

Our Hunt for Red Stag

THE TASTING PANEL'S Anthony Dias Blue and Meridith May recently invited three of Southern California's top chefs—Mary Sue Milliken of Border Grill and Ciudad, Warren Schwartz of Westside Tavern and Neal Fraser of Grace and BLD—to their weekly HAPPY HOUR radio show on Los Angeles CBS-affiliate station KFWB 980. The top toques were introduced to Red Stag bourbon, a four-year-old Jim Beam bourbon infused with natural black cherry flavors.

Each chef was challenged to come up with a dish inspired by the whiskey. Milliken chose a duck dish, Fraser matched the bourbon with roast pork and Schwartz, with his background in cooking game from his old digs at Saddle Peak Lodge, came up with venison, its accompanying sauce made from Red Stag.

During their recent visit to the HAPPY HOUR radio show, Neal Fraser of Grace and BLD and Warren Schwartz of Westside Tavern flank co-host Meridith May.



Mary Sue Milliken of The Border Grill and Ciudad with Anthony Dias Blue.



Petrossian Opens Latest Boutique and Café in Los Angeles

Owner Armen Petrossian and his son Alexandre were on-hand for the opening of Petrossian Paris Boutique and Café in West Hollywood, CA, on May 27. The gourmet shop sells Petrossian's extraordinary selection of farmed and sustainable caviars and other gourmet foods, as well as choice wines; the café features all-day service and a menu showcasing the Petrossian caviar collection. The opening marks Petrossian's 20th anniversary on the West Coast, in an expanded location re-designed by David Davis. "We have similar Boutique and Café locations in Paris, Monaco, New York and Las Vegas," notes Alexandre Petrossian. "This one is the baby." —David Gadd

Alexandre and Armen Petrossian at the opening.

Bear with Me

Timothy Carl's Ph.D. may be in genetics, but he's also a huge history buff. The St. Helena native hails from a family of six generations of California grape growers, and he also happened to marry into a family that has been toiling the vineyards as growers for four generations, with coveted property from Oakville to Rutherford.

"I'm a big fan of Sonoma County's diversity, soil types, weather and geography," the Knight's Valley resident told THE TASTING PANEL on his recent visit to our office. The concept behind Carl's Huge Bear label was to stay small in volume, but have the ability to explore Sonoma County.

Looking up his ancestors in the Healdsburg archives (his family tree in California dates back to the 1820s), Carl discovered a headline that stopped him in his tracks: *Huge Bear Attacks Knights Valley*. "I knew it right then, that was the name for our wines," Carl points out, adding that the Knight's Valley appellation plays an important role in the terroir sourced for Huge Bear, which is fiercely gaining cult status.



Dr. Timothy Carl pours us the soft, plush Huge Bear 2006 Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon. It grows with tobacco and cedar but delivers a core of cherry and chocolate. SRP \$55.