



The Ram and Ewe

Phone (403) 337-2800 * Fax(403)337-2418 * E-mail pat@pasu.com

All articles copyrighted to PaSu Farm *Web Page www.pasu.com

Aug. 2004

Volume 35

PaSu Farm

Shopping for a new countrycontinued.

The rest of the Canadian tour was relatively uneventful with the following exception.

Sue, having visited Lake Louise on her previous visit in 1968 was insistent that I should visit this Mecca of turquoise lake and mountain glaciers that, to her, was the quintessential panorama of the Canadian Rockies. So, on a very cold day late in November, we caught the bus from Calgary and arrived in Lake Louise at about eleven in the morning. It was snowing and bitterly cold.

We set about the task of finding a bus or taxi that would take us to the Lake only to be informed that the Chateau was closed at this time of the year because there was nothing to see.

Well, most reasonable people would find a cozy restaurant and sit it out waiting for a bus from Vancouver that would take them back to Calgary. Not my Sue. She insisted that we walk up as she felt it was essential that I should experience this Canadian gem. The walk was long, uphill and nasty. At last the formidable hulk of an imposing structure came in and out of view as the snow swirled around in near blizzard conditions. There was no turquoise lake. Just an ugly building in front of which was a flat expanse which disappeared into the grey and white amorphous vista of swirling snow. Sue was devastated. She, like me, had never experienced a Canadian winter and we had both anticipated seeing a lake and mountains. The trek back was at least downhill.

We traveled back to Calgary and onto Edmonton. From there it was a long bus haul to Toronto where we visited with family. Then a trip to Quebec City and finally back to New York where we caught a flight to Luxembourg and the start our French adventure.

We rented a vehicle at Luxembourg and it was our intention to travel down to Lyon, across the centre of France to Bordeaux, from there to Saint-Emilion, Tours, Paris and back to Luxembourg. We had been very thrifty with our money in Canada in the anticipation that we would loosen the purse strings and indulge ourselves in the gastronomic delights of French cuisine and superb wines.

We arrived at Nancy, a stones throw east of Strasbourg, at about six in the evening and found a charming rustic inn that perfectly epitomized all our expectations of French culture. The stone building was old with high ceilings. Our room had wooden shuttered windows and balconies overlooking an apple orchard. Antiques were everywhere and we had the most welcoming four-poster-bed in our spacious room. Supper, we were told, would be served at seven and the chef was renowned for his haute-cuisine.

We couldn't wait.

After refreshing ourselves we hurried down in eager anticipation of our first meal in France. Although, my memory does not recall all the courses or the wine for that anticipated meal, I do remember the entrée. In fact, it was so memorable, that neither Sue nor I have ever forgotten it.

Our server for the evening was the lady who greeted us and presumably owned the establishment. She was typically arrogant French but pleasant none-the-less. With a triumphant flourish she placed the piece de resistance in front of Sue and I announcing that it was andouillettes, the specialty of the region. There on an elegant white and gold rimmed plate were two black sausages garnished with a sprig of fresh herbs and dressed with a sauce. For those of you who do not know what an 'andouillettes' is let me give you the definition as it appears in the Larousse Gastronomique. A type of sausage made from pork intestines, with the addition of pork stomach and calf mesentery precooked in stock or milk and packed into a skin and smoked over beech wood for up to two months.

The flourish of the presentation coupled with the anticipation of trying the regional specialty was only slightly marred by the strong smell of dog doo-doo which I assumed the lady had inadvertently acquired in her foray to the garden to collect fresh herbs. The wine glasses were refilled and we were wished bon appetite. We toasted each other and began the meal. As the fork began its journey from the plate to my mouth I was aware that something was unpleasantly amiss. Either the lady had left a substantial deposit from her shoes close to the table or I was about to eat something that suspiciously looked and smelled like what she had walked in. I hesitated for a fraction of a second before popping a morsel of the strange black sausage into my mouth.

When describing food we use elaborate terminology to describe the flavours of the dish we are experiencing. For example to describe a Cabernet Sauvignon we would raise the glass, revel in the hue, inhale deeply, take a mouthful, savor the wine and contemplate carefully before making such pompous prognostications such as; "This wine is rich in blackberries with overtones of coffee, a hint of tobacco and a lingering flavour of dark chocolate." However, it is amazing how you can cut all that bullshit and arrive at an incontestable conclusion and hit the nail on the head. PIG SHIT! Not doggy doo-doo or any other polite nomenclature but pure unadulterated pig poop in a black sausage casing with a strong flavour of smoke and possibly a hint of chicken manure.

