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South Central Province Charleston

# A Piedmont Style Italian Dinner at the Duncans

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Hosts of this Piedmont Style Italian dinner - Stephen and Dame Paula Duncan.



By: [Michael Poynter, Bailli](#)

**February 22, 2025, Charleston** – When a unique opportunity presents itself, one must take advantage while the fire is hot. Chevalier Stephen and Dame Paula Duncan offered to host a

special dinner party and the Bailliage could not refuse. Such was this February 22 occasion when on an unusually cool evening, 12 members of the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs Bailliage de Charleston, South Carolina met at the lovely Stono Riverfront home of the Duncans to spend an evening in a tour of the food and wines of the Piedmont region of Italy. The attendees for the evening were limited to ensure that everyone had the perfect seat in the dining room to savor the delightfully creative dishes and unusual Piedmont wines being served.



*From left, Chevalier Bruce Bingham, Dame Lillian Bingham, Vice Chargé de Missions Rick Konrath, and Bailli Mike Poynter enjoying a glass of sparkling wine.*

The menu for the evening was designed and prepared by Charleston's own Chef Chris Licata, who is a classically trained French chef and who also serves as Vice Conseiller Gastronomique for the Charleston Bailliage. Assisting Chef Chris was his daughter, Chef Christine Licata-Hoang, and Chef Anthony Hoang, both having flown in from Washington D.C. especially for this special evening. The wines were selected by Vice Echanson Nick Palmer and featured wines from the Piedmont region of Italy. Chef Licata and Vice Echanson Nick Palmer spent some considerable time in pairing the dishes with wines to reflect the ingredients, setting up a memorable Piedmont dinner.



*Vice Echanson Nick Palmer and Dame Louise Konrath enjoying a glass of sparkling wine.*

The Bailliage de Charleston is fortunate to have members such as Vice Conseiller Gastronomique Chris Licata and Vice Echanson Nick Palmer. Chef Chris specializes in French, Nouvelle, Asian Fusion, Italian Cuisines and Light Pâtisserie cuisines. He is owner and Executive Chef for Intimate Gatherings, specializing in creating unique personal dining experiences for private clients. He's keeping it in the family with his daughter, Sous Chef Christine Licata-Hoang and his son-in-law, Deputy Executive and classically trained Chef Anthony Hoang, coming home for the event. Chef

Anthony specializes in Vietnamese specialty cuisines and is an Experimental Chef for an eight restaurant conglomerate of the American Food Restaurants in the Washington area.



*The culinary staff for the evening: From left, Deputy Executive Chef Anthony Hoang, Vice Conseiller Gastronomique/Executive Chef Chris Licata and Sous Chef Christine Licata-Hoang.*

Vice Echanson Nick Palmer is not only a lover of wine, as evidenced by his being a 1983 graduate of the Académie du Vin in Paris, but he is also a lover of music. He has an extensive resume, including a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree, graduating cum laude from Harvard University, ultimately receiving a post graduate degree in Orchestral Conducting, a MM (Master of Music) degree from the New England Conservatory of Music, and a D.M.A. (Doctor of Music) degree from the University of Iowa. He's also studied at the Julliard School and a number of other highly recognized schools of music. His list of symphonies, which he has conducted worldwide, is extensive, but tonight we were fortunate to just have him be our wine expert providing excellent commentary of the wines served.

As guests arrived they were served a glass of Contratto 2016 Pas Dosé, "Millesimato", Metodo Classico. This Italian sparkler consists of 85% pinot noir and 15% chardonnay from 30 to 35 year old vines. This comes from the Contratto winery, which was founded in 1867 by Giuseppe Contratto. The winery is known as the oldest producer of "Metodo Classico" (Classic/Champagne Method) sparkling wine in Italy. This opening salvo was well received and gave everyone time to

mingle with fellow guests and to view the Duncans's wonderful international art collection, Murano glass, and sculptures that Paula and Stephen have been collecting for many years.



*First course – jumbo roasted shrimp with Chorizo corn cream and Cajun angel dust.*



*Entrée course – Roasted beef tenderloin, with sauce Bordelaise, pineapple Miso and Zinfandel fig sauce, Wasabi mashed potatoes and roasted asparagus.*

As guests took their seats in the beautiful dining room, with the elaborate decorative mural taking everyone to a different and satisfying place, Vice Echanson Nick Palmer and Chef Chris gave an overview of the evening's menu and wine pairings.

Chef Chris described each dish as it was served, giving its historical significance to the Piedmont region. Vice Echanson Nick explained the reason for choosing each particular wine and asked guests to give their thoughts of the tasting.



*Farewell to a wonderful evening at the Duncans: From left: Vice Chargé de Missions Rick Konrath, Chevalier Bruce Bingham, Bailli Mike Poynter, Debbie Poynter, Dame Dorothy Palmer, Host: Dame Paula Duncan, Executive Chef/ Vice Conseiller Gastronomique Christopher Licata, Vice Echanson Nick Palmer, Dame Lillian Bingham, Host: Chevalier Stephen Duncan, Dame Louise Konrath, Susan O'Neill, and Chevalier Randall O'Neill.*

At the end of the dinner, guests were invited to join our hosts for a fireside chat and were served their choice of a glass of Domaine de Chez Mailliard, Cognac Leyrat V.S.O.P. Reserve, France or a glass of Taylor Fladgate 1983 Vintage Porto, Portugal. Either one capped off a perfectly wonderful evening with friends.

This evening's [Charlestown Piedmont Italian Dinner Menu](#)

Vive la Chaîne!

Photos: Courtesy of Bailli Michael Poynter and Debbie Poynter

*Featured image above: Hosts of this Piedmont Style Italian dinner – Chevalier Stephen and Dame Paula Duncan.*

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