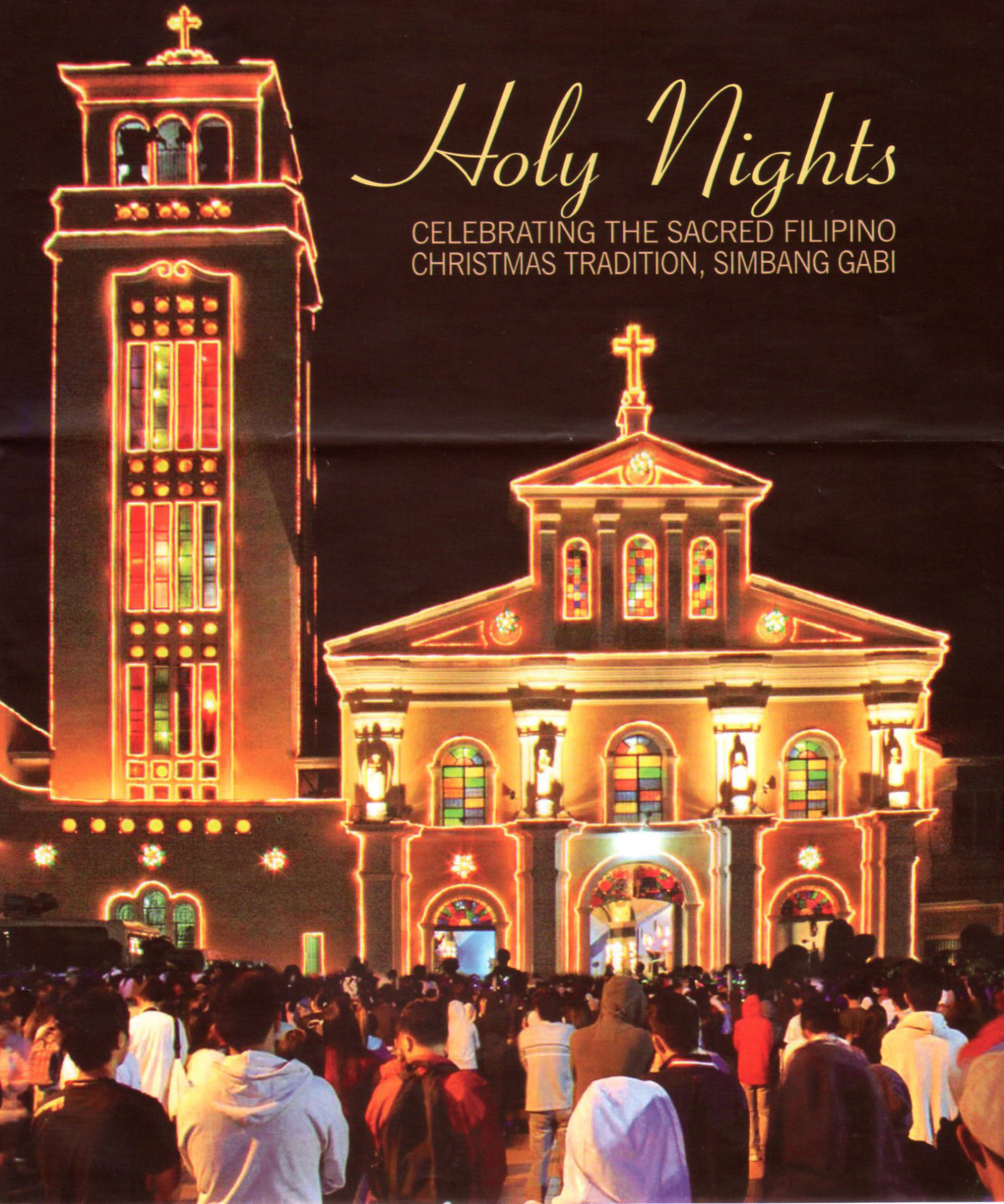


PHILIPPINE
panorama

SUNDAY MAGAZINE OF THE MANILA BULLETIN • December 14, 2014

Holy Nights

CELEBRATING THE SACRED FILIPINO
CHRISTMAS TRADITION, SIMBANG GABI



A toast to Champagne!



Tita Trillo, birthday girl, and Frederic Mairesse representing Barons de Rothschild, Champagne, France.



A toast to champagne! Almost pink, pale and shimmering.



Lito Lapid (his uncle is the senator) and Richard Gapasin of Diamond Hotel in a conspiracy to render fine and excellent service.



