

Mushroom Madness at Brothers Moon

By Mark Altom, *Vice Chargé de Presse*



1 Shibumi Farm Owner Alan Kaufman, Académie Brillat-Savarin Chancelier Délégué Georges Muller, Co-Owner/Executive Chef Will Mooney and Bailli Celia D'Arienzo.



2 Bailli Celia D'Arienzo, Sarah Palumbo and Ecuyer Denise Wiley.



3 Vice Chargé de Missions Joseph Fuoco and Carol Fuoco.



4 Bailli Hon. Linda Lew Woo and Gregg Hutchinson.



5 Chevalier John Quinones and Edna Quinones.

On August 18, the Garden State Bailliage gathered for a “Mushroom Madness” dinner at the Brothers Moon restaurant in Hopewell, New Jersey. Co-Owner/Executive Chef Will Mooney created a decadent feast that showcased mushrooms in each of its seven courses. All of the mushrooms were locally sourced from Shibumi Farm, owned by dedicated mushroom “wrangler” Alan Kaufman, who was on hand to describe the mushrooms in each dish, provide mushroom lore, and regale us with tales of traveling the world in search of new mushroom delights.

The only exception to the “bring-your-own-wine” request was the reception wine—Petra Unger Q Zweigelt Rosé 2012—which was procured from our bailliage’s cellar. This full-flavored offering from Australia was a fine match for the appetizers of house-cured salmon with “bacon” (crispy, thin mushroom slices that tasted remarkably like bacon); “king” cakes (like crab cakes but with king oyster mushrooms) with celery rémoulade; and shrimp and shiitake wontons.

The mushroom-centric meal opened with sweet-and-sour *pioppino* mushroom soup—a luscious, creamy concoction enhanced by potato and red pepper. For the salad course, mesclun with roasted shiitakes, red onion, Jersey tomatoes, deviled eggs, and shaved Manchego was dressed with *membrillo* vinaigrette.

Creamed shiitakes on grilled bread garnished with microgreens comprised “Shiitake on a Shingle.” The entrée of braised beef short rib with oyster mushroom ragù over *orecchiette* was followed by dry-roasted mushrooms in farro risotto with grilled carrots. Decadent chocolate-shiitake *pot de crème* rounded out the repast.

In a concluding ceremony, Bailli Celia D'Arienzo thanked Chef Mooney and presented him with a commemorative Chaîne plate. Académie de Gastronomie Brillat-Savarin Chancelier Délégué Georges Muller awarded him the Brillat-Savarin’s prestigious chef’s medal for his innovative, superb menu. For attendees, the evening’s take-home message was the remarkable versatility and deliciousness of mushrooms. ☞