Saturday Evening Fine Dinning Menu September

Duck Rillet
With Port Wine Jelly and Melba Toast

Chicken, Mango and Coconut Soup

Mushrooms and Prawns
in a crepe

Passion Fruit Sorbet

Entrée choice of
Rolled Loin of Lamb
Stuffed with Wild Mushrooms
Or

Atlantic Salmon
With a Wine reduction sauce

Selection of Baby Garden Vegetables

Crème Brulee

Coffee

\$45 per person

Does not include GST or Gratuity
Reservations Essential

LADIES NIGHT

Buffet Dinner, Fashion Show
and Guest Speaker

5th November

Cocktails 6pm. Dinner served 7.30pm

\$20 per person Reservations Essential

Does not include GST or Gratuity

Let us do your
PRIVATE FUNCTION
OR
CHRISTMAS PARTY

SHEEP MANURE

Dress your Fall garden with Sheep Manure ready for the spring and have a few bags in the potting shed for a great mix with potting soil. Phone first to make sure that bags are available or that there is a tractor operator if you are buying by the truck load.

Price is \$5 per bag
6 bags for \$25

In one definitive moment my father's severe autocratic upbringing at the dinner table paid off. With supreme control I valiantly suppressed the urge to spit the offending mouthful across the room and gargle vigorously with wine. Instead I did the incomprehensible. I held my breath, attempted to chew and managed to swallow as quickly as possible. As anticipated, this was not going to be an easy task considering that the offending half chewed morsel was unanimously rejected by my throat and some subconscious part of my brain, both of whom were genetically programmed to prevent any such offensive matter reaching the stomach and thereby threatening the survival of the host. My father's training and the conscious mind attempted to force it down, while the throat and the subconscious valiantly apposed such action resulting in an amazing display of silent yodeling. Eventually it was down. With supreme aplomb I reached for the wine and resisted the urge to gulp the glass down. I purposely avoided Sue's gaze until I had regained full control.

It appears from conversations we had later that her ordeal must have surpassed mine. Lacking my fine sense of smell she had been unaware that there was anything to be concerned about until she had cut into the sausage and experienced an offensive smell. However, I had played up the French cuisine to such an extent that she felt any rejection of the meal would put her at a massive disadvantage and define her ignorance of fine food. The self control I had displayed had been interpreted as an acceptance of this singularly horrible sausage and so she heroically persevered. When I eventually looked up I saw her trying to accommodate the remaining piece of her sausage, about three inches long, into her mouth in the perverse attempt to minimize her anguish and get it over with. Her strategy was to get it in, take a large sip of wine and attempt to swallow as quickly as possible without chewing. A singular feat that would have surely impressed the producers of certain questionable movies. Her complexion had taken on a greenish hue while her expression was somewhat like that of the ghoul in the famous painting called 'The Scream.'

Fortunately I caught her attention just as she was attempting to accommodate that fateful mouthful and saved the day for her. Our host returned to the table and was aghast that we had rejected and worse still wasted a national treasure of Haut cuisine.

The next day we stopped at Dijon, then on to Lyon and eventually a few days later we arrived at Bordeaux on a Saturday afternoon. We continued on west and stopped for the night at the little town of Blanquefort as it was getting quite dark. The inn we chose was situated on the main thoroughfare in the centre of the town. The establishment itself was quite different. From the bar ceiling there hung a multitude of stuffed animals and birds. The disturbing factor here was the taxidermy. It was atrocious. All the animals had a bloated stuffed look. Furthermore, some of them were suspended by their tails or by a wire around their chest and under their front legs so that it looked like a bizarre upside down panorama of heads and tails. This is definitely not one of those places that made it into the Michelin Gastronomic Guide. But we were tired and hungry. So we took it.

We had made arrangements to leave early the next morning (about 6am) to get to Chateau Loudenne, which

Shopping Notes Christmas

EXTRA SHOPPING HOURS

We will be open in December on Friday nights for shopping till 8 pm.

ALSO

December Mondays -11 am to 5 pm

The restaurant will not be open on these Mondays

OTHER LOCATIONS

As usual we will be at

Northlands Mall

Nov. and Dec.

Also

AG TRADE RED DEER

10th to 13th November

And do not forget

Spruce Meadows

Christmas Market

Nov.19th,20th &21st

And of course

CHRISTMAS

WEEKEND MAGIC

At

PaSu Farm

Years ago before we had a shop we used to have an OPEN HOUSE at the farm on the weekend. During the weekends in Dec. We continue this tradition by offering FREE Christmas cake and hot cider. Let us take the stress out of your shopping.

**OUTSTANDING SELECTION
OF NEW MERCHANDISE**

was being managed by a friend of ours. Fortunately, there was no fear of oversleeping as the mattress and springs probably predated the First World War and we slept on top of each other as we rolled down into the centre of the bed.

I awoke at about five having had a vivid dream that our bed was hurling down the Le Mans Race Track. As I lay there, trying to reassure myself that this was only a dream, the sound of racing cars continued. Perplexed I went to the window. There was indeed a stream of cars barreling past and heading west. The only explanation we could arrive at was that it was some sort of car rally as the cars were going pretty fast through a town and they were tail-gating each other. We thought we would wait awhile and let the participants pass before continuing. After thirty minutes it occurred to us that this was either the biggest race in the world or that there was some sort of catastrophic disaster in Bordeaux and the citizens were evacuating in a hurry. Either way we were going to be part of the event.

