

ON THE ROAD WITH THE GRAPE GUY

TUESDAY, MAY 13, 2008

[My Lunch with Martin Malivoire – May 5, 2008](#)

The invite came very urgently, both in person and by email. At two separate events at which I and Martin were attending, Martin Malivoire said, “we must do lunch so you can taste my wine.” A couple of days later the email arrived: “Martin would like the pleasure of your company at Gamelle.” Never one to pass up a lunch invitation I said sure, where is Gamelle and when? We finally settled for 2pm on Monday May 5th and so the stage was set.

Have you ever been to Gamelle? It’s a small French Bistro on College, just west of Bathurst. I met Martin on the street in front of the restaurant and we walked in together. It looked very familiar, like something from a movie, but I couldn’t quite put my finger on it: a long narrow restaurant, quaint and cozy. I sat across the table from Martin, my back to the door.

“We have a problem.” He started. Suddenly, from somewhere in the shadows of the kitchen out walked Moray Tawse. “The five families,” I assumed he meant [The Somewhereness 5](#) (Tawse, Malivoire, Norman Hardie, Flat Rock, Stratus), “Aren’t happy with the way you have been portraying us high-end high-priced wineries.” He said with a menacing grin, “and we want this to stop.”

Out of nowhere, probably from off the street, a younger man appeared, he clasps a big hand on my shoulder and sat right down beside me, he looked suspiciously like Moray. He sat briefly, then excused himself to go to the washroom. “I’m sure we can settle this the old fashioned way.” Martin said smiling – I nodded slowly. “So what’s your beef with us?” He asked, still smiling.

“I have no beef.” I stammered.

“We see it differently.” Suddenly the young man returned from the bathroom, brandishing a shotgun. Before I knew what was happening Martin and Moray had taken cover under the table, while the music of Nino Rota swelled on the Hi-Fi in the restaurant. I realized what was happening too late as the hot lead ripped through my body ...

This was the dream I had the night before I was to have lunch with Martin Malivoire at Gamelle ... but all Godfather references aside, it turned out that my lunch with Martin was a wonderful experience. At 59 years of age, and me much younger, we had a meeting of minds on such a wide variety of issues – not the least of which was wine. He took me through the current line-up of Malivoire

wines paired with a variety of nibblies and lunchtime fare. Some paired very well, while others fell a little flat, not that there was anything wrong with either the food or wine, but on occasion (as it ought to be the case) together they did not mesh. All-in-all the experience was delicious and well worth the time to get to know both Martin and his wine, winery and practices. Below is a list of 7 wines, currently available at the winery, that I would say are worth putting your hands on at all cost – buy enough and Martin'll make you a deal you can't refuse.

2005 Moira Vineyard Chardonnay (\$36.80)

2005 Gamay (\$16.80)

2005 Pinot Noir (\$31.80)

2006 Estate Gewurztraminer (\$25.80)

2006 Pinot Gris (\$18.80)

2007 "Ladybug" Rosé (\$15.80)

2007 Chardonnay Musque "Spritz" (\$19.80)

As for Gamelle – good food, nice ambiance – I had never been there before today and I quite enjoyed myself and would recommend the restaurant.

On my way home I was whistling a happy tune, my dream had not been my reality, and I was relieved. Suddenly I happened upon a roadblock, strange to come across one of these in the middle of the afternoon on Bayview Avenue. I also noted that I was alone on the street, another odd occurrence at 4:30 pm on such a busy street in Toronto. I got out of my car, "What's going on here?" I started to ask as I approached the newly erected guard hut by the side of the road ... Out came Shiraz Mottiar, Paul Pender, Norm Hardie, J.L. Groux and Marlice Beyers all carrying Tommy Guns pointed directly at me ... Fade to Black.

For more wine reviews and related articles go to www.ontariowinereview.com, while there sign up for Michael's free bi-weekly newsletter.

POSTED BY MICHAEL PINKUS - GRAPE GUY AT 7:36 AM