

THE *quiet* (WINE) ACHIEVER



Long time Sutherland Shire resident Don(ovan) Ditter was recently awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for his services to the Australian wine industry, mainly as chief winemaker at Penfolds Wines and of course the winemaker of the legendary Grange Hermitage (now just called 'Grange').

Both a friend and colleague, Don Ditter, now 82, was Penfolds' chief winemaker from 1973 to 1986 and since his retirement has been a wine educator and consultant for Penfolds. I recall Don saying that "everyday is a new adventure because every bottle of wine you open is different and interesting".

Don Ditter, who started with Penfolds as a laboratory assistant at 16 at the Magill winery in Adelaide in December 1942, grew up in the Barossa Valley where he met his lovely and supportive wife June. Don served in the air force in World War II then studied oenology at Roseworthy Agricultural College in South Australia, graduating with first class honours.

Don worked under Max Schubert, who introduced the first vintage of Grange Hermitage to Australia in 1951 – a wine that was made under some secrecy. The stable of wines that Don was responsible for making included 12 vintages of Penfolds Grange (1973-1986), developed Magill Estate Shiraz and produced 10 vintages of Bin 707 Cabernet Sauvignon, plus 14 vintages of St Henri Shiraz.

Don produced perhaps two of the best wines ever made, namely, the 1986 Grange Hermitage, which was rated by US wine expert Robert Parker Junior at 99 plus per cent out of 100 and the 1976 Grange, which he also helped produce.



Don(ovan) Ditter

Join the Alternative Palate Wine Club

The Alternative Plate Wine Club has proven very successful and we want everyone who has been considering joining a wine club to consider our club. It works just like every other wine club in that members receive a regular delivery of a dozen special select boutique bottles of wine every three months. You can choose from a Mixed, Red or White dozen.

Are there freight costs?

No. Your order is delivered free Australia-wide.

How do I join the Wine Club?

Just send an email to info@thealterantivepalate.com.au and we will send you a Membership Form - it's that easy!

Greg Bondar

Food and Wine Editor



WINE OF THE MONTH

Koonunga Hill Seventy Six Shiraz Cabernet was released from the 2006 vintage, thirty years after the original wine, and pays homage to a remarkable, long-lived style. It is a refined version of its stablemate and shows "extra dimension and complexity." Koonunga Hill Seventy Six Shiraz Cabernet is made for current drinking, or, like all Koonunga Hill red wines, will also benefit from a few years of extra bottle age. Readily available at most retail liquor outlets for under \$20.00

Kalevu

RESTAURANT – **RARE** FIND IN THE SHIRE

When next you are driving south and into the 'Shire' – the affectionate name given to those residing in the Sutherland Shire – make time to experience the culinary delights to be had at what is one of the most progressive restaurants in suburban Sydney.

Chef and owner Chris Pennells (pictured) has done a magnificent job in creating an exciting and creative menu alongside a modern comfortable décor. The ambience is congenial with dimmed seductive lighting making it an ideal dinner venue for that special occasion. Chris was trained at some of the best restaurants in Sydney including Summer Salt at Cronulla and Guillaume at Bennelong (Opera House).

Locals and visitors are greeted by very attentive and friendly staff and it is not long before the first course comes



out from a small but functional kitchen. The high quality in taste and presentation could be likened very much to a 'hatted' restaurant without the high price.

Whilst modern Australian cuisine is an apt description for Kalevu the a-la-carte menu and the small blackboard selection offers diners an outstanding selection of tastes and flavours. The duck is a must whilst the barramundi is a treat for those who like a touch of the exotic flavors. Interesting salad side plate offers Persian fetta with mandarin and rocket sauce.

For the entrée you must try the black pudding and pumpkin ravioli or the seafood tasting plate and for the mains the twice roasted duck, vanilla bean mash with cassia glaze and wakame or the crispy barramundi with celeriac purée, pistachio dust and apple marshmallow are both a real treat. The menu changes every couple of months, again showing the culinary talents of the Chef Chris.

The two courses mid-week special (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) at \$42.00 per head is a diners delight with a workable wine list or if you prefer BYO.



Visit Kalevu at
www.kalevurestaurant.com.au

