

## January 2011

Monthly Archive

January 4, 2011

### Win Free GOOD EATS & ZINFANDEL PAIRING tickets!

Posted by John Cesano under [Uncategorized](#) | Tags: [Carol Shelton](#), [FREE ZAP 2011 Tickets](#), [Recipe Contest](#), [Win Free Good Eats & Zinfandel Pairing Tickets](#) |

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Yesterday, I wrote about the three day, four event Zinfandel Festival in San Francisco January 27-29, 2011 put on by ZAP, Zinfandel Advocates & Producers.



ZAP has made a pair of tickets available for me to offer to you for two of the events. First, we will be offering one pair of \$140 tickets (prize value: \$280) to Good Eats & Zinfandel Pairing at Herbst Pavilion at Fort Mason Center in San Francisco Thursday, January 27, 2011 from 6:00 – 9:00 PM.

**GOOD EATS  
& ZINFANDEL  
PAIRING**

One winner will receive the pair of tickets. Getting to the event is on you, but for my many readers who live in northern California, that shouldn't present any difficulty.

I wrote yesterday about tasting Carol Shelton's acclaimed Karma Zin and Black Magic Zin paired with Smoked Elk Loin with Raspberry Compote on a Manchego Cheese Crisp AND Espresso BBQ pulled Pork with Raspberry Salsa and Point Reyes Blue Cheese on Focaccia Crostini prepared by the chefs from Nectar Wine Lounge and Restaurant; and imagining at least 49 additional delicious wine and food pairings, each intended to showcase how well Zinfandel works in the kitchen, all at ZAP's Good Eats & Zinfandel Pairing event.

I mention Carol Shelton often. I sold her wines for years and developed a "house palate," I am predisposed to like what she makes; but liking, or loving, Carol's wines is easy. Carol was the top award winning winemaker in the nation over a dozen years, and she is recognized as one of the nation's best Zinfandel winemakers.



Carol Shelton recently wrote about the ZAP Good Eats & Zinfandel Pairing, “This is the BEST ZAP event—less crowds, best wines and yummy foods to try, and music to boot!”

I think each of the four events of the Zinfandel Festival are perfect, each different, but each exactly as it should be. Easily, however, the most enjoyable of the events is Thursday night’s Good Eats & Zinfandel Pairing.

50 wineries will be pouring Zinfandel, and 50 restaurants will be providing food created to pair with Zinfandel; Chocolate, mushroom, cheese, pork shoulder, pork belly, house made bacon, spicy beef tacos, al Pastor tacos, and lamb will be featured in some of this year’s dishes.

ZAP has provided the recipe from one of my favorite dishes from last year, Ruth’s Chris Lamb Lollipops drizzled with a Zinfandel Brown Sauce:



### ***RUTH'S CHRIS LAMB LOLLIPOPS***

*1 rack Domestic Lamb (yields 7-8 lollipops)*

*Sea Salt*

### *Fresh Ground Pepper*

*Generously season lamb rack with salt & pepper. Sear both sides of rack on a hot cast iron griddle or skillet for 2-3 minutes per side. Then place in 350 degree pre- heated oven for approximately 12 minutes for Medium Rare (internal temp of 125). Remove from oven and let rest for about 5 minutes. Then slice between the bones to create individual lollipops. Arrange on serving platter and generously drizzle with Zinfandel Brown Sauce. Garnish with fresh thyme.*

### **RUTH'S CHRIS ZINFANDEL BROWN SAUCE**

*Yield: 1 cup*

*1/2 oz. Olive Oil*

*2 Tablespoons Onion, finely diced*

*1 Teaspoon Chopped Fresh Garlic*

*1/2 Teaspoon Whole Black Peppercorns*

*1 Sprig Fresh Thyme*

*1/2 Cup of Your Favorite Zinfandel*

*1 Cup Veal Demi Glaze (available at Whole Foods and other specialty food stores)*

*Place saucepan on medium/high heat. Add oil to heat, then add chopped onion and garlic. Cook until onions are translucent, about 2 minutes. Be careful not to burn garlic. Then add black peppercorns, fresh thyme, and zinfandel. Cook until wine is reduced by 1/2. Add Demi glaze and heat just until it is melted. Remove from heat, strain through cheese cloth. Keep warm until needed.*

I hope your appetite has been whetted, and your creative juices are flowing, because here is what you need to do to win the pair of tickets: visit the ZAP page dedicated to the [Good Eats & Zinfandel Pairing](#) event, take a look at the list of wineries that will be pouring their Zinfandels, but take your time as you take in the foods being prepared for the event, and follow the [link](#) to look at recipes for five of the dishes being served.

