

# Destinations: Jolie Vue Farms' Outstanding in the Field

By Paul Sidello

What would you consider the ultimate criteria in a dining experience? Would it be the ambiance of your surroundings? Perhaps it's the presentation? Is it the explosion of flavors, exciting taste buds? How about the quality of the food and the pairing of the wines? The service, is that a factor? Or is it a mélange of intangibles which create an experience that cannot be put into words, but must be experienced; much like, how do you explain to someone an incredible rock concert, rollercoaster ride or sunset and truly have them "get it"?

"Outstanding in the Field," an annual homage to locally produced meats and produce, elevates the dining experience to a level which only a chosen few have had the opportunity to experience.

Jolie Vue Farms ([www.jolievuefarms.com](http://www.jolievuefarms.com)) in Brenham hosted one of this year's events (others in Austin & Dallas). Jolie Vue Farms is renowned for humanely producing organic, heritage Berkshire and Duroc pigs, beef and chicken in a natural, stress-free environment. Hosts Glen and Honi Boudreaux, of West University, welcomed each guest with Texas-style warmth and hospitality. No airs or pretention; just good old friends at first sight.

As I walked up to the small, white farm house, I immediately caught site of the main entree for the evening: whole pig being roasted over an open fire. the aroma served as a perfect "amuse-bouche,"

If just walking onto the farm created this impression, what was in store for me? I didn't have to wonder for long. A wide variety of hors-d'oeuvres and wine were immediately available, served on the front lawn. The wine for the evening was provided by Duchman Family Winery (Driftwood, Texas), which uses 100% Texas grown grapes in its production. Attention was taken to pair the right wine with each course. Chef Paul Lewis of Cullen's Grille, located near NASA, brilliantly and creatively fashioned each course using freshly picked ingredients from local producers.

The event started at 3 p.m. It was a perfect afternoon in the low to mid 80's, a cloudless sky and a gentle breeze. Guests from as far away as Oklahoma, New Mexico and greater Houston area were served deviled eggs with house-cured pepperoni, lardo-wrapped watermelon with aged balsamic, spicy braised Jolie Vue pork empanadas, chilled arugula soup with crème fraiche & cajun caviar, and crispy shrimp and sambal aioli, all paired with a 2009 Viognier.

A pleasant stroll to the dining area atop the hill overlooking the tranquil, pastoral setting of the gentle rolling hills of Washington County gave Glen Boudreaux the opportunity to comment on the humane care given to the livestock and the benefits of eating organic meats and produce.

Approaching the dining area, pleasant cooking aromas drifted my way, once again providing a preview of culinary delights to follow. A tent area was set up for Chef Paul's open-air kitchen. Guest immediately chose their seats at the serpentine-styled table set for 175 people with white table cloths, and local flowers. Mother Nature provided the perfect ambiance that only she could create.

Like clockwork, the servers delivered the first course family style: Jolie Vue Farms pork selection of salamis, coppa di testa, scotch eggs, prosciutto, Vansorman cheese (Brazos Valley Cheese, Waco, Tx) and pickles. This sampling provided an opportunity to experience the nuance of flavors and set the stage for what was to follow. Chef Paul carefully selected a 2009 Vermentino as the wine for this course.

The evening was leisurely paced. Ample time to socialize and get to know each new neighbor. Like a wonderful symphony, Chef Paul included the adagio moment: Rancher's Meat (Waller, Tx) chicken stuffed with goat cheese and wrapped with prosciutto. Homestead Gristmill (Waco, Texas) blue corn grits and braised spicy mustard greens rounded off the course. The grits and mustard greens added just the right balance to showcase the main star of the dish. All were



Nearly 200 guests enjoyed fresh air and local food at Jolie Vue Farms recently.

complemented by a 2009 Dolcetto. Bellissimo!

With bagpipes a' singing, the star of the evening arrived with the glory and honor a Jolie Vue Farm heritage pig deserves. This pork has no resemblance to any pork you have ever bought or been served in any restaurant (Chef Paul serves Jolie Vue Farm meats at Cullens as does Monica Pope at T'afia). Its moist, tender, sweet and fresh taste cannot be duplicated. The honored guest was accompanied by All We Need Farm (Needville, Tx) grilled sweet potatoes and warm three bean & okra salad. All were paired exquisitely with a 2009 Montepulciano, Dutchman Family "Reddy Vineyards." Bravo, bravo!

As the sun set, the sky transformed from cerulean blue to shades of pastel blues and pinks. Candles were soon lit on our tables, and a star-studded sky blessed the evening and an incredible, sensational dessert appeared. A Lady apple tart with apple cider caramel & basil ice cream topped off with crunch "porky" corn and complemented with a delightful 2009 Orange Muscat completed the evening. The apples were locally grown by Sullivan's Happy Heart Farm (Danon, Tx).

An Outstanding in the Field ([www.outstandinginthefield.com](http://www.outstandinginthefield.com)) event is organized with the philosophy of celebrating a community through food. With more than 180 public events performed over the past ten years, they have developed a unique partnership with farms, vineyards, ranches and sea coast locations. With their repertoire of places, people and ingredients, they know where to go, who to source from, and how to set their signature farm table. Reservations for the 2011 schedule will be available on the website on the first day of Spring, March 20, 2011. To get early notice of their 2011 events, I suggest you join their mailing list.

This annual event more than met all the criteria for a perfect dining experience and then some!

Congratulations and thank you Glen and Honi Boudreaux for hosting a magnificent, memorable feast at Jolie Vue Farms and doing your part in supporting and creating a healthier, greener food chain for all of us. ([www.jolievuefarms.com](http://www.jolievuefarms.com)). Jolie Vue's grass pastured beef, free-range chickens and Berkshire pork are available at local farmer's markets as well as by home delivery. Call (713) 839-8610.



Glen and Honi Boudreaux.

