

focus on wine

Eleanor and Ray Heald

He's well brought up in Burgundy region

In 1859, the Burgundian Symphony, a Nuits-Saint-Georges vineyard owner, became a negotiant as a result of his customers' requests. They wanted him to obtain more wines from Burgundy and other regions for them.

Selecting, as well as cellaring wines, became Moillard's main concern. Today, his descendants are the owners of Burgundy estates which have been enlarged by each generation.

Domaine Moillard sources or owns parcels in several important grands cru and premier cru locations. At Vosne-Romanée, for example, the company is distinguished at Les Beaux Monts and Les Malconsors, a site contiguous with the renowned La Tache.

Wine production from Moillard's grape sources in the Hautes-Cotes de Nuits offers consumers more reasonably priced Burgundy wines than Moillard planted chardonnay in this region about seven years ago.

"In Burgundy it is not sufficient to be 'well born.' It is also important to be 'well brought up,'" maintains Henri Thomas, a Moillard descendant and the firm's general manager.

"The Moillard policy stresses quality. In order to source and produce quality wines, it is necessary to make thoughtful selections. We do this from three avenues of supply: the family vineyard holdings; grapes purchased by Moillard and fermented in its winery; and the wines purchased either by contract or from various, carefully selected growers."

THESE GRAPE supply resources qualify Moillard to be termed a negociant-eleveur. The negotiant capacity extends to wines from the Maconnais, Beaujolais and the Rhone. The latter makes up about 22 percent of production.

The key advantage of Moillard may be a 140-year experience in the Burgundy wine trade, constituting about 50 percent of wines produced.

"In general, the 1988 vintage is still tight and not showing that well," Thomas states. "The acid is still too obvious. The 1985 reds are more mature, but the whites need another six to eight months' bottle aging."

In a three-year projection, Thomas believes that the 1988 white burgundies will show better than the 1985. "The reds from 1985 will remain ahead of the '88s," he affirms. "I believe that it's a mistake for importers and wholesalers not to stock back vintages. Too often consumers are deceived by the hype given to certain vintages. Currently, Moillard still has some 1983s available. They are drinking well and they cost less than either the 1985s or the 1988s."

"Consumers tend to read the wine press, and the 1988s and 1989s are being discussed now. They've forgotten about a drinkable vintage like 1983."

Looking to the future, Thomas believes that eventually the 1990 vintage wines will be much better than 1989s. "Perhaps the 1990 wines will be as good as 1988," he says.

THOMAS CLAIMS the 1990 red burgundies (pinot noir) have deep color, rich fruit with balanced acid and tannins. "The 1990 whites (chardonnay) are balanced with generous fruit," he reports. "Chablis wines from 1990 should prove very good. In general, all the 1990 white wines are better than whites from 1989."

Thomas is not shy to say that a string of good Burgundy vintages is not without problems. In particular, he points to the growers asking higher prices year after year. "I try to point out to them that the market will not bear increases currently," he contends.

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See Larry Jones' column Taste Ruds, Page 1B.

LOBSTER DIP
Slightly extravagant — but worth it!
4 ounces cream cheese
1/4 cup sour cream
1/4 teaspoon salt
Pinch cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 cup finely chopped cooked lobster

meat

Combine all ingredients in a bowl and mix well. Can be placed in a mold and chilled until set, then unmolded. Serve with toast points or water crackers.

TARRAGON LOBSTER SALAD

A friend sent me this recipe from

New York. She said this salad sells for \$60 per pound in the Big Apple.

2 pounds cooked lobster meat
2 tablespoons Dijon-style mustard
3 tablespoons sherry or wine vinegar
1/4 cup light vegetable oil (not olive)
2 tablespoons fresh tarragon minced
or 1 tablespoon dried
Pinch cayenne or red pepper

2 bunches mache or butter lettuce
Chop lobster meat into chunks. Blend mustard and sherry vinegar in a processor and with motor running, drizzle in oil until thickened and well blended. This also can be done in a small bowl using a wire whisk. Fold dressing and lobster together and add tarragon. Season with pepper. Refrigerate at least 1 hour. Serve on a bed of lettuce. Serves 6.

Birmingham woman is contest runner-up

Mary Becker of Birmingham was named a runner-up in the 1991 Bays English Muffins National Recipe Contest for her original entry, "Super Sunday Supper Sandwiches."

In her prize-winning recipe, Becker combines shredded, cooked ham with the spicy sweetness of a traditional sloppy joe, creating a dish for holiday leftovers.

Becker's recipe was selected from more than 2,500 entries submitted nationwide. She was awarded a gift pack of Bays English Muffins and a Bays gourmet apron. Contest rules required that English muffins be used to create an entree, snack or dessert dish. Entrants were judged by a panel of food editors and restaurant critics from major market newspapers and magazines on the basis of taste, imagination, appearance and practicality.

Margaret McDaniel of Sun Valley, Idaho, won first place for her original recipe, "Smoked Salmon with Ginger-Lime Butter," and received a one-week trip for two to Lorena DeMedici's Villa Table cooking school in Tuscany, Italy. Giving an oriental flair to smoked salmon, the winning dish tops toasted-English

muffin halves with a ginger-lime butter made from fresh ginger root, lime zest and butter. Thinly sliced smoked salmon is then placed on top of the muffins, and each is garnished with a sprig of fresh dill.

SUPER SUNDAY SUPPER SANDWICH
Serves 4
2 tablespoons dark molasses
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1/2 cup minced onion
1/4 seeded green pepper, chopped
1/4 teaspoon soy sauce
1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
12 ounces chili sauce
2 cups shredded cooked ham
6 Days English Muffins

Combine molasses, brown sugar, onions, green pepper, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce and chili sauce in saucepan, simmer over medium heat for 15 minutes. Season to taste.

Add ham and simmer in sauce until hot.

Toast four to six split Bays English Muffins. Spoon ham mixture on muffins.

Serve with green salad and a big

bowl of mixed fresh fruit.

SMOKED SALMON WITH GINGER-LIME BUTTER
Serves 12
1 tablespoon minced, fresh ginger root
1 teaspoon lime zest
1 teaspoon fresh lime juice
1/4 cup unsalted butter at room temperature (1 stick)
6 Days English Muffins, split
9 ounces thinly sliced, good quality smoked salmon
Fresh dill

Combine ginger, lime zest, lime juice and butter. Set aside or store in covered jar in refrigerator up to five

days. Lightly toast muffins in toaster or bake at 400 degrees for 5 to 7 minutes. Spread each half with ginger-lime butter. Arrange 2 or 3 slices smoked salmon on top. Garnish with fresh dill sprigs.

To serve as an hors d'oeuvre, cut the muffin halves into 4 triangular pieces, then bake on cookie sheets and toast. Proceed as above, using only 1 slice salmon on each.

On vacation

Betsy Brethen is on vacation. Her column, "Family-Tested Winner Dinner," will return in September.



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