

## Food

Saying more than “It tastes good”

We slipped, slurped and scored. The room was silent as we concentrated on the task at hand. When we finished one flight, the waiters brought out another one and another dozen oysters. This continued until we had gone through the 30 wines and five dozen oysters. In all, it took about an hour.

We handed in our scores and then gathered in the bar for a beer and some appetizers. How I ate or drank anything I’ll never know.... Before I knew it I was on the plane back to Tucson. I had so much fun, met some amazing people and ate great food. I learned a lot, too. And I will never eat an oyster again without thinking of that amazing experience.

(“Food and Wine: Pairing Wine with Oysters” by Rita Connelly, *California Wines*, April 17th, 2007)

To Chileans, empanadas mostly mean *empanadas al horno*, which are frequently baked in a wood-burning oven. The classic versions are filled with seasoned minced (not ground) meat and onions and garnished with hard-cooked egg, olives and raisins. They can be made either in the half-moon shape that they usually take throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, or in a distinctively Chilean squared-off form made by folding all but the straight side of the semicircular turnover to make a package that is often four inches across.

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As to the filling, the classic minced meat recipe is delicious, but less complicated fillings are, too. Consider sautéed mushrooms, diced cheese or seasoned canned tuna. Pulled pork, chicken, minced lamb, salt cod (*bacalao*), vegetable mixtures like *caponata*, fresh crab meat or minced cooked shrimp mixed with herbs are also fine. In other words, anything goes.

(“For Chileans, Passion Translates to Empanadas” by Florence Fabricant, *New York Times*, April 14, 2009)

I was served a burger of such musty complexity that it transcended its plastic foam container. It was bloody, juicy and rich. It was a porterhouse in a bun. I was drinking an egg cream, but I wanted a glass of Château Pétrus.

(“The Perfect Burger, Greater Than Its Parts” by Oliver Schwaner-Albright, *New York Times*, April 15, 2009)