

**EVENTS AT  
 A GLANCE**



**Mediterranean "Cruise"  
 Wine Dinner**  
 Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Embark upon a wine and culinary journey dining through the Western Mediterranean—a reception and five-course meal. We'll make "stops" in **France** for selections such as chilled seafood bouillabaisse terrine and *Chateau d'Esclans Whispering Angel Rosé*; in **Spain** for Baby zucchini flower and fresh fig salad with *Casa de la Ermita Blanco*; in **Morocco** for pan-seared yellow fin tuna mignon with preserved lemon chermoula and *Amazigh Carignan*; and **Italy** for shepherd rosemary-smoked lamb rack and prosciutto stuffed tomatoes with *Shardana Valli di Porto Pino Carignan*. To see the **complete menu**, follow this link to our web site at <http://www.MoZaicSarasota.com>. And while you're there, make your reservation for this special event. \$79 per person. Seats are limited!

**Saturday Wine Tastings**

Chef Dylan pairs tantalizing appetizers with exquisite wines every Saturday, 12-3:30 PM. Only \$15 and receive a **\$10 gift certificate** toward your next meal!

**Wednesday  
 Couscous Nights**

Enjoy a choice of many variations of the authentic, Moroccan national dish. A homey meal ideal for sharing with friends!

**New MoZaic Menu**

Chef Dylan will be adding some exciting new menu selections in August. Stay tuned!

**CHEF'S NOTES** by Chef Dylan Elhajoui

**Letters from Summer Camp**

When people think of summer they often think of camp, either with fond memories of making new friends and one's first brush with independence, or sad reflections of feeling homesick. As a boy, I had always dreamed of going to camp. But not entirely for the usual reasons.

Traditionally in Morocco, most families set up apprenticeships for their children over summer vacation to learn a trade and make practical use of the summer. Each year we focused on a different trade. Although you might think this is a great idea, to a boy like me it was just *work!* So as a way of escaping work, I begged my father to go to camp. A month of outdoor adventure seemed much more exciting than gluing boards for a carpenter or sweeping up hair at the barber shop.

My father initially denied my request because camps were run by a government that was corrupt at the time. But I didn't care. I just wanted to go. Thankfully, my father finally relented, so I began fantasizing about my big adventure ahead.

**Truth is Stranger Than Fiction**

When I arrived at Camp Kharzouza in the Mid Atlas Mountains, I was amazed by the expansive forest just waiting to be explored. We set up our tents, did rigorous exercises, fished, and sang songs by the camp fire. It was like Boy Scout camp in some ways, but in other ways very, very different.

Apparently, the entry fees were pocketed by the camp administrators, so insufficient food was purchased to feed the 60

growing boys. The camp chef fed us small portions at infrequent meals. We were starving! To compensate for the food shortage, I would collect money from campers at night, then get up at dawn and run 45 minutes on foot to the nearest village and smuggle in fresh fruit. It didn't completely fill us up, but it helped keep us going. However, corrupt camp leaders were not the only ones threatening our food supply.

**Pesky Macaque  
 monkeys ransacked  
 the tents and stole  
 our food.**

The area was inhabited by pesky Macaque monkeys who would ransack the tents and steal our food, so each night two campers were forced to guard the food tent. This was a daunting task, standing guard in the dark with the sound of wolves howling in the distance. When it was my turn for duty, the mixture of ravenous hunger, exhaustion from the day's activities, and fear of what might lurk in the darkness, finally got to me. I was tormented by thoughts of the food within the tent. I admit that I gave into temptation, snuck in with my fellow guard, and grabbed a large ball of cheese—half of which we consumed on the spot! We hid the other half in a back pack and returned to our post. Cheese never tasted so good.

The next morning, though, our crime had been discovered and the scout masters threatened to punish the entire camp—kid by kid—if no one confessed. As they began beating boys with sticks, the pressure finally got to my buddy. He fessed up and we got busted.



