



# Winedog Speaks

## On The Road Again

Aaaaah...To be young, carefree, full of adventure and hungry! Have you ever seen 5 people riding on a motorcycle at one time?



Our great friends, Katrina and Jeffrey Crawford recently introduced my wife and me to a delightful young couple who are actually living out a fantasy many of us have only dreamed of. Their captivating story is in the form of a trip of a lifetime for anyone who claims to take great food and the cultures it comes from seriously.

I proudly introduce you to David and Alina (Alina is Katrina's niece), who are at this moment engaged in an adventure that I'm sure Jerry Bruckheimer would find tempting when planning next years' reality programs for television viewers. They spotted our family of Vietnamese cycle daredevils and snapped the shot for us.

On their web blog, [www.davidandalina.blogspot.com](http://www.davidandalina.blogspot.com), the couple does a dandy job of explaining their game plan. Here's the lowdown in their own words...

"A little bit about our trip - we are planning on taking the better part of a year to travel. Right now, our itinerary is going to take us to Korea, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, India, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Tunisia, Morocco, Portugal and Spain. We are approaching this adventure with an open mind and a good sense of humor. As with most things in life, we are expecting plans to change along the way. In general though, this is the route that we have planned."

I urge you to take the time to look over their insightful comments from the start of their journey from their home in Hana on the island of Maui in Hawaii on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007. They have already posted wonderful experiences while in Korea, China and Vietnam. Both have solid backgrounds in the hospitality industry and David's chef experience kicks in when he does a terrific job of describing the local ingredients, seasonings and presentation of exciting dishes at every stop.

I will warn you that you can easily become addicted to their blog. I found myself rushing to the kitchen this evening after reading of their recent experiences in Vietnam and frantically assembling my own version of one of the noodle soups they were describing. Here's my take on a soba noodle soup:

### **Soba Noodle Surprise Soup**

(Served 4 with seconds available.)

- 1 quart low sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup water
- 2 cups chopped roasted chicken breast
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic

1 tablespoon low sodium soy sauce  
3 bundles Roland organic Buckwheat Soba noodles (about 10 ounces)  
1 (4 oz.) can chopped Shitake mushrooms, drained  
1 teaspoon Sriracha HOT Chili Sauce (more or less to taste)  
½ cup diced green onions, 2 or 3 small onions

In a medium pot over medium high heat, add chicken stock, water, chopped chicken breast, minced garlic, and soy sauce. Bring to a boil and add Soba noodles and mushrooms. Cover, lower heat to just simmering and allow to simmer for about 3 to 5 minutes, just long enough to allow the noodles to soften and delicately cook.

Remove pot from the heat, season with Sriracha Sauce to taste and stir in the diced green onions just before serving.

As you may have guessed (that is if you're a wine lover) we are right in the middle of red wine season and that means hearty full-bodied red wines that stand up well to big, robust meals that are rich and hearty. These wines not only accompany those beefy stews, slow cooked roasts and juicy grilled meats but are perfect to use as marinades and to enrich a matching sauce.



You have a grand assortment of reds available to you this day and age but some of the top picks continue to be Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Shiraz, Syrah, Zinfandel, Merlot and blends that include these grapes.

Two great Pinot Noirs are produced by Chehalem and Robert Stemmler. The Chehalem is quickly becoming an Oregon classic while Stemmler gets his outstanding results year after year with California fruit, mostly along the Russian River.

If you are drawn to Aussie reds, check out Leeuwin Estate on Margaret River. They are wowing wine critics far and wide with their "Artist" Series Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon. Both reds result from severe pruning and maximum extraction to provide stunning complexity and depth. My only warning is that reds like these can spoil you for most others on the market.

I wish you the best this week and remind you to visit with David and Alina while they finish up their stay in Vietnam. I appreciate your emails and calls and hope you'll keep me in the loop when sharing those family favorite recipes. I'm continuing to compile the best of the bunch for a recipe book and would love to include your's along with comments about the special person who brought the recipe into your life. Be safe and I'll see you next time! Cheers.

*Jerry Allison, a native of Warren County in Southwestern Ohio, has been in the fine wine and fine dining field for 30 years in the South Florida, Chicago and Southwestern Ohio markets. He writes a weekly syndicated column, manages a fine wine business and is the executive chef for Winedog Fine Wines and Catering Services. You can visit his column archive at [www.winedog.com](http://www.winedog.com) and take your comments and questions directly to him at 888-288-0668 or email him at [winedog@winedog.com](mailto:winedog@winedog.com). He has resided with his wife and two sons since 1999 in the country outside of Morrow, Ohio*

