

Barry Koslow: Chef, philosopher

By Alexandra Greeley
Special to *The Washington Examiner*

After many years behind others' kitchen doors, Alexandria native Barry Koslow has moved into his own niche: He is chef and co-owner of Dupont Circle's high-end, almost-kosher deli, DGS Delicatessen. That means Koslow has gathered all that he has learned after cooking in such restaurants as Equinox, 2941, Michel Richard Citronelle, and Tallula, and turned his knowledge and skills into preparing modern Jewish dishes in his own restaurant kitchen. Well, classical Jewish food with a Koslow modern twist.

Take the tongue sandwich called the Wally B in honor of one partner's grandfather, for example. Traditionalists may eat such a sandwich with lots of mustard, maybe some lettuce or sauerkraut, all on rye. Koslow uses rye, of course, but adds pickled apple slices for a sweeter twist on this classic. He has also introduced several North African spices and preserved lemons, which spark his kasha varnishkes dish of bow tie pasta, buckwheat and mushrooms.

"These dishes appeal cross-culturally," said Koslow of his modernized Jewish fare. "Washingtonians really are OK with this appeal to a broad base, to everyone. ... This food is not just solely for Jewish people." But he adds that many ex-New Yorkers come to DGS and love the food, plus many young D.C. professionals who have never had this type of food come in to experiment.

But, he hastens to add, many of his dishes are based on family recipes. "This is my grandma's matzo ball soup," he said, "but minus the chicken fat. I have added duck fat instead." He added that his parents have eaten at DGS and approve of what he is doing.

Another element of Koslow's deli-



GRAEME JENNINGS/EXAMINER

If you go DGS Delicatessen

- » **Where:** 1317 Connecticut Ave. NW
- » **Info:** 202-293-4400; dgsdelicatessen.com
- » **Hours:** Lunch, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday to Friday; dinner, 5:30 to 10 p.m. Monday to Thursday and Sunday, 5:30 to 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday; brunch, 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

catesen food is that all the meats, smoked fish, mustard and pickles are made from scratch. "If you look at the history of Jewish delicatessens," he says, "they started in New York in mom-and-pop shops featuring specialties made from scratch. The delicatessens started using processed meats and serving overstuffed sandwiches. ... We saw where delis went wrong, when people dropped their craftsmanship and offered foods not made from scratch."

Koslow explains that pastrami needs eight days to age properly, and fresh mustard needs to set for a long period, so he makes five-gallon barrels at a time. He also hot-smokes the whitefish and cold-smokes the salmon, giving them a gentle smoky flavor. Doing all this in-house is what sets DGS apart, and what makes it so "modern."

The Vine Guy » Scott Greenberg

The delightful wines of Willamette Valley

As the old saying goes, "Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life." Well, on a recent business trip, the next best thing happened to me. I went to Portland, Ore., for work and fell in love — again — with the Willamette Valley.

The Willamette Valley is Oregon's leading wine producing region, featuring more than 200 wineries spread out over its six distinct appellations, including Eola-Amity Hills, Dundee Hills, Chehalem Mountains, McMinnville, Ribbon Ridge and Yamhill Carlton. This long, broad valley runs for more than 100 miles, from the Columbia River in the North and stopping just short of the town of Eugene in the South.

The Coast Range to the west of the Valley provides a natural barrier to the Pacific Ocean, while the Cascade Range to the East locks in cool moist air, providing a long, cool growing region where the wet winter and spring months are followed by warm summer days. The cooling effect of the maritime influence drops the nighttime temperatures during the summer, allowing the grapes to develop beautiful acidity. Many of the farmers in the valley liken the finicky climate to the famous pinot noir and chardonnay grape-growing region of Burgundy, France, where each harvest is unique. But in the end, the wines are as distinctive as the vineyards they come from and the winemakers who produce them.

Here are some of my current Willamette favorites; retail prices are approximate.

The same climate and soil composition that favors pinot noir also loves chardonnay. And the Winderlea Vineyards and Winery, nestled in the Dundee Hills district, takes full advantage of its location to produce the beautifully crafted **2011 Winder-**

lea Chardonnay (\$38). The judicious use of new French oak barrels (about 20 percent) produces a wine with scents of ripe apple and toasty oak. Flavors of apple and nectarine hit the front of the palate and are complemented on the bright, clean finish by citrusy notes of Meyer lemon and Key lime. **QPR 9**

Location, location, location is important in Oregon, so Josh Bergstrom decided to take some of the best grapes from vineyards sourced from separate districts throughout the Willamette Valley to make the **2011 Cumberland Reserve Pinot Noir (\$42).** The pretty bouquet sports scents of red cherry and bright red berry. Flavors of cherry, baking spices and clove feel silky smooth

in the mouth. A hint of cocoa on the back of the palate really adds a delightful note to the beautiful, lush finish. According to Bergstrom, this wine captures the essence of what Oregon pinot noirs are so well known for. **QPR 9**

Lynn Penner-Ash moved from D.C. to California to pursue a degree in botany at the University of California, Davis, but was intrigued by grape-growing, so in her junior year she changed majors to viticulture. Shortly after working a harvest at Domaine Chandon, she was seduced by winemaking and switched her major to enology. Good thing, too, since her **2010 Penner-Ash Zena Crown Vineyard Pinot Noir (\$60)** is stunning. Located in the Eola-Amity Hills district, the consistently cool climate and well-drained volcanic soils of the Zena Crown vineyard yield fruit that produces a wine with a distinctive nose of earthy cherry, rhubarb and candied ginger. Rich flavors of dark cherry, ripe strawberry and black tea are well-integrated with the fine, sweet tannins that flow through on the long, lush finish. **QPR 9.5**

About 20 different winemakers use the pinot noir grapes that come from Dick and Deirdre Shea's 140-acre property in the Yamhill Carlton district. And while many of their wines are delicious, the wines produced by the Shea's stand alone. The grapes used in the **2010 Block 7 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir (\$56)** come from a coveted, gently sloping, south-facing vineyard and produce a wine that displays beautiful aromas of violets and cranberry. Earthy flavors of strawberry, orange peel and black cherry coat the palate. Spicy notes of pepper and wild cherry add complexity to the lush finish. **QPR 10**

Note: *QPR is a rating system that compares the quality a wine delivers relative to the price. A QPR of 10 is considered an excellent value.*



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