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**A Grape Walked into an Olive Bar...**

By Susie Iventosch

This wonderful recipe, sent to me by one of our faithful Lamorinda Weekly readers, Anna Morrison of Orinda, is most unusual ... and incredibly delicious, too!

I must admit, I was a bit leery of this concoction, created by epicurean Susan Jeter, and included in Robin Maxwell's novel, Signora da Vinci. Somehow grapes and Greek olives

did not seem the perfect combination to me, though I love each—separately. Still, it was an intriguing recipe and I decided to give it a whirl, making a few changes of my own.

Oh my gosh ... what my family had been missing for all of these years! The compote is divine when served over a mixture of goat, blue and cream cheeses on baguette slices toasted with olive oil and sea salt. I have now served this dish to guests at eight different gatherings and everyone, from college boys to 80-year old adults, has absolutely loved it!

The recipe calls for seedless red grapes, and even though I tried it with green grapes one time, I don't recommend it. It is best to stick to the red grapes on this one. Perhaps you could try adding some green Greek olives, too. We used just Kalamata, but I think cracked green olives would add a nice touch.

The compote can be made days ahead and refrigerated until ready to serve, and over the Thanksgiving holiday, when the oven was preoccupied, we also made the Grape-Olive compote on the stove top, cooking it down in a good sauté pan.

**Grape-Olive Compote over three-cheese spread**

**Ingredients**

- Compote*
- 2½ cups seedless red grapes, cut in half or quarters (measure after cutting)
  - 1½ cups pitted Kalamata olives, cut in half (measure after cutting)
  - 1 teaspoon dried thyme, or 1 tablespoon minced fresh thyme
  - ½ teaspoon sea salt
  - 2 tablespoons olive oil
  - 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- Cheese spread (adjust quantities as you like)*
- ½ cup crumbled blue cheese
  - 1 cup cream cheese
  - 4 oz. Montrachet goat cheese



Grape-Olive Compote on 3-cheese spread.

Photo Susie Iventosch

**Directions**

*Compote*

Toss all together and place in a greased or sprayed, small casserole dish Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour. Stir and cool. Refrigerate until ready to use.

*Cheese Spread*

In a medium sized bowl, beat blue cheese with an electric beater until as smooth as possible. Beat in cream cheese and goat cheese. Refrigerate until ready to use. Then spread in a round, about 1 inch thick, on a serving platter, and spread compote on top. Serve on crostini toasted with olive oil and a wee bit of sea salt.

**These recipe is available on our web site.**

**Go to: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com)**

Susie Iventosch is the author of *Tax Bites and Tasty Morsels*, which can be found at Across the Way in Moraga, [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), and [www.taxbites.net](http://www.taxbites.net). Susie can be reached at [suziven@gmail.com](mailto:suziven@gmail.com).

Many of our readers like Susie's recipes. Our website now features a link to our recipe page where you can read, print or download all of the recipes we have published. If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at 925-377-0977



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**Pilot No More**

*Lamorinda restaurants do their part for the environment*

By Sophie Braccini

**T**he commercial food waste recycling pilot was a success thanks to the valuable support we received from participating Lamorinda businesses," said Bart Carr, Senior Program Manager with the Contra Costa County Solid Waste Authority (CCCSWA). In fact it was so successful that the program is now a standard service offered to restaurants and food providers in CCCSWA's service area, which recently gave recognition awards to all of the Lamorinda establishments that participated in the pilot.

The program consists of sorting food scraps at the source, collecting it, and transferring it to an

EBMUD digester that transforms the waste into electricity and regurgitates soil-covering material. During the pilot phase, CCCSWA supported businesses by providing containers and training that made the transition easy.

"It's not difficult to implement," says Matt Carroll, General Manager of Sodexo Dining Services at Saint Mary's College, "We collected probably 2000 pounds of waste a week, and continued to divert some of the food waste for the campus' garden compost as well."

As the program expands on a voluntary basis CCCSWA, and its partner Allied Waste Services, are recruiting a full-time manager who



David Shields (El Charro) received a recognition award in Lafayette; from left, Shields, Paul Morsen, Mike Anderson, Carol Federighi, Bart Carr  
Picture courtesy of CCCSWA

will continue the training and support for this program. Carr indicates that the goal for the rate of expansion is of 10-12 new participating businesses per month. Some of the new participants in Lamorinda include Berg Senior Services (Moraga Royale) in Moraga, Mountain Mike's Pizza and Blue Ginko in Lafayette, and Trattoria Lupetti and Table 24 in Orinda. Carr noted that Safeway does not participate in the program because it collects its own fruit and vegetable waste and composts it in Livermore.

Read our April 1, 2009 article about the launch of the pilot program here: <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0302/CCCSWA-Turns-Commercial-Food-Scraps-Into-Electricity.html>

**Lamorinda Participants in the pilot Food Waste Recycling Project:**

- Lafayette**  
Amarin Thai Cuisine • Chow Lafayette • Diablo Foods • El Charro Mexican Food • Lafayette Park Hotel • Noah's Bagels • Petar's • Postino Restaurant • Yan's Restaurant
- Moraga**  
Asia Palace • Ranch House Café • Royal Siam • Saint Mary's College • Terzetto Cafe
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