Carmela Ang, Lorna Ambas, Glenda Barretto.



Precious Sollven and Nelson Navarro.



Princess Disini and Dr. Jaime Flor.



Annie Trillo Rocha and Lorna Ambas.

And to Tita Trillo, who taught me and hundreds of others how to appreciate the romance and poetry of wine and especially champagne. Who as wine distributor has contributed to the sophistication of hip young professionals who cannot today celebrate an event or special occasion without a bottle of something red, white, or bubbly.



BY
JULLIE
Y. DAZA

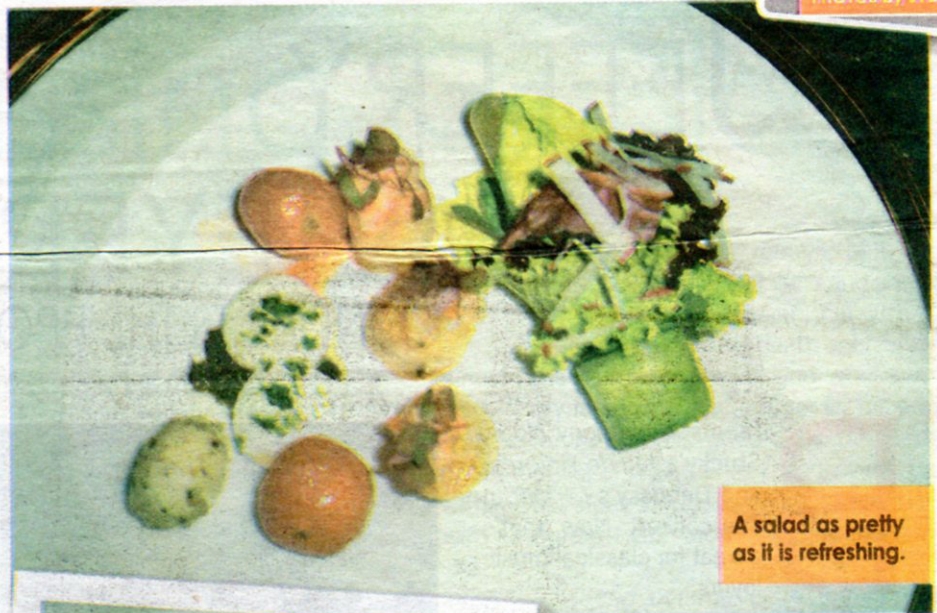
But Tita told a lie when she marked her milestone recently, declaring that "on my 21st birthday let us all be merry"; for the truth is Tita

is 42, not 21! The champagne dinner she hosted, with proceeds going to the nuns and wards of Mother Teresa, went to my head and inebriated my senses. Despite just a sniff and two sips of the most beautiful—yes, beautiful, as in *tres belle*—Rose champagne produced by Barons de Rothschild, dinner was a dreamy affair.

Frederic Mairesse, managing director of Champagne Barons de Rothschild based in Reims, France, flew in to Manila to fulfill his promise to be present at Tita's birthday dinner. And how we took advantage of his presence to learn more about champagne! The French pronounce it *shampahn*, we pronounce it *shampayn*. Champagne as a name or noun may be used only by the makers of champagne as a product of the region around Reims and Epernay in northeastern France. Remember many many years ago when Yves St Laurent created a perfume that he called Champagne? It was pulled out of the market as soon as the court ruled that the use of the name was illegal, simply because the perfume was not champagne, and it was not produced in Champagne.

Champagne originated in the late 17th century, takes a minimum three years to age in the cellars, and is the result of a marriage of black and white grapes planted in a region that can only be described as magical, with just the right soil in the ground, the right temperature in the air and sun, and the right experts to delicately blend nature's gifts perfectly, with utter refinement. What's new with champagne is that three branches of the Rothschild family "have joined forces with Champagne families whose passion for generations has been to produce exceptional wines."

This partnership covers 72 hectares, which Frederic describes as "small" because the Rothschilds want to maintain quality and purity. By comparison, another winemaker would own thousands of hectares. In the same manner, whereas Rothschild produces a mere 500,000 bottles a year, another vintner would be happy only with an output of 30 million. France's total champagne production is 330 million bottles a year. As Tita would say, "Let's drink to that!" 🍷



A salad as pretty as it is refreshing.



Seabass with all the trimmings.



Eddie Rocha, movie producer.



Standing, Tita and Frederic, as servers serve Princess Disini.

