

XTRAVAGANCE

WADE INTO THE ROYAL SUDS

D'Sens at the Dusit finds new use for a 400-year-old beer



THE DUSIT'S Chanin and Vipada Donavanik, left, and Alex Willats, right, flank Princess Anna and Prince Carl-Eugen zu Oettingen-Wallerstein and their daughter Joanna Eugen.

PARANI CHITRAKORN
SPECIAL TO THE NATION

Drinking beer seems casual and everyday enough until someone hands you a glass of 1598 Fürst Wallerstein Beer Cuveé, Edition Privée. This beer is older than the United States!

Fürst is German for "prince", and in this case we're talking about the prince of Oettingen-Wallerstein, whose history goes back even further – almost 900 years. Today the family is among Europe's oldest surviving noble houses.

His Serene Highness Prince Carl-Eugen zu Oettingen-Wallerstein and his wife and daughter were recently in Bangkok, of all places.

D'Sens at the Dusit Thani Bangkok will be launching his premium beer, the 1598 Fürst Wallerstein, during the Culinary Germany 2011 gourmet fair being held at the hotel from October 20 to 30.

Playing host to the family were Dusit International chief executive and managing director Chanin Donovanik and Dusit Group assistant vice president Vipada Donovanik.

"This beer was originally brewed exclusively for the consumption of the family and our friends," Prince Carl-Eugen said. "Along the way we just forgot how extraordinary it was. Then my wife – Princess Anna – reminded me of this special recipe and encouraged us to brew it again."

The prince said they love Thailand and its food (and desserts),



Seared duck liver and sauerkraut and smoked eel



Valhrona chocolate fondant with red berry compote



The 1598 Wallerstein

as well as "the warm climate, the culture and Thai people who always give us a smile".

"Most importantly we have good friends here, Khun Chanin and Khun Vipada. And that is the good part of doing business with friends."

The family had a go at elephant polo in Hua Hin. They usually use horses. "It was very exciting!" the

prince explained.

The yeast is fermented three times, in fact, ensuring the rich variety of aromas and the rich price. It sells for 90 to 150 euros (Bt3,800 to Bt6,300) per bottle in Europe's leading restaurants.

The smoke, caramel and coffee and the amber colour derive from roasted barley, the prince said, and crucially, the brewing water is low in calcium carbonate.

The taste is full-bodied, fruity, sweet and powerful, a little bitter-sweet, complex with a lingering finish. And the alcohol content is higher than regular European beers – 9 per cent by volume.

D'Sens served it with – in order – seared duck liver, sauerkraut and smoked eel (which the beer complemented well), mushroom cream soup with custard, and smoked duck breast with a chestnut pancake (matched beautifully by the smoky lager) and quail, both pan-fried breast and crispy legs confit.

The caramelised texture of the bird was again echoed in the caramel of the beer, set off refreshingly by the pineapple aroma.

Needless to say, a course of creamy French farmhouse cheese and the beer was another ideal pairing, and the dessert of Valhrona chocolate fondant with red berry compote found its partner in the beer's own chocolate aroma.

The French cuisine thoroughly enjoyed meeting the German beer, and I believe the beer will be excellent with Thai food too.

prince said.

Guests tasted the newly revived premium beer and discovered aromas and flavours of pineapple, yeast, dried fruit, chocolate, caramel and coffee, with hints of cloves and tobacco.

"The yeast, pineapple and dried fruit come from the barley and wheat malt, with a second fermentation from the yeast used in the