Imagine trying to orientate yourself with a map at about six fifteen on a dark Sunday morning and being caught in a wild rush of vehicles. As far as I could tell we were all headed in a westerly direction. Fortunately there was virtually no oncoming traffic as the vehicles were overtaking each in a leap frog fashion that would have made a Hollywood car chase scene look tame. The map was abandoned as we had no chance of stopping, slowing down or making a sudden turn. We were now unqualified entrants in an unknown road race that was certainly chosen for its challenging complexity, twisting roads and impressively sharp bends. Although there were no marshals visible, they must have been there somewhere controlling opposing traffic as we all flew through the few stop signs we encountered. Composed and controlled are two adjectives that you do not use to describe the French even when they are at rest. However, when they are racing the word impatient is just too tame.

About twenty minute into the race we came to some sort of pit-stop. Some of the competitors were parked outside a building and a few of the cars in front of us were peeling off. Praying that the idiot behind me would respect my left turn indicators I braked and turned hard left in classic racing form. We parked and entered the building.

Sue and I just stared dumbfounded. We were in a smoke filled bistro. Men were seated at tables and at the bar. Cognac, coffee and croissants seemed to be the staple fare. However, what was really disturbing was that we had either stumbled into a movie set or had inadvertently gate crashed a group of guerrilla fighters. They were dressed in camouflage and khakis with large impressive bandoliers. Guns were everywhere propped against the tables, bar counter or walls. It occurred to me, as it was still pitch black outside, that I might still be sleeping and this car race and guerrilla nest were all part of some French Alice in Wonderland.

We inched our way up to the bar where I enquired in as normal a voice as possible what was happening. The barman informed us that this was typical for a Sunday morning at this time of the year. Apparently some small bird on its migration route south passed by this part of the world and was considered a delicacy. The patrons/hunters

were fortifying themselves before the hunt. We were further informed that hunters outnumbered birds by about ten to one and it was important that they should get an early start so that they could find a good spot and have some advantage. That accounted for the mad rush on the road.

When we left the bistro the first pink tinge was appearing in the east. As the light increased we were greeted by a beautiful landscape of vineyards and meadows veiled in soft morning mist that clung to the low lying areas. Aspen like trees grew as borders or in small clumps. Perched in these trees, often only feet apart and in groups of two or more, were little tree houses which were obviously the hunters' blinds. Most of them were right on the side of the road that we were traveling. However, some were on both sides and often opposite each other. One can only imagine what would happen if one of the unfortunate birds were to chart its course down the centre of the road. By now we were able to clearly see the profiles of the hunters with their guns poking out of the windows of their blinds. If the Normandy beaches had been as well fortified the Allied Forces would never have effected a successful landing in the Last War.

On our trip to Paris we stopped for two days at my uncle and aunt's house in the valley of the Cher River which is in the heart of the Loire region. We did all the famous chateaus ate well and drank fabulous wines. A week in Paris and then back to South Africa. We stopped in Johannesburg and our friends came down to spend a few hours with us before catching our flight back to the Cape. It was the 23rd of December and there was a buzz everywhere. South African forces had invaded Angola and were officially at war.

Time to leave. On the 17th March 1977 we landed in Calgary and began our new life. It had been a successful shopping trip.

African Feast

with
David Thiaw
and
Domba

An extravagant selection of wonderful
African Food, followed by Music,
Stories and Dancing.

Saturday Oct. 30th

Cocktails at 6 pm Dinner at 7.15 pm

Reservations Essential

Tickets are \$50 per person

Service and GST are not included in the above prices

RESTAURANT EVENTS

CHRISTMAS DINNER THEATRES

Saturdays

27th November

4th, 11th & 18th December

Cocktails from 6pm

Dinner served at 7.30pm

Shadow Productions

Present

WE WISH EWE A MERRY CHRISTMAS

PaSu Farm presents an interactive murder mystery dinner theatre with Shadow Productions. You play detective as a hysterical whodunit is served up along with fine food. Keep your eyes peeled, ask the tough questions and be ready to laugh until your sides split. You might even win a prize.

Tickets are \$50.00

(does not include GST or gratuities)



Victorian Christmas Dinners



Fri. 26th Nov.

Fri. 3rd, 10th & 17th Dec.

6.00pm Cocktails 7.00pm Dinner

Once again we will be presenting our seven course, plate service English Victorian Christmas Dinner. The entrée will be a choice between Roast leg of Lamb and Prime Rib. To create a warm hospitable atmosphere our staff will be dressed in Victorian garb, candles and crackers will be placed on the table and the plum pudding will be flamed for all to see.

\$45 per person

Service and GST. Are not included in the above prices.

RESERVATIONS ESSENTIAL