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Tupac Shakur Pops Up (With a Chicken-and-Cocktail Restaurant)

Also in Unfiltered, French Laundry thief cellared behind lock and key, Belvedere weaves a rye garden, and Vinality and Oregon get auctions



Photo by: Anonymous/dapd/AP Photo

Tupac Shakur, restaurateur? We got a peek at some of the rapper's unique cocktail creations.

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If chefs are the new rock stars, why can't rock stars be the new chefs? No reason in theory, except that the "rock star" behind the menu at downtown Manhattan pop-up Powamekka Café is a rapper—who died more than 20 years ago. On April 7, West Coast hip-hop legend **Tupac Shakur** will be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and to mark the occasion, Lower East Side chicken destination Sweet Chick will transform into a Tupac restaurant for the weekend.

But it's not just a Tupac-themed restaurant: The musician once sketched out a detailed "down home Southern" restaurant concept in his notebooks. The imagined Powamekka,

which included touches like restrooms labeled "Divaz" and "Playaz" and even a suggested critical rave ("The experts agree: 'The perfect hideout 4 those who wish 2 escape the worldz cold reality!'", never came to fruition before Shakur's shooting death in 1996. But it will live briefly this weekend, serving the rapper's favorite foods—meatloaf, gumbo, and fried chicken wings, according to his estate—and drink ideas Shakur concocted. Sweet Chick revealed the list to Unfiltered. You can enjoy a "Thugz Passion" (gin, Alizé, lime, pomegranate ice and Champagne, served in a coup), a "Ghetto Russian" (condensed milk, Bailey's and Remy Martin, garnish with shaved nutmeg—"think Coquito with Cognac"), "Can of Sunkist," Tupac's nonalcoholic libation of choice, and other pours to perk up New York Unfiltered readers who are California dreaming right about now.

French Laundry Thief to be Cellared Behind Lock and Key

What's on the menu at the French Laundry? Justice. More than two years after Grinch-like thieves stole Christmas from the famed Napa Valley **Thomas Keller** restaurant, one co-conspirator has been handed a sentence. A federal judge sentenced **Davis Kiryakoz**, of Modesto, Calif., to 15 months in prison following his conspiracy conviction to transport more than \$500,000 worth of wine stolen from three California businesses—the French Laundry, Alexander's Steakhouse in Cupertino and Fine Wines International in San Francisco. Kiryakoz was also ordered to pay his victims nearly \$600,000 in restitution.

You had to hand it to the thieves, at least, for knowing their wine. The French Laundry team reported more than \$300,000 worth of wine missing from its *Wine Spectator* Grand Award-winning inventory in December 2014, including high-end bottlings from Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, Screaming Eagle, Dom Pérignon and Jacques-Frédéric Mugnie. Napa County sheriffs rescued most of the bottles in Greensboro, N.C., from an unknowing wine buyer. With the help of the FBI, the sheriffs tracked the sales back to Kiryakoz and, allegedly, a second defendant, **Alfred Georgis**, who is scheduled to go to trial May 1.

A Garden of Plenty of Rye at Milan Design Week

Fresh off coordinating a partnership with award-winning musicians and A-list music festivals, Belvedere is dabbling in a different sort of sensory experience, this time on the scene at Milan Design Week from April 4-9. The star of the show is French floral designer **Thierry Boutemy**, who has collaborated with canned-wine enthusiast **Sofia Coppola**, for the 2016 film *Marie Antoinette*, and fashion photographer **Mario Testino** for the *Vogue* cover of **Lady Gaga** (more of a "Grigio Girl" herself).

The Belvedere Garden presentation showcases rye as a base component (much like the vodka itself) along with other ingredients found in the event's featured cocktail (herbs, citrus fruits) in a series of rounded floral archways Boutemy installed in the Palazzo Borromeo d'Adda in Milan.

Belvedere Garden Milan Design Week WebVideo

"I try to tell authentic stories and make beautiful poetry with my work, and evoke emotions that are rooted in minimalism," Boutemy said in an email to Unfiltered. "Often you only need a few ingredients to create poetry, much like Belvedere Vodka. The installation is a nod to that philosophy." The garden is open through April 9.

Paddles Up for Italy and Oregon Auctions

On April 9, the Comitato Grandi Cru d'Italia will host a brand-new charity auction at Italy's largest wine and spirits exhibition, Vinitaly (where *Wine Spectator* will also be on hand for our OperaWine tasting of the country's top producers). Held in Verona's 16th-century Palazzo Giusti del Giardino, the auction will feature large-format bottles and historic vintages across 97 lots, bringing together 100 producers of international renown.

In addition to several 100-bottle Grandi Cru lots, individual wines such as the Antinori Solaia 2007, Bellavista Franciacorta Millennium Riserva Privata 1995, and Bertani Amarone Classico 1967 and 1981 will be up for grabs. A portion of the auction's earnings will go toward Dynamo Camp, Italy's first recreational therapy camp for young people suffering from serious and long-term illnesses.

Auction watchers may also be cheered to hear of a recent stateside success. On April 1, the second annual Willamette: The Pinot Noir Barrel Auction in Newberg, Ore., raised \$472,000, all in a mad-dash 80-minute live auction. Hosted by, and benefiting, the Willamette Valley Wineries Association, a non-profit organization whose mission is to increase recognition of the Willamette Valley region, this year's fête featured the 2015 vintage from 69 Oregon producers. At \$20,000, the evening's top-selling lot was 5 cases of Antica Terra's 2015 Pinot Noir. "The auction committee is relieved that the second year matched the success of the first year," **David Adelsheim** of the eponymous winery and auction cochair, told Unfiltered in an email. "It took an extremely collaborative wine industry with the top wineries willing to work together to create the event and attract the bidders."



Aubrie LeGault

Pat Dudley of Bethel Heights (left) and David Adelsheim co-chaired the 2017 auction.

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