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Jamesport Manor Inn

370 Manor Lane, Jamesport 631-722-0500

By Henry J. Salmaggi



Alluring ambiance, attention to minute detail, and most importantly, fabulous food. That is how I would begin to sum up the "Jamesport Manor Inn" on Manor Lane in Jamesport. I was fortunate enough to attend the Summer Select Wine Dinner and Pairing this past week. The cuisine for the night was carefully hand selected by award winning Chef David Intonato, and Sommelier Kenneth Eberle.

Chef Intonato grew up on the East End and just recently returned to take control of the kitchen at the Jamesport Manor Inn. One of the owners, Matt Kar, is known in the community for running the popular Jamesport Country Kitchen for more than two decades.

Chef Intonato's menu for the night featured the freshest and finest local produce and fish paired with an array of wine that included vintages from the North and South Forks, Spain, and Washington State. The eye-pleasing and generously portioned plates showcased the finest that our summer's harvest has to offer.

Walking through the front doors of the magnificent, remodeled mansion we were greeted by Manager Coleen McCaffery, and her cheerful and knowledgeable staff. Walking past a quaint and inviting bar room, we were seated at a table next to a fire place in one of the dining rooms that was surprisingly packed for a weeknight.

The room was filled with well dressed patrons and anticipation over the food. The building itself exudes a feeling of old world excitement. It is designed to replicate the original 1850s structure that stood in its place until it burned down in October of 2005. Anyone with an appreciation for interior design needs to see this place. The walls are garnished with paintings for sale, all done by local artists.



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Now to the food. The amuse-bouche was Columbia River Salmon, with pickled Julienne vegetables, served over roasted peach, with wasabi aioli, and a balsamic reduction. It was basically a flavor explosion in my mouth that really set the evening off.

The first course was a Chilled Newin's Farms Tomato Soup. It was Tomato Granite, Bay Scallop tar tare. The dish was paired with Wolffer Estate's Sparkling 2005 Brut "Blanc de Blanc". The tomatoes were picked from the vine at the pinnacle of their ripeness. The soup and small bubbled brut were a refreshing way to begin the meal.

Next was Peconic Bay Lobster Cerviche. It was served with pickled jalapenos, and a plantain chip. This was paired with the local Chenin Blanc from Paumanok Vineyards on the North Fork. Paumanok owners and managers Ursula and Charles Massoud attended the dinner.

Just before this course, Charles Massoud stood up and shared with the diners some history about how this "mistake" wine came about. When the Massoud's bought the vineyard in the spring of 1983 he said they wanted to rip out all of the varietals they didn't plan on working with. The Chenin Blanc vines were on the chopping block, but the seasons changed before they could get around to removing them, so they decided to roll the dice. It worked out well. This is my personal favorite of all the wines produced here on the North Fork. This Chenin Blanc is clean with hints of grapefruit and pineapple, and has subtle notes of apple. It served as the perfect companion to the healthy portion of local lobster Cerviche.

Course four was Chimichurri grilled shrimp and rib-eye alambres, skewered with sweet summer peppers, cipolloni onions, and citrus vinaigrette. This dish was another wholesome portion of perfectly blended flavors. The shrimp were large and the rib-eye was tender and jammed with flavor. Lopez de Heredia's 2001, Vina Bosconia, Rioja Reserva was chosen to bring out the full essence of this dish. Unlike the old style wines that accompanied the earlier courses, this "modern" style wine had a very bold taste. A great wine with complex body that I think may develop even more over time.

The skewers were followed by a Moroccan BBQ glazed Grilled Beef Short Rib, Harbes' corn "Pico de Gallo" and crispy leeks. This was paired with a 2006, Ex Libris, Cabernet Sauvignon, from Washington State. This was also a terrific wine. It was a little on the fruity side, with a Bordeaux structure. It was very drinkable summer wine with spice that complimented the melt-in-your mouth short rib.

The sweet finale was fried summer plum ravioli, with limoncello gelato, and kissed with chocolate and peppermint. This was served with Macari's 2005 "Block E" Late Harvest Chardonnay. This was a beautiful way to cap off the summer meal. The "Block E" Chardonnay is an award winning local ice wine that earned a gold medal and "Best in Class" at the London International Wine and Spirits Competition.

After dinner I took a walk to the upstairs of the Jamesport Manor Inn where there is another dining room, a smaller room for private parties and the Rosalie Dimon Gallery. On the walls along side of the local oil painting and photography there are interesting pictures of the original building, the Dimon Mansion. There is one in particular that stands out. It is the mansion fully engulfed in flames right before it was reduced to ashes in the '05 fire. Just as the Phoenix in Greek mythology, the new Jamesport Manor Inn rose from the ashes, and is a hidden jewel on the North Fork.

I highly recommend the Jamesport Manor Inn for any food lover looking for an impressive fine dining experience out on the North Fork. You will not be disappointed in the quality of the food, the portions on your plate, or the pour of your wine.

On a regular summer day a lunch entrée will run you an average of about \$17.00, and an average dinner entrée costs about \$27.00. Keep an eye out this fall as Kenneth Eberle and owner Gail Kar are kicking around the idea of hosting an Oktoberfest pairing incorporating the fall harvest and locally brewed beers.

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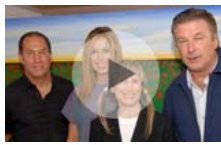
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