

# New wines making a splash

For decades Napa Valley has been the most prestigious regional name to appear on a wine label.

Indeed, the suspicion has lurked around that the word alone on a label raises the cost of a bottle at least a dollar. And not too long ago Sonoma began to be touted by winemakers as another very fine origin for their product.

Until recently that has been it. Such origins as San Benito, Livermore, Santa Clara or San Luis Obispo have not been prominently displayed. No one seemed especially proud to name these regions as the homes of their wine.

But the recent arrival of two new labels on local shelves now confirms the importance of the Monterey County in the wine-growing business. Both of

these proudly use the county name in their own — Monterey Peninsula Winery and the Monterey Vineyard.

Different as they are from each other, their presence highlights a growing cost of a bottle at least a dollar. And not too long ago Sonoma began to be touted by winemakers as another very fine origin for their product.

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**THE MONTEREY VINEYARD** is located in a dismal town, Gonzales, well inland and east of the Coastal Range. Now owned by Coca Cola (along with Sterling and

Taylor of New York) and funded by their monies, winemaker Dick Petersen is reducing the varieties he makes to a manageable number.

Still extensive, they offer roses made from Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon that are excellent. Their whites include Gewurtztraminer, Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, "Grauer" Sylvaner and Johannisberg Riesling. Additionally, Petersen has experimented with some late harvest white, including botrytis on white Riesling and Sauvignon Blanc grapes to produce rich, lush dessert wines.

They also offer Petite Sirah, Pinot Noir, Zinfandel and Gamay Beaujolais. All in all, a quite extensive line. Perhaps their most interesting is a late harvest Zinfandel, high in alcohol and pow-

erful and chewy to drink. With a storage capacity of 2,000,000 gallons this is a major winery. They offer good value for the money, most of their releases costing in the \$4-\$7 range here in Michigan.

By contrast, Monterey Peninsula Winery, in the flight path of the Monterey city airport, has storage for but 20,000 gallons and carries more of the aura of a boutique winery. Somewhat unstable in their releasing patterns, they have won the affection of their followers by holding a grape "stomp" each fall. Quite a party.

**THEY RELEASED** a "Stomp Zinfandel," but the authorities said this was unsanitary and its product couldn't be sold as wine. So they went

ahead and sold it without paying the wine taxes on it.

While they occasionally make a Cabernet Sauvignon, a Pinot Noir or Barbera (depending on grape availability) this is a Zinfandel winemaker. Often releasing several lines in the same year, the grapes carry geographical designations or proprietary names (as "Big Jim's"). The style is big, the taste huge and the prices not too bad although our local distributor is adding a bit much for handling with this line. But worth a try.

Monterey, along with Mendocino, is one answer to the urban crush for wine growers. It provides space and a benevolent climate that will shape the industry for years to come.

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# Birds need cold weather friends

Every year your columnist reminds you that birds are not only entertaining, they are a gardener's best friend as they fly around the garden eating insects.

You just don't count them the day you want them to help you garden. These cold days you can provide food and evergreens for shelter from the wind. Last week we suggested that you retrieve Christmas trees and stand them up with a support near your bird feeder.

**BIRDS LIKE WHITE** fine sand for grit. Some birds like coarse salt. Place containers of these where they will not become messy with wet weather. You can secure from the Cooperative Extension Service, Michigan State University, bulletin No. E 755, this tells the bird story with pictures of the construction of feeders as well as identifying silhouettes of flying birds. The publication also provides a list of trees and shrubs to attract birds. This is a good time to clip out the column info which will be helpful to you next spring.

If you plant everbearing strawberries, you can expect fruit early the first spring, which will

continue to nearly frost time — enough to make fruit salads interesting. Ozark Beauty is a favorite. This choice will give high yield from a small space. Remove the runners and place the plants as close as 12" apart. They are interesting when planted in ornamental containers.

**A LOT OF US** have fluorescent light charts. The question is often asked about starting outdoor plants early under artificial light. If those seedlings are to be planted outdoors after the 20th of May, you back up six weeks and only start them at that time. The reason being that if you start vegetable and flower seeds too early they become leggy and have difficulty adjusting to the outdoors due to their height.

Now that it is so popular to grow geraniums from seed you might want to start them in peat pots. After they are around one inch high place in a sunny window. Don't give them too much water or they will have stem rot.

Right now enjoy your garden catalogues. Even though you order too much seed, just consider it winter therapy. Gardening can be a growth experience for you, too. So how about ordering something which sounds

good and is a newcomer to you? The joy of gardening is to grow extras to share. Remember gardening isn't all work. Shared flowers and vegetables have the power to bring you more goodies, unexpectedly, to your door.

**Classes challenge curiosity**

The natural world and much of what's in it can be examined by children through winter classes at Cranbrook Institute of Science.

Two new courses — "Seasons Have Reasons" for third and fourth graders and "Do-It-Yourself Astronomy" for seventh, eighth and ninth graders — will be added to the series that begins Jan. 4 with "Physics Fun II" for kindergartners.

Other classes beginning in January and February are:

- "Wonders of the World Around You," for preschoolers (minimum age: 4); "Exploring the Museum," for kindergartners; "Animals With Fur," "Wonders of Weather," and "Reptiles and Amphibians" for first and second graders.

Most are four-session classes that meet weekly from 4 to 5 p.m. Fees range from \$10 to \$20. For information, call 645-3230.

Cranbrook Institute of Science, is at 500 Lone Pine, Bloomfield Hills.

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