

PERFECTION IN PARADISE

By Judith Kellogg, *Hawaii/Pacific Islands Chargée de Presse Provinciale*

UPON ARRIVAL AT THE STUNNING grounds of the Hilton Hawaiian Village, one feels freed from the pressures of the world outside. The flowers and foliage are lush, and the stone pathways enable strollers to meander by waterfalls, fishponds, and clusters of penguins. This was the setting for the gala dinner on the first night of the Hawaii/Pacific Islands Regional Assemblage on September 29. This affair brought together members from the four islands of Kauai, Oahu, Maui, and Hawaii Island.

In the grand reception hall of the Tapa Ballroom, we sipped champagne. The spectacular evening was orchestrated by Kauai/Oahu officers Bailli Mark Monoscalco and Vice Conseiller Gastronomique Mirella Monoscalco. They had the enthusiastic support of Kauai/Oahu Vice Chancelier-Argentier Honoraire Gary Seibert, the Hilton's vice-president and managing director of the Hawaii region. It comes as no surprise to people who have worked with Vice Chancelier-Argentier Honoraire Seibert that he has been named the Hilton's "General Manager of the Year" three times.

Chancelier National George Brown, who lived in Hawaii for much of his childhood, was pleased to return to his roots to perform the Chaîne and Mondiale inductions and elevations, which he accomplished with flair and wit. Bailli Monoscalco paid special tribute to retiring Chargée de Presse Provinciale Julie Honda, who epitomizes the aloha spirit and has been a dynamic and gracious Chaîne presence at local and national levels as well.

In the elegant Tapa Ballroom, tables were decorated to resemble the Chaîne seal. They were covered with red tablecloths on which yellow bowls of roses were placed on blue-tinted mirrors. Even the lights were tinted red for our entrance. The ensuing meal was the inspired work of Kauai/Oahu Chef Rôtisseur Daniel LaGarde, executive chef of the Hilton Hawaiian Village. Chef

LaGarde has been immersed in culinary endeavors since age four, having been mentored by his chef-father in Quebec. This award-winning chef has cooked for princes and presidents. He has also appeared on television and in industry magazines in the United States and Canada.

Elegant, sometimes whimsical presentations, characterized the meal. Dinner began with duck confit and foie gras terrine served with pineapple compote and dragon fruit coulis. *Domaine de Baumard Côteaux du Layon Cuvée Ste.-Catherine 2002* accompanied this course. Vanilla butter-poached Kona lobster was assembled on a long glass plate to resemble a fanciful sea creature—complete with a long tail curling six inches off the plate. Plated with mango and crispy *tuile* of Kilauea black salt, this delicious dish was paired with Louis Latour Corton-Charlemagne 2002.

We then savored pan-seared veal sweetbreads with Hamakua mushroom ragoût and tarragon chips, complemented by *Domaine du Vieux Telegraphe Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2003*. Arriving next was orange- and miso-glazed *Dona kampachi* with truffled lentils, matched with *Zind-Humbrecht Riesling Alsace Rangen 2002*.

The intermezzo was sensory magic. Nested individual bowls of lavender sorbet with lavender sprigs were served amid erupting mist from a concealed bed of dry ice. Each table was momentarily draped in a dreamy, lavender-infused cloud. This contrasted with the robust entrée—a lamb trilogy—married with René Rostaing *Côte-Rôtie Cuvée Classique 2001*. Dessert was a chocolate extravaganza, comprised of pineapple-coconut ice cream with a bitter-sweet warm chocolate center, milk chocolate dome with *lilikoi* curd, and mint crème brûlée on macadamia-nut shortbread. *Domaine de la Tour Banyuls 2003* enhanced these treats.

The annual business meeting was held



1 Kauai/Oahu Vice Conseiller Gastronomique Mirella Monoscalco, Chevalier Sid Lee, Cyd Asakura, Susan Lee and Dame Sarah Seabolt.

2 New Kauai/Oahu commandeurs: Vice Chancelier-Argentier Hon. Paul Grab, Bailli Hon. Koen Witteveen and Chef Rôtisseur Guido Ulmann.

3 Chargée de Presse Provinciale Hon. Julie Honda, Kauai/Oahu Bailli Hon. Carole Brooks and Kauai/Oahu Vice Chancelier-Argentier Hon. Paul Grab.

4 Honolulu Vice Chancellor-Argentier Garrett Saikley, Dame Sarah Seabolt and Bailli Provincial Robert Lee. 5 Elevated officers and inductees. 6 Dame Elizabeth Brown and Chancellor National George Brown. 7 Chaîne officers. 8 Kiana Gentry and Kauai/Oahu Bailli Hon. Koen Witteveen. 9 Chargée de Presse Provinciale Judith Kellogg and Honolulu Bailli Fred Hellekes. 10 Restaurant staff. 11 Chocolate extravaganza. 12 Poached Kona lobster.



the next morning. After the previous night's sumptuous dinner, we were grateful for the light fare, which included heaping platters of tropical fruit. With Bailli Provincial Robert Lee ably presiding, regional officers and local baillis reported on the busy and productive year for the Chaîne. Sadly, Maui Bailli Honoraire Mitch Kysar stepped down, but he has a capable successor in Bailli Chris Speere, a Maui Culinary Arts professor. Other baillis—Hawaii Island Bailli Wilhelm Pirngruber, Honolulu Bailli Fred Hellekes, and Bailli Monoscalco—ensure that our chapters are flourishing. We enjoy the highest percentage of professional members of any region in the United States.

That evening, an intimate gathering enabled officers to introduce out-of-town members to one of Honolulu's most spectacular restaurants—

Hiroshi's. A master of Asian Pacific fusion cuisine, Chef Hiroshi Fukui created an extravagant seven-course repast while Master Sommelier Chuck Furuya told entertaining anecdotes, offered fascinating wine insights, and chose the perfect accompaniment for each course. Master Sommelier Furuya is among the world's leading authorities on the relatively new challenge of pairing wines with this type of cuisine. This dinner was a fitting culmination to a memorable assemblage in which our region's superlative culinary talent was showcased and lasting friendships were cemented. ☒