Now it is your turn, clicking "Leave a Comment" at the top of this post, leave a recipe for a delicious dish that will pair well with Zinfandel. Recipe entries will be accepted through noon here in California on next Tuesday, January 11, 2011. You have one week to enter the contest. The recipe can be inspired by something you have previously seen or tasted, but the recipe must be original to you – recipes from your grandmother are acceptable, even recommended,

JohnOnWine loves grandma's cooking. I will look at the entries, and privately assign each a score from 1 to 10, based on how well I think it would pair with Zinfandel, and how inspired I am to make it myself. A bonus point will be awarded if you send a picture by email to [JohnCesano@aol.com](mailto:JohnCesano@aol.com), so the highest score I will give an entry is 11 points.



I will not be posting scores, so don't be shy about entering your recipe; but I will post the winner's recipe next Wednesday, January 12, 2011, and the lucky winner will win the two Good Eats & Zinfandel Pairing tickets.

Tickets need not be won, they are also available for [purchase](#), and this is a very worthwhile event to attend if you are able.

January 3, 2011

## It is January, which means it is time to buy ZAP tickets

Posted by John Cesano under [Uncategorized](#) | Tags: [20 Years of Zinspiration](#), [Evening With the Winemakers Benefit Live Auction and Dinner](#), [Flights! Stories From The Vineyard](#), [Good Eats and Zinfandel Pairing](#), [Grand Zinfandel Tasting](#), [Zinfandel Advocates & Producers](#), [Zinfandel Festival](#) | [Leave a Comment](#)

A year ago, last January, I wrote a decent piece announcing the three day Zinfandel Festival put on each year by **ZAP, Zinfandel Advocates and Producers**. Well, the new calendar brings us to the 20th Anniversary edition of the Grand Zinfandel Tasting.



The dates of this years **Zinfandel Festival**, themed **20 Years of Zinspiration**, run **January 27-29, 2011**.

GOOD EATS  
& ZINFANDEL  
PAIRING

**Good Eats and Zinfandel Pairing** kicks the Zinfandel Festival off in grand style Thursday, January 27, 2011, at Ft. Mason's Herbst Pavilion in San Francisco from 6:00-9:00 PM. At least 50 top Zinfandel producing wineries will pair their most delicious offerings with food created by 50 of the Bay Area's top restaurants and purveyors of tasty morsels.

Imagine tasting Carol Shelton's acclaimed Karma Zin and Black Magic Zin paired with Smoked Elk Loin with Raspberry Compote on a Manchego Cheese Crisp AND Espresso BBQ pulled Pork with Raspberry Salsa and Point Reyes Blue Cheese on Focaccia Crostini prepared by the chefs from Nectar Wine Lounge and Restaurant. Now imagine at least 49 additional delicious wine and food pairings, each intended to showcase how well Zinfandel works in the kitchen.

This is the ultimate tasting event.

FLIGHTS!

**Flights! Stories From The Vineyard** at the Westin St. Francis on Friday, January 28, 2011 from 10:30 AM – 1:00 PM is a seated tasting led by top vineyardists and winemakers.

This year, Joel Peterson of Ravenswood will speak about the Old Hill Vineyard, David Gates of Ridge Vineyards will speak about Lytton Springs Vineyard, Janell Dusi of J Dusi Winery will speak about Dusi Vineyard, and Steve Tylicki of Steele Wines will speak about DuPratt Vineyard, each leading us on a liquid tasting of that vineyard. Terroir and blending choices are sure to be touched on as stories are told and passions shared.

This was the event I learned the most at last year; although sitting for an hour at lunch after Flights! with Joel Peterson and Morgan Twain-Peterson by pure chance, listening to them share their knowledge, passion, and experiences, was a special treat for me.

EVENING  
*with* THE  
WINEMAKERS

**Evening With the Winemakers Benefit Live Auction and Dinner** Friday night, January 28, 2011 from 5:00 – 10:00 PM at the Westin St. Francis is your chance to play dress up and enjoy a sumptuous meal paired with wines from 27 participating Zinfandel producing wineries.

I have not attended this event, but I have heard that is a wonderful evening for attendees.

GRAND  
ZINFANDEL  
TASTING

**Grand Zinfandel Tasting** at Herbst and Festival Pavilions, Ft. Mason Center, San Francisco on Saturday, January 29, 2011 from 2:00 – 5:00 PM, with an extra early hour for ZAP members only, is

the big daddy of Zinfandel tastings. Roughly 200 wineries show up and pour their Zinfandels. With each winery pouring from one to a dozen Zinfandels, most in the three to five range, there are more Zinfandels to taste than is humanly possible.

In what will likely be an annual posting, I urge you to attend this event. Zinfandel is California's wine, which pretty much makes it America's wine (written with apologies to Oregon, Washington, Virginia, and Alaskan wineries not producing quality Zinfandel). The event is as big, as serious while being fun, as the wine itself.

Tickets, and more information, are available through [ZAP](#).