

Dinner at the Herbfarm in Woodinville

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As part of the going-away festivities for my friend, a group of us went to The Herbfarm, the local restaurant referenced in Clue I of Puzzle #3.

The restaurant is nestled in the Sammamish Valley, right next to the Willows Lodge resort and its restaurant, The Barking Frog. Less than a kilometer down the road is the Chateau Ste. Michelle Winery. All the high-falutin' wine-snob destinations in one convenient location. (Right behind is the Redhook Brewery, if you tire of the whole urbane ambience and just want a beer and a sandwich.)

Actually, the word "restaurant" doesn't do the Herbfarm justice. It's really a "total dining experience". The evening begins at 4pm with a tour of the herb garden. After heading inside, you are introduced to the evening's menu and the restaurant staff. (This restaurant has a staff mushroom forager!) Once the introductions are complete, the nine-course five-hour meal begins.

For posterity, I record the menu below.

A Fete for the Sun

The Herbfarm • Sunday, July 24, 2005

From the Water's Edge

Paddlefish Caviar on Cucumber Gelée

Westcott Bay Mussel Skewer

Razor Clams with Sea Beans

1999 Argyle Oregon Brut

Spice-Crusted Pacific Albacore

On a Salad of Beets, Wasabi, and Dill

2003 Rulo Winery Viognier, Walla Walla

Dungeness Crab, Chanterelle, & Lamb's Quarter Lasagna

2004 Dr. Loosen/Chateau Ste. Michelle "Eroica" Riesling

Troll-Caught Sockeye Salmon

Slow Roasted in Squash Blossoms

With Zucchini Strands and Sorrel-Lemon Thyme Sauce

2004 Chinook Wines Rosé of Cabernet Franc

Tarragon Ice & Apricot Float**Three Tastes of Muscovy Duck**

Lavender-Crusted Breast on Onion Pudding

With Black Currant Sauce

Duck Confit with Just-Dug Potatoes

Slow-Braised Leg on Morel Risotto

2002 Cougar Crest Reserve Syrah, Stellar Vineyard

An Herbfarm Garden Salad

With Currants & Sally Jackson Guernsey Cow Cheese

Sonata of Summer Desserts

Anise Hyssop Panna Cotta with Raspberries

Marionberry-Rose Geranium Ice Cream Cone

Almond-Filled Donut Peach with Lemon Verbena Yogurt Ice Cream

Brewed Coffees, Teas & Infusions**A Selection of Small Treats**

Vintage 1916 Barbeito Malvazia Madeira

Multigrain Rolls & Herbed Foccacia

Between the duck and salad courses, we stepped outside to feed the pigs.

The preliminary tour of the herb garden primed me to appreciate the extensive range of herbs employed in the various dishes. (We also learned herb trivia—daylilies are edible, as are zucchini and chive blossoms. I found this part most fascinating, learning about herbs and how the various elements were chosen for the dishes to come.) The garden salad, it seemed, didn't have two leaves from the same plant!

If you're considering paying the Herbfarm a visit, be warned: You need to make reservations months in advance, and the evening will set you back a pretty penny.

And we did pay the bill before we left.

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