

Seven winemakers from around the world to attend '10 Winemakers dinners | BVI News



From Right to Left: The Hon. Elvis "Juggy" Harrigan, Ms. Esther O'Neal Wheatley from the Fat Virgin Cafe, The Hon. Dr. Orlando Smith and Ms. Camille Robinson-Regis, the recently retired High Commissioner of Trinidad and Tobago to Canada celebrating the announcement of the seven winemakers from around the world who will be attending the 2010 Virgin Islands Winemakers Dinners. * Photo by Raj Jagdeo

VIRGIN GORDA, British Virgin Islands (September 5, 2010) – The BVI Charitable Fund of the Community Foundation (BVI) Limited announced last night at a special dinner at Sugarcane Restaurant at Nail Bay, Virgin Gorda, this year's selection of international winemakers from France, New Zealand, Portugal, Italy, California, South Africa and Germany who will be attending and personally pouring their wines at the 2010 Virgin Islands Winemakers Dinners which will be held between December 1st and 7th.

Mr. Ajit Mathew George, Co-Chair of the BVI Charitable Fund stated that the seven award winning winemakers who accepted the invitation to attend and pour their wines included Philippe Prost from Bouchard Père & Fils based in Burgundy, France, Alberto Chiarolo from Michele Chiarlo in the Piedmont region of Italy, Duncan Forsyth from the organic Mount Edward vineyard in New Zealand's Central Otago region, Dirk Niepoort from Niepoort Vinhos, in Portugal's typically port-producing Douro region, Shauna and Kent Rosenblum from Rock Wall wines in San Francisco, California, Miles Mossop from TOKARA Wines in Stellenbosch, South Africa and Phillip Ketterm from Weingut Ketterm in Germany's Mosel River valley. All the winemakers are volunteering their time and donating all the wine.

The names of these seven winemakers was publicly shared at a wine dinner featuring Indian food was hosted by Mr. George and his wife Dr. Sarah E. Brown and showcased seven wines from winemakers who had attended the 2008 and 2009 Winemakers Dinners. Among the 33 distinguished guests present at the dinner included the Deputy Premier of the Virgin Islands, the Hon. Dancia Penn Sallah, Q.C., the Hon. Dr. Orlando Smith, Leader of the Opposition, The Hon. Elvis "Juggy" Harrigan, the Hon. Keith Flax, and Ms. Camille Robinson-Regis, the recently retired High Commissioner of Trinidad and Tobago to Canada. The Rev. Rosemarie Flax gave the invocation and Ms. Lorna Smith, President, Rotary Club of Tortola spoke on behalf of all the invited guests.

This year's Winemakers Dinners will feature seven gourmet 5-course dinners and seven delicious 3-course luncheons at a collection of special venues throughout the BVI. Each of the 2010 dinners will feature five gourmet courses with each course prepared by a master chef and paired with two wines poured by award winning winemakers.

The net proceeds of the 2010 Winemakers Dinners will be distributed to YEP (Youth Empowerment Project); the Food & Beverage Management Program at H. Lavity Stouff Community College; Sailability BVI; BVI Special Olympics and the swimming pool project of Virgin Gorda Charitable Company Ltd.

This year's Winemakers Dinners include new partnerships with the Rotary Club Sunrise of Road Town, the Rotary Club of Road Town, the Food & Beverage Management Program at H. Lavity Stouff Community College and YEP (Youth Empowerment Project).

The members of the Rotary Clubs in the BVI will be selling a limited number of tickets to the seven Winemakers Luncheons at \$50 per ticket with 80% of the proceeds of each such ticket sale benefitting the member's Rotary Club. .

A new partnership with the Food & Beverage Management Program at H. Lavity Stoutt Community College will feature a unique five-course dinner on Sunday, December 5th at H. Lavity Stoutt Community College for eighty guests. Each course will be prepared by a visiting master chef who will be paired with a chef based in the BVI, with the assistance of the students and faculty of the college. Each of these courses will be paired with two wines poured by the visiting winemakers.

The young members of YEP will be working very hard between now and December 1st to create a piece of custom art work to present to each chef, winemaker and member of the press that is visiting the Virgin Islands for the 2010 Winemakers Dinners. Mr. George said that this wonderful blend of art, food and wine would be much appreciated by our visitors and serve as an excellent way to leverage this event.

While Chef Vikram Garg from Halekulani Resort in Waikiki, Hawaii will remain as the Founding Executive Chef, he will be collaborating with Chef Alexander Yates from The Restaurant at Leverick Bay who will serve as the Executive Chef of the 2010 Virgin Islands Winemakers Dinners. Mr. George introduced Chef Yates last night and thanked him for volunteering his time and talent to coordinate all the logistics of this year's menus and ordering all the exotic ingredients from around the world for the visiting chefs. In addition, Chef Yates arranged for Leverick Bay Resort and Marina to host all the visiting chefs who will all have access to the kitchen at The Restaurant at Leverick Bay to prep each day's meals. "This is exactly the kind of partnership that will help us make this very successful event become even more successful," said Mr. George.

In 2009, over 860 people in total attended the four dinners, seven luncheons and the VIP Reception between December 2nd and 6th which featured 74 separate courses of food, and 81 different wines that were paired with these courses. During the July series of the Winemakers Dinners, about 1,000 people in total attended the four dinners, seven luncheons and the VIP Reception, which featured 78 separate courses of food, and 87 different wines that were paired with these courses.

Mr. George reported that both the July and December series of the 2009 Winemakers Dinners were completely sold out in advance with a waiting list for each dinner. He also reported that all the lunches were very popular. The net proceeds of the 2009 Winemakers Dinners will be distributed between September and November 2010.

Richard Grosche, wine journalist from German wine magazine *Weinwelt* and manager of the international wine academy MUNDUS vini, will make the wine and food pairings for each dinner.

OHMS – which stands for On Her Majesty's Service – also donated the fine Czech porcelain and glasses for the five course place settings each evening. In addition to OHMS, a company that imports premium white wines from Germany's Mosel Valley and fine champagnes, the other Founding Sponsor is Allivictus. Martin Dindos is the principal; of both OHMS and Allivictus, which are companies based in Czech Republic.

The Co-Chairs of the BVI Charitable Fund are the Premier of the British Virgin Islands, the Hon. Ralph T. O'Neal, OBE and Ajit Mathew George. The BVI Charitable Fund was established in March 2008 with a \$25,000 challenge grant from Nail Bay Resort to help promote this destination to potential new visitors while at the same time creating new and innovative fund-raising events to benefit various charities in the BVI by attracting support from both outside and within the BVI. The BVI Charitable Fund is part of the Community Foundation (BVI) Limited. Information on visiting chefs, winemakers and the location of the dinners and luncheons will be published in installments beginning on August 9th on www.winemakersdinners.com.

For additional information including pictures from the various dinners and lunches in 2008 and 2009 visit www.winemakersdinners.com.

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