

Dinner Party of Fourteen

At the Notarnicolas'

July 2018—#187



(note: the writer of the email did not detail her contributions)

Dinner Party of 16-2 convened at the Notarnicolas' abode on a near perfect summer day – low 80s, low humidity, mostly sunny, and a pool. It had been four years since we last held DP8 at one of our houses.

Mark and Joyce adeptly coordinated the food and drink contributions as well as preparing for the arrivals. Joyce borrowed a table, perhaps chairs, and plateware to serve fourteen, while Mark tested out the smoker and turkey fryer. The early email, a testimony to planning, read:

- Monteverds: Dessert & Diet soda
- Teators: Green salad & Bottle of red wine
- Pisanos: Dessert & Bottle of red wine
- Karnes: Side dish (starch of some sort) & Sangria
- Dennis: 2 Growlers of beer
- Quinns: Fruit salad & beverage
- Mark is happy for the opportunity to use his smoker and turkey fryer.

Early arrivals tested the pool, enjoying a dip or a lap in the 80 degree water, chatting poolside, and watching the house's shadow cross the pool near 6 pm.



Early food included in-season cherries, as well as tortilla chips and oval chips for the two Notar spreads:

Pimento cheese and Hot pepper relish, each mixed with cream cheese. Early nosherers tried to





ter smoked beef brisket, enriched with Sweet Baby Ray's Honey BBQ Sauce, Pa's Pistols Sweet Hickory Sauce, and Ring of Fire Steak Sauce, was deftly sliced into foot long, half-inch slices. And, there was more: the five pound smoked pork loin stuffed with peach pie filling, almond slices and spinach, seasoned with a dry rub and wrapped in bacon awaited the same competent carving. The verdict among the three meats: a tie for first! Mark, thank you for your skills this evening.

not fill up on these tasty starters. Another pan of a Joyce creation – a Peach, Prosciutto & Brie Tart – combined layers of texture and taste.

A variety of drinks awaited. Deb's red Sangria bucket (almost a fruit salad by itself) disappeared by evening's end, as did Den's two growlers of IPA and Blue Moon, as did most of a Zin, Chardonnay, and Sangiovese Superiore. Add bottles of water and soda, and everyone's thirst should have been slaked.



Somewhere just before 7, the call for first course came. A Teator greens salad, topped with freshly picked tomatoes from the Teator garden, joined the Quinn fruit salad.



And then we watched Mark in action. The 14 pound turkey (4 minutes per pound = 56 minutes @ 350 degrees oil temperature; five hours smoked on Wednesday, three more on Thursday) awaited his nimble carving. And then the 12 pound, foot diame-



Deb K created a large bowl of an antipasto/pasta salad: Celentano pasta, pepperoni, salami, chorizo, cheddar cheese, black olives, Parmesan cheese, smoked sun dried tomatoes, onions, peppers and a vinaigrette dressing – a good complement to the meats. (On a regular night, this would have sufficed as a meal itself.)

Joyce's vegetable platter was filled with grilled zucchini, red onion, mushrooms, peppers, all of it marinated in a balsamic sauce and then finished with balsamic glaze.

By 8 pm, a few minutes into the beginning summer dusk and aided the soft waft of a breeze, accompanied by the remnants of

our liquid libation, we sat quite contentedly and could have gone home satisfied. But, no...

We knew what lay ahead. Lynda and Ross had placed a bowl of rich chocolate brownies to be savored. And then Kriss had brought two Charlene pies – a chocolate cream pie as heavenly as anywhere, only to be outdone, some say, by the sweet tartness of a red raspberry pie. Most of all it was consumed, almost as if we had not consumed enough already.

Nine-thirty was showing on the clock, the last remnants of dusk had been extinguished, and a few gnats were nipping at our juicy skins,



enough to remind us to help clear the tables and head home, and so off we disappeared in the contrails of a mid-July darkness.

Topics of discussion have melded together in the nether of the evening, never to be detailed. Suffice it to say, it was a top notch evening with good food, drink, and friends. A special thank you goes to Joyce and Mark for hosting the event. No matter how much we all pitch in, the nitty-gritty details still lie with the hosts and are so very much appreciated. I, for one, will voice my favoritism for this setup than one at a restaurant; we can chat and gab with everyone over the



course of the evening, rather than the nearest five people. It is work and for that we commend the Notars' efforts to bring the DP8 family together.