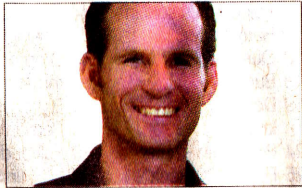


Slovenian wines suddenly hot topic

Chef Mavro spring menu, UH volleyball player spark interest

The other day I was talking to University of Hawai'i-Mānoa men's volleyball star setter Nejc Zemljak, a Slovenian native, about the Movia pinot nero from Brda, in the Primorska wine-growing region of Slovenia. Our wine committee at Chef Mavro voted this lesser-known wine onto our spring menu, where it's paired with "Kurobuta a la Saigon," which is wrapped with be-



RAISE A GLASS

By Todd Ashline

tel nut leaves and served with lemongrass pork jus.

Suddenly, Slovenia has become a topic of conversation among our guests. Nejc told me that his hometown of Maribor is said to have the world's oldest living grape vine — more than

400 years old and a national treasure. The vine is still producing fruit; the mayor of Maribor gives bottles of historic wine made from its grapes to dignitaries and special guests as gifts.

Our little talk got me thinking about Slovenian wine. Sure, I have had the Movia wines before, but other than that winemaker, I am not sure I could name another producer or region in Slovenia — so I did some research.

Slovenia borders Italy to the west, Austria to the north, Hungary to the east, and Croatia to the south

and has been part of the European Union since 2004. The Celts and Illyrian tribes produced wine in Slovenia roughly 2,400 years ago, long before production was started by the Romans in France, Germany or Spain. There are three wine regions in Slovenia: Primorska, Podravje and Posavje.

Primorska is in the southwest of the country and borders Italy and the Adriatic Sea. It is the most widely known of the Slovenian wine regions and the first

SEE GLASS, D4