

Wine Bard

Confessions of an oenophile

Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival - Day 1

It's Wine Fest time in Vancouver!

This year, I have the unique opportunity to experience the Playhouse Wine Festival several ways: attending a press event, tasting at an industry event, pouring in a hospitality suite, and drinking at the large tasting event. Although I am not able to attend any of the [informational events](#), I feel incredibly fortunate to be able to experience the festival in so many ways already.

Last night was the festival kick off at Earls Hornby: [Get Uncorked](#). I attended with fellow blogger [Tiny Bites](#) and we shared thoughts on the wine and food, while she snapped some great [pictures](#) of the event. The event featured [Inniskillin](#) wines paired with Chef Reuben Majors delicious creations while wine maker, Sandor Mayer, shared about his unique wines. He has produced some fantastic wine varietals despite the fact that Malbec and Zinfandel grapes are traditionally grown in warmer and drier climates. We learned that Zinfandel was never intended to be grown in a Canadian climate.

The highlight of the evening was the incredible pairings! My favourite pairing was the Scallop & Grapefruit Ceviche paired with the Chenin Blanc. The way the citrus flavours exploded in my mouth when I tasted them together reminded me of something I had heard at another tasting: A good pairing is born out of two enjoyable flavours that become even greater together. I overheard someone asking for a jar of the candied grapefruit!

The Shortrib Crostini paired with Malbec was a close second. The lovely earthiness of the truffles in the canape surprisingly brought out the dark cherry in the Malbec and I adored the butteriness of the crostini.

The Marsanne/Rousanne was a real treat because of the limited release of this exciting varietal!

This was a fantastic prelude of what is to come this week and I hope you are as excited as I am to try out some great local and international wines. Especially Pinots as they are this year's theme varietal. If you haven't bought tickets yet, there are still a few available to select [events](#). I will do my best to blog about events as the week goes on, and please let me know what you think of events that you attend. I would love to meet some of you, so if you recognize me, do come and say 'hi'.

Buzz Bishop of Virgin 953 gives some great tips on his blog about [how to survive the wine tastings](#). There are some suggestions that I hadn't considered, and there is the obvious tip (to me, because I am slob) to wear dark colours. But, please, please, please, don't wear any scents to tastings— we want to smell the wines, not you.

Also, and most importantly: Please make sure that you have a safe trip home planned from any and all events that you attend. There are booths where you can get complimentary bus passes at the tasting events, and there will be lots of taxis drivers waiting outside. Drink responsibly. Cheers!

Disclosure: Over the course of the week, there will be some crossing of my two worlds: blogging and work related. I am not in a