Champagne for charity

"Be true to your work, your word, and your friends."
— Henry David Thoreau

The Champagne Barons de Rothschild Charity Dinner was themed by wine diva **Tita Trillo** to resemble the grandeur of the Cannes Film Festival, where world-renowned personalities from the international film industry walked down the red carpet towards the Palais des Festivals amidst the flashing cameras of the paparazzi.

OH, YES, IT'S JOHNNY!

by JOHNNY LITTON

For the gala event, Tita selected the penthouse of Diamond Hotel Philippines so guests could see the hustle and bustle of Roxas Boulevard as well as the majestic tranquility of Manila Bay, similar to the Palais des Festivals in Cannes.

Each dinner pairing highlighted the selection of wines

that embodies the essence of the Rothschild family's wine-making values: perfection, constancy, excellence and refinement.

Champagne Barons de Rothschild managing director **Frederic Mairesse** flew in from France just for the occasion to help the poorest of the poor in Delpan, Tondo through the Missionaries of Charity and for the evangelization program of the Society of Saint Paul.

The party took a humorous turn after Tita Trillo's announcement that the celebration was for her 21st birthday. This announcement sparked the whole gang of visitors cheering up with free-flowing Champagne Barons de Rothschild Brut served with canapés specially prepared by the Diamond Hotel.

The party concluded with Frederic Mairesse hopping from table to table, describing his wines as all the guests sipped every last drop of his premier cru champagnes.

Cheers!



Ambassador Preciosa Soliven, Champagne Barons de Rothschild managing director Frederic Mairesse and Tita Wine Cellar Inc. chairman Tita Trillo.



(Seated) Glenda Barretto, Jullie Yap Daza and Jaime Flor; (standing, from left) Camella Ang, Mandy Navasero, Princess Monjiera Disini, Frederic Mairesse and Tita Trillo.



(Front row) Mark Martin, Rutchie Vidal and Karl McLean; (back row, from left) Jane Umali, Bob Lehman, Tita Trillo and Rene Arambulo.



(From left) Paola Bondoc, Kristine Meehan, Joy Enverga, Doctors Gwen and Kim Amurao with Mitch and Bea Locsin.



Bernadette Olivares, Claudine Trillo and Frederic Mairesse.



(From left) Melrose and Patrick Pagtanac with Gina and Pepe Batholomi.



Lorna Ambas, Jullie Yap Daza and Annie Rocha.



(Clockwise) Racle and Doug Green, Tom and Rex Gordon, Irish McAullay and Jenny-Lou Bland.



George Chan and JP Morgan Hong Kong managing director Sonia Li.

For the lovebirds

We hosted a special dinner lately in honor of two of our good friends at MU, Dusit Thani Manila's premier Japanese restaurant.

Recently married **David Ackerman** and his wife, friend and confidante, the former **Mache Torres**, were in perfect company indulging in salmon and tuna sashimi, Philippine *maki*, *rafu* steak, *gindara teriyaki* and *bi* tempura specially prepared by MU's Japanese chefs accompanied with excellent sake and a selection of wines.

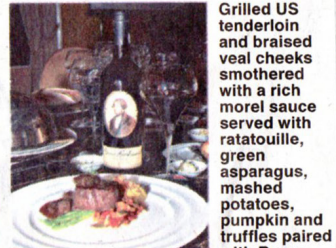
Yes, David and Mache reminded us of that saying: "We cannot really love anybody with whom we never laugh."



(Seated, from left) Sharon Tan, Liza Timbol, Catherine Rufino, Mache Torres-Ackerman and Mitzl Plad; (standing, from left) Miko Valerio, your columnist, Carlos Rufino, David Ackerman, retired Sandiganbayan Justice Raoul Victorino and Eric Lacain.



Fr. Andy Inting and Fr. Rey Reyes with Oskie Ravanera.



Grilled US tenderloin and braised veal cheeks smothered with a rich morel sauce served with ratatouille, green asparagus, mashed potatoes, pumpkin and truffles paired with Baron Nathaniel Rouge from Pauillac, France that exudes aromas of blackcurrant and cherry with intense notes of leather, toast and vanilla.



(From left) Catherine Rufino, Liza Timbol, Mache Torres-Ackerman, Mitzl Plad and Sharon Tan. The lovebirds David and Mache Ackerman.



(From left) David Ackerman, Miko Valerio, Justice Raoul Victorino, Carlos Rufino and Eric Lacain.



Birthday greetings scribbled by Tita Trillo's well-wishers.