

# Liqueurs for holiday cooking

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from France for dessert making," he said. "This is a pure raspberry brandy, which is colorless. The bouquet of framboise is so beautiful it can take over a room and should be used sparingly. Many people also enjoy drinking framboise as an after-dinner drink. It should be chilled." Corsini recommends storing it in the freezer, like vodka, and serving it in small glasses.

He said, "Anisette is always a favorite at Christmas because cooks use it in cookies and puddings. It's great when served with a good, strong cup of coffee." He recommends serving 1 1/2 ounces (a "hooker") with the coffee to satisfy a craving for sweets. A bottle of Marie Brizard sells for \$16.75 a fifth.

"AFTER-DINNER liqueurs such as Chambord, which is made from small black raspberries and honey, is a beautiful gift," Corsini said. He

recommends this as a hostess gift. Besides being a lovely after-dinner drink, it can be poured over peaches as a Peach Melba sauce or mixed with a jam to glaze a ham.

There are a few other cordials which should be included in a gourmet's pantry. Calvados, which is actually a French apple cider brandy, fits into this category. In France the beverage is aged and revered along with the country's finest brandies. Like other brandy, it is labeled according to its age.

If you are buying a bottle for the sole purpose of cooking, it's not necessary to buy one which is more than three years old. Prices start at \$15 and go up from there.

Calvados is wonderful when added to a pan of sautéed sliced apples or incorporated into an apple dessert recipe. Just as when you heat any wine or liqueur, the alcohol content is cooked off. If you are concerned about the price tag, Calvados, like

all other brandy, cordials and fortified wines, will last indefinitely. Incidentally, should someone attempt to convince you to substitute applejack in its place, explain politely that they are two distinctly different tastes — the latter being unsatisfactory.

In the Orange Flan recipe which follows, one tablespoon of Grand Marnier is mixed into the custard. Grand Marnier is an orange liqueur made from a brandy base. Cointreau, which is also an orange liqueur, is made with a clear base and can be used in place of Grand Marnier in many recipes but will have a less mellow taste.

Several after-dinner drinks are classified with liqueurs even though their low alcohol content or method of manufacturing is different than most liqueurs. Some like creme de cassis is made from fruit juice to which alcohol is added. L'Étrier Guyot from France's Burgundy re-

gion is my personal favorite. This black currant liqueur blends beautifully with mixed berries over a scoop of ice cream as an ingredient in a berry sorbet or fruit custard, or with jam in an English trifle.

BESIDES FRUIT, there are herbal and coffee-flavored liqueurs. Herbal liqueurs such as Galliano and anisette have a high sugar content and should be used cautiously in dessert recipes. The light green liqueur, anisette, is considered to be the queen of the herbal liqueurs. It originated in a French monastery more than 300 years ago as an elixir and has received renewed popularity in many cuisine-nouvelle-type dishes.

There are no fast, hard rules to follow when cooking with liqueurs. The best advice — follow a recipe closely and when you need to substitute one for another, consult with a reputable wine shop sales representative.

# Gourmet Buffet joins businesses

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THE FACILITY, within minutes of the other businesses, has a spacious commercial kitchen with separate work stations, a large variety of equipment and separate refrigerators for meats, dairy products, fresh vegetables and desserts. Gourmet Buffet is where new recipes are tested.

"It's as big as the kitchen I trained on at Schoolcraft," Cortis said. "We could serve a party of 1,000 at any time."

The restaurant is open to the public, serving lunch and dinner daily and a brunch on Sunday. Prices range from \$4.75-\$7, with discounts for senior citizens and children. It is an all-you-can-eat format.

All the items that appear on the restaurant menu are available for banquets and parties, both in the restaurant's private rooms and off-premises. Several of the chefs and cooks have been employed at fine restaurants and country clubs and have taught culinary arts.

During a recent visit, Chef Garnet Hart of St. Clair Shores was putting the finishing touches on a tray of chicken, which often appears on the menu when Polish favorites are featured. It is seasoned pork and veal, which is breaded, fried and served on a stick.

WHILE ONE worker stirred up a batch of minit, oat-bran muffins, another washed purple, red and green grapes and sliced wedges of honey-

dew melon for the daily fresh fruit salad. A huge chocolate sheet cake was on a cooling rack, waiting to be frosted. The air was fragrant with the aroma of jerky roast beef and made-from-scratch macaroni and cheese.

Cortis has used his various business interests to good advantage. For example, the bread-bakers at Gourmet Buffet were having problems. Dan Miller had a ready solution.

"We were making bread and it was getting hard too quickly," Cortis said. "Dan told me we were using the wrong kind of flour. We were using baking flour instead of bread flour."

Each Thursday afternoon, hot lunches are prepared at Gourmet Buffet and delivered to the senior-citizen dance sessions at the Grande Ballroom. The meals, which cost \$1 each, include such entrees as baked chicken and stuffed cabbage.

In addition, Cortis plans to use the Livonia kitchen to prepare some of the foods served at the Barnstormer, and Elite Sweets pastries, although not available on the Gourmet Buffet regular menu, may be ordered for special parties and banquets.

Cortis isn't resting on his laurels. He's hoping to expand his catering business. He also is seeking a new location for the New Grande Ballroom, preferably in Livonia. He says the operation has outgrown its present location at Warren and Merriman in Westland.

## POIRES AU VIN ROUGE PEARS IN RED WINE

This recipe is from the new cookbook, "Bistro Cooking" by Patricia Wells, Workman Publishing, 1989.

4 large or 6 very small pears, peeled with stems intact  
1/4 cup vanilla sugar (available in gourmet shops or can be made by mixing 1/4 cup sugar and 1/4 vanilla bean, split and stored with sugar in a tightly covered jar for 2-3 weeks.)  
Editor's note: 1/4 teaspoon of vanilla extract may be substituted and added to 1/4 cup plain sugar.  
1 bottle fruity red wine, Beaujolais  
1/4 cup cream de cassis liqueur  
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice  
1 sprig of summer savory or rosemary  
1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise  
4 whole cloves  
4 black peppercorns

In a deep nonreactive saucepan

that will hold all the pears snugly, combine all the ingredients. Cover and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Turn the pears from time to time, so they are evenly cooked. Simmer until the pears are cooked through, about 30 minutes.

Remove from the heat; allow to cool. Transfer the pears and liquid to a serving dish. Cover and refrigerate for 24 hours before serving. Yield: 4-6 servings.

## ORANGE FLAN

This recipe is from "The New Basics Cookbook" by Julie Rosso and Sheila Lukins, Workman Publishing, 1989.

Caramel:  
1/4 cup sugar

## 3 tablespoons water

Custard:  
1 cup fresh orange juice  
5 whole eggs, lightly beaten  
2 egg yolks, lightly beaten  
1/4 cup sugar  
2 tablespoons heavy or whipping cream  
1 tablespoon Grand Marnier liqueur  
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Prepare the caramel: Combine the sugar and water in a small heavy saucepan and cook over medium heat until the mixture is thick, bubbling and just amber colored. As it cooks, brush down any crystals forming on the sides of the pan with a wet pastry brush (or keep the pan

covered for the first 5 minutes.) The mixture will be very hot. Pour the hot caramel into a dry 4-5 cup ring mold. Wearing pot holders or mitts, swirl the ring mold to coat the bottom and part of the sides with caramel. Set aside.

Prepare the custard: Whisk the orange juice, whole eggs, yolks, sugar, cream, Grand Marnier and vanilla together in a bowl just until smooth. Pour the mixture into the caramel-coated mold. Set the mold in a larger pan to reach halfway up the sides of the mold.

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