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**FROM THE CELLAR**

by Ken Kuiken, MoZaic Sommelier

Jim was my best childhood friend. We bummed around Hawthorne, New Jersey together from the time we were seven. As we got older, we shifted our attention from baseball and fishing to fast cars and fine wine. Never the cheap stuff. Jim's dad had a Rolls Royce that we drove into New York City, where we hooked up with our bartending friend, Jessup. He introduced us to great wines and taught us how to drink cognac. Even at college we pursued our wine education by starting at the top. This was right when the American wine scene started to emerge. We focused on all the first growths like Chateau Lafite, Château Margaux, Château Haut-Brion, and Stags Leap Cask 23—the 1973 Cabernet that put California on the wine map [voted Best Wine at the Paris Tasting of 1976].

Jim and I went our separate ways after college, but I stuck with the wine business. I just could never get it out of my system, nor would I want to. But it's the way I discovered wine with my best pal that shapes the kind of sommelier that I am today. Not the stuffy type who describes wines in obtuse ways in order to sound knowledgeable No. I want wine tasting to be casual, fun, and exciting; something you'd do with your best friend. My hope is through this newsletter that I can share my passion for wine in a way that's palatable for you, and you can enjoy some of our creative wine dinners and Saturday tastings with your best pal, or maybe some new friendships will emerge! ♦

## Tortured by Food

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I cannot overstate the integral role food has played in my life and this was no exception. When our leaders got a hold of us, they stripped us down to our underwear, laid us spread eagle in the dirt with our hands and feet bound to four stakes. They covered us in jelly—yes, runny apricot jelly!—and left us out in the hot sun for six hours! The heat and stickiness were torture enough, but the bugs that bit, stung, and crawled all over us were completely unbearable.

## Cooking with a Vengeance

When they finally untied us, we had learned our lesson, but we were *not* happy campers. Meanwhile, the pressure had gotten to the camp chef who couldn't deal with the food shortage nor the sea of hungry faces. He walked out. Desperate for someone to take over kitchen duties, the officials asked if anyone knew how to cook. With great confidence, I volunteered. I could have used my new responsibility as an opportunity for vengeance, but I was really just thrilled to be assigned to this new post...and happy to have access to the food!

## My Debut as a "Chef"

I left the jelly incident behind me and focused on my mission of cooking for the boys for the rest of the month. Although the truth was that I had *never* actually cooked by myself before, I took my new responsibility very seriously and drew upon years of helping my mom and dad out in the kitchen. And I had a great time doing it! My first dish was a disaster. I cooked a beef stew so long that the onions and potatoes had disintegrated into a soupy mess! Eventually, I figured out what I was doing and the boys were happy with their new chef!

Twenty years later, I started a real apprenticeship program in Colorado and worked events where I cooked for thousands, but that is another story for another newsletter. Until then, have a great and memorable summer! ♦



## FOOD • AND • CULTURE

This section is devoted to books, art, music, and movies that may have something to do with food [either as the main or secondary focus]. Food subplots are often our favorites. Feel free to email us suggestions at [mozaic-sarasota@gmail.com](mailto:mozaic-sarasota@gmail.com). Written by Anne Meskey Elhajoui.

I was hanging out at a Starbucks recently to enjoy both chai and solitude, perusing their haphazard book shelf. I picked up *Anything Considered* by Peter Mayle only because it had a place setting on the Art Deco cover. I knew nothing of the plot but was immediately hooked by this fun and crazy caper surrounding the acquisition of the scientific secrets of farming french truffles. The bonus is that it takes place in the homeland of MoZaic's cuisine du Midi, the Western Mediterranean! It's an exciting tale culminating in a great chase between the Sicilian and Corsican Mafia, a British chap who "suffers from optimism", a beautiful and powerful New Yorker, and monks and villagers in a quaint French village, all of whom will fight to the death for the briefcase holding the secrets. Throughout the novel are delightful dinners in restaurants serving food that is near and dear to our hearts. It's a feast.

