



Winedog Speaks

Let's Have A Block Party!

This past week was capped off with an old fashioned "block party" in my neck of the woods and I've got to tell you, we really had a blast and I would urge all of you to do likewise. I would point out that you don't really need a block to do this as our situation was actually more of a "strip of country road" and it worked out just fine.

Our world has evolved into a pretty cold place over the past 4 or 5 decades and I've personally lived in places that after several years I hadn't really met anyone around me. Thanks to the persistence of Mr. & Mrs. "V" I was solidly reminded that there are some truly warm and wonderful people out there if we will just take a moment to slow down and take notice.

Thanks to all that shared a bit of themselves Saturday evening along with some terrific homemade food. The menu included lots of conversation, some good jokes, a much appreciated end-of-summer rain shower, and a reminder that people were meant to spend time together without the intrusion of television or any other cyber-type electronic devices. No amount of instant messaging or emailing will ever hold a candle to the magic of my neighbor Ed's laugh or the power of loving welcome and farewell hugs. I think you get the picture.

From the looks of it, you will have several weeks of great weather coming up and a perfect opportunity to share your own "block party" experience. Grab the bull by the horns, fire up the grill and have at it. Simple joys are the best kind there are!

I put together an eclectic, multi-ethnic 'cooking by the seat-of-your-pants' dish for this past Saturday's shindig that turned out pretty well. Here's my version of a:

Slow Roast Caribbean Luau Mixed Pork Medley

(Will serve 12 or more as part of a buffet.)

- 6 pounds fresh pork boneless country style ribs
- 1 pound sweet Italian style sausage links
- 1 bottle Goya Mojo Chipotle Barbecue Marinade Sauce
- 1 (20-ounce) can sliced pineapple in juice
- 1 medium sweet onion coarsely chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped garlic
- Sea salt to taste
- Fresh ground black pepper to taste

Rinse and dry your boneless ribs and place them into a



large roasting pan; I used a disposable one that came with a tight seal lid. Add in your sweet Italian sausage. Place your chopped sweet onion evenly over the meat and mix your garlic into the Mojo before pouring the entire bottle over the whole combination.

Pour the pineapple juice in after the Mojo and then place the pineapple slices on top of the meat using your best “Martha Stewart” style placement for maximum visual appeal for when you take the cover off for your guests.

Salt and pepper everything and seal it up with either a cover or aluminum foil before placing it in a preheated 325°F oven for 2 ½ hours. When your timer goes off, remove the cover and continue to cook for an additional 30 minutes.

When serving take the time to cut up the ribs and the sausage into small serving sized pieces and remind everyone that the dish is a little spicy. Enjoy!



It's coming up on the time of year we begin to enjoy more red wines and there are some great choices to be had for both dry and fruity wine lovers who want to stock up at a time of year that many outlets are offering some really good deals. Labor Day kicks off the unofficial fall wine season for the retail industry and many retailers are offering deals to draw your business.

One of my great favorites in a fruity red is the German Valckenburg Dornfelder that has an incredible black cherry styling with just enough spicy tannin in the finish to balance off the sweetness and keep the wine lean. The Dornfelder grape was a hybrid created back in the early 1970's that has since become one of the most popular red wines produced in a white wine country.

If you love dry reds, well your biggest problem will be in deciding where to start. French Syrah or Australian Shiraz are two darlings in the red wine world given their economical prices combined with big fruit flavors and an “in your face” style that jumps out of the glass and assaults your tongue with rich fruity character and a smooth, lush texture.

Look for French Rhones when you are seeking Syrah and some great ones are also showing up as Vin de Pays from the south of France where the best bargains originate. There are a ton of good Shiraz selections out there and most retailers are stocking a substantial assortment of Australian offerings given the demand.

If you'd like to jump into something special check out the Rosemount “Hill of Gold” Shiraz, which is one of the finest I've even had the pleasure to enjoy. It is classy from the gitgo and provides a wine experience you won't soon forget. Another great producer to look for is Wolf Blass who's Presidential Selection is a consistently excellent choice.



Good hunting out there and let us know if you need any assistance in locating some nice wine selections. We're always happy to help.

I hope you'll keep those calls and emails coming. It's wonderful to know that you're out there reading. Have an incredible week and let's keep our fingers crossed for more rain and some cooler temperatures. 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 and take your comments and questions directly to him at 888-288-0668 or email him at winedog@winedog.com . He has resided with his wife and two sons since 1999 in the country outside of Morrow,