

## **CHRISTMAS FOOD AND WINE MATCHING 2006:**

**Mary Dowey, Author of Food and Wine: Matching made simple...**

**Lynne Coyle, Wine Development Manager with Gilbys  
Alan Crowley, Master of Wines with Edward Dillon & Co.**

**Mixologist Paul Lambert, Finlandia Vodka Cocktail  
Champion and Bartender at Saba restaurant in  
Clarendon Street.**

### **Mary Dowey Pre-dinner**

**Prosecco Raboso Rosé Brut NV** (Marks & Spencer, €12.49)

Prosecco is currently the most fashionable fizz in town – and rosé of all kinds is also on a roll. With this delicious pink sparkling wine you get two key trends for the price of one (and a very modest price it is)!

This was my top recommendation in a round-up of proseccos for the first issue of The Gloss magazine in October. (It sold out at the time but is now back in stock.) Light, fruity and refreshing, it slips down so easily that it has tremendously broad appeal. A pretty shade of pink, it looks lovely in the glass – especially if you drop a frozen cranberry in the bottom. (Helps to keep it cold, too.)

### **Starter**

**Daniel Crochet Sancerre 2005** (Enowine, Monkstown & IFSC, €17.99 – this wine + scores of others are available for tasting in both shops all the time)

Sauvignon Blanc is everybody's favourite white grape these days (since the death of Chardonnay) and Sancerre is Sauvignon Blanc in its poshest form. The problem is that a huge number of Sancerres are disappointing – but this one, from one of the region's rising stars, is everything that good Sancerre should be:

delicately fruity (hints of gooseberry + grapefruit) with tangy acidity and terrific depth of flavour.

This is versatile enough to go with a wide range of starters, including smoked salmon, all kinds of seafood and first-course salads (a growing trend, to avoid Xmas overload).

Enowine asked me to select six of my favourite wines for a 12-bottle 'Mary Dowey Christmas Case' (on sale at €220). This Sancerre is among them.

### **Main course**

**Domaine de la Bouissière Vacqueyras 2004** (leading wine shops countrywide including Donnybrook Fair, Donnybrook; Redmonds, Ranelagh; Jus de Vine, Portmarnock; On the Grapevine, Dalkey; The Vineyard, Galway; Cana Wines, Mullingar; World Wide Wines, Waterford and others, about €20)

I'm convinced that the red wines of the Southern Rhone are the best match for turkey and goose with all their trimmings. Their rich fruit, smooth texture and warm spice notes marry in beautifully without making the flesh of the bird taste too dry (as Bordeaux or Burgundy tend to do). The luxury Rhone choice would be Chateauneuf-du-Pape – but the best of these are over €40 a bottle. This Vacqueyras from a fastidious producer, Thierry Faravel, delivers similar flavours from the same key grapes, Grenache and Syrah, at half the price. A very stylish wine indeed.

### **Pudding**

**Cookoothama Botrytis Semillon 2004** (selected SuperValu & Centra outlets, half bottle €15.99)

A lot of sweet wines are just too heavy and sickly at the end of a huge meal, but this Australian is a winner. It has lovely, reviving, citrusy freshness as well as flavours of candied peel and sultanas to tie in with the pudding – and, better still, it's only 11 per cent alcohol.

Tall, slim bottle looks extremely elegant, too.

### **Lynne Coyle:**

## **Pre-dinner drink**

### **Champagne Laurent Perrier, Ultra Brut Price: €55**

(Stockists: Cellars Big Wine Warehouse Naas Rd, The Vintry, Rathgar, Greenacres Wexford, Thomas Woodbury, Galway Joyces, Galway, Croughans, Athlone, Fields, Skibbereen, Lynchs, Tullamore, Wine Vaults, Portlaoise)

This champagne is unusual because it has no added sweetness. It is very ripe and round with lovely ripe fruit balance that makes it easy to drink

Delicious with smoked salmon, or can be drunk on its own because it is not overly acidic.

Good news for anyone watching their weight, Ultra Brut has less calories than other champagnes.

## **White**

### **Santa Rita 120 Reserva Especial Sauvignon Blanc ,Leyda**

**2006** (Price: €11.50, Donnybrook Fair, Cellars Big Wine Warehouse, Naas Rd, TESCO, Wine Vaults Portlaoise, O'Gormans, Portlaoise)

This is the latest vintage and it has just arrived from Chile. It is produced in the Leyda Valley -one of the best growing areas for Sauvignon Blanc because it is lovely and cool.

Gooseberry zingy palate

Good with turkey or pasta

## **Red**

**Portia 2004 Ribero del Duero** (Price: €19.99 Donnybrook Fair, Cellars Wine Warehouse, Lynchs , Glanmire)

This the latest vintage and it's just released.

A rich concentrated red wine, with floral aromas. It has delicious ripe red berry fruit.

A nice counterbalance to turkey with all the trimmings or the richness of roast goose.

## **Dessert wine**

**Thomas Barton Reserve Sauternes 2005** (Price: €19.99

Deveneys Dundrum, McCabes Wine Warehouse , Next Door Group in the South East, Donnybrook Fair, Lynchs Glanmire, Bradleys, Cork, Dicey Reillys , Ballyshannon)

A luscious sweet wine. While it is rich it's not cloying and good acidity keeps it fresh.

The grape variety is Semillon from Bordeaux

Great with Christmas pudding or trifle, also caramelised oranges or lighter desserts

## **What about if you are making mulled wine?**

People do not want to spend a lot of money on a bottle for mulled wine. She recommends an Australian such as the Wild Coast Cabernet Shiraz. This wine is nice and juicy so it won't require a lot of sugar to be added to it

## **Alan Crowley and Paul Lambert**

**Alan everybody likes to splash out on something a little special at Christmas time. You have picked some of the best champagnes for us?**

Alan is going to talk about

1. Krug (the best of the best)
2. Veuve Cliquot (Fabulous champagne)
3. Moet and Chandon Vintage

## **Paul, What did you have to do to win the title of Ireland's Finlandia Vodka Cocktail champion?**

Paul created three unique cocktails especially to win the title Ireland's Finlandia Vodka Cocktail champion - the Finlandia Orient Express, Kittila Krush, and Cheesecake.

Paul will fly to the world famous snow village of Kittila, located in the Arctic region of Northern Finland next January to compete against the world's best bartenders, each representing their respective countries for one of the most sought after trophies in the world of cocktail mixology.

## **What are the perfect Christmas cocktails?**

The perfect one for the Christmas season is the Orient Express ,  
Belvedere (luxury premium Polish vodka) Cosmopolitan and a  
Hennessy Paris cocktail.