## THE WINDOW SEAT

*The Window Seat* is our monthly feature celebrating some of the great people who visit MoZaic [MoZ]. Our favorite part of operating a restaurant is the wonderful people we get to meet every day. Since this is our premier issue of *MoZaiConnections*, we'd like to acknowledge **Carl** and **Mary Burst** who worked hard to be our very **first guests** on December 12, 2008 [not an easy task with all the delays!]. We thank them for their standing reservation for EVERY upcoming wine dinner and celebrating their 27th anniversary with us. It's always a pleasure to see **Pam Marwede** and **Captain Wayne** come through our door. They frequent MoZ and love to chat with Chef Dylan about the global groove and exchange musical discoveries. Thanks to **Michelle** and **Christian Spycher** who hold the record for most visits to MoZ—that officially makes you family! MoZ regulars, **Gigi and Davide**, brought Sarasota Film Festival guests **Stanley Tucci** and **Steve Buscemi** to hang out after hours—a fun surprise. Also on the celebrity front, **Maria Sharapova** boasted about MoZaic on her blog entry on Feb. 5, 2009: "You should definitely visit MoZaic...Highly recommend it!" While actress/author **Robin Givens** stopped by for dinner a couple times this month. Everyone who dines with us is a V.I.P. and we'll keep you posted on the goings-on of more of our MoZ friends in the next issue!



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## A NIGHT AT MOZAIC

by Teresa Tilden

My husband and I went out on a warm night in late spring to dine at MoZaic. We like to eat out and do fairly often, so we were excited to try a new place, but a little nervous too because we had just recently met the owners, Anne and Dylan. *What if we don't like the food or we have a bad experience?* we wondered. *What will we say?* We decided it was worth the risk, though, because we had heard such great reviews of the restaurant. Plus we had a free dessert certificate in hand!

It was almost dark when we walked into the colorful dining room accented by warm orange cinnamon walls and Anne's modern art. The hostess was welcoming, the restaurant bustling and active, but not overcrowded, and we were seated upstairs right away.

Our wait staff was pleasant and always ready. Jesse and I ordered the baby arugula salad and agreed that it was by far the freshest and possibly most delicious salad we had ever eaten. It tasted as if it had just been picked from the garden. The goat cheese was delightful, light and tasty and also fresh as can be.

The main course came next. Jesse had the sea bass and I had the ravioli. The sea bass was perfectly cooked and interestingly flavored—original and tasty. The ravioli also had a unique flavor, the wild mushroom filling adding a nice earthy taste, both sweet and well salted. The friendly sommelier recommended a wine that was paired perfectly with our meal.

We ended with the delightful Provence: the lavender-scented buttermilk panna cotta with moscato d'asti apricot soup. The tangy green apple sorbet that accompanied the dessert complemented the lavender nicely. Lovely. Perfect for warm Florida. Thankfully, we didn't have to fudge our review of dinner with our new friends. And we're excited for our next visit!

Please submit first hand encounters [either good or not so good!] to [mozaicsarasota@gmail.com](mailto:mozaicsarasota@gmail.com).

## ART@MOZAIC

Before opening last December, we were having trouble finding just the right art for the walls. So, as many of you know I asked my wife, Anne, to do the paintings. Since graphic design is her true vocation, painting such a large body of work was a huge creative leap. But now, her wonderful paintings line the MoZaic walls. To get the back story of each painting, go to our website then click "Mozaic Art Guide I and II" under Events. To finish the decorating process, Anne is working on "The Big MoZaic Mosaic" composed of many small paintings [see some "pieces" above] which debut at the end of July. —Chef Dylan



## TALK OF THE TOWN

If you've dined with us recently, could you please spare a minute to write a comment about your visit on one of the sites listed below? We recently won the *Diners' Choice Award for Best Food* on Open Table. Although we do not serve you in order to get awards or recognition, we realize that your comments are often what entices people to visit MoZaic. *Thanks for helping to spread the word about MoZaic!*

<http://www.tampabay.metromix.com/> then search: **MoZaic Sarasota**

<http://www.thisweekinsarasota.com/dining/>

<http://www.opentable.com>

