wouldn't have happened ten years ago. With more producers out here each year, it's an exciting time to be out [on the East End]."

And exciting, it was.

Long Island wine was definitely the centerpiece for the event with some of the region's best wineries lining the walls of the intimate tent. A definite highlight were the barrel tastings from the 2010 vintage of Long Island Merlot and a few other varieties.

Winemakers all agree this is an incredible vintage to watch as that summer's dry heat gave the fruit good depth and some wonderful characteristics. Macari Vineyards' merlot barrel sample was exceptional and I'm excited to see how it develops. Russ McCall continues to make some fantastic merlots, my wife's favorite, and Shinn Estate Vineyards Nine Barrel sample was very promising.



I was also really excited to try Channing Daughter's orange-hued Ramato -- an orange wine made from pinot grigio grapes -- which drank clean and crisp. Unfortunately, I didn't get a chance to try Channing Daughter winemaker Christopher Tracy's newest project, a Lagrein wine from a Northern Italian variety, which he brought as his barrel tasting. Perhaps I'll have to trek out to the winery to give it a try.

Sprinkled throughout the winery's tables was food from some of the East End's top restaurants.

From Love Lane Kitchen's Local Duck Sausage with Plum Compote and Miso Mustard to Noah Schwartz's Pipes Cove Oysters with a Lemongrass Mignonette, local ingredients were highlighted and elevated by regional chefs. Fresno's Chilled Heirloom Tomato Soup with a Lobster Salad was a definite fan favorite, and South Fork Kitchen's Local Fluke with Yuzu, Meyer Lemon, and Cucumber was yet another indication that chefs are taking advantage of local foods found only a few miles from their restaurants.

The talk around the food was all about the excitement of having more and more locally focused food purveyors.

David Page, of Shinn Vineyard, raved about Noah's McCall beef tartare served at the event's Shinn Estate 10-Mile Dinner the night before. "You can just feel the vitality in that meat! It's like nothing else..."

As dusk slid into evening, the tents lit up across Mecox Bay, beacons of the East End's evolving culinary landscape.

The festival was a brilliant time for all to celebrate the place and people that have created this wonderful gastronomic experience. It will be exciting to see how these chefs and winemakers continue to push this community in new and progressive ways in the future.

There are good things happening on the East End and if you haven't made it out here yet, it's time you took the trip.

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A big thank you to winemaker Roman Roth for once again being the driving force behind the success of Harvest East End. What a great event for the local food and wine industry. Agriculture is alive and well on the East End!

Posted by: [David Page, Shinn Estate Vineyards](#) | [September 21, 2011 at 04:24 PM](#)

Congratulations for the success.

Alvin

Posted by: [Nuvali](#) | [September 21, 2011 at 11:27 PM](#)

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