

# Sequoia Grove showcases chardonnay

Sequoia Grove Vineyards is just north of Robert Mondavi Vineyards and Cabot Cellars along Highway 29 in Napa Valley.

Until the 1987 crush, the winery was housed in a remodeled, century-old barn, nestled among a small stand of towering sequoia trees.

In the early 1970s, owner Jim Allen had been looking for a place to grow grapes and make wine.

He considered Virginia and participated in a grape growing feasibility study in New Mexico. Making wine in New Mexico became a reality, but with grapes shipped from California.

For four years, the winery functioned in the Allen family kitchen, where Allen produced California cabernet sauvignon, chardonnay and zinfandel.

FINALLY, ALLEN and his wife, Barbara, decided to be practical and move to California to continue winemaking near a reliable grape source.

Sequoia Grove grows 25 acres of grapes (chardonnay, cabernet sauvignon, merlot and cabernet franc) in the vineyard surrounding the winery. Wines from this parcel are estate bottled.

Other grapes used to make the wines that have attracted an enthusiastic following are bought. The chardonnay is sourced from the Carneros region and the cabernet from Napa Valley.



## focus on wine

Eleanor and Ray Heald

### WINE SELECTIONS OF THE WEEK

Sequoia Grove Vineyards specializes in only two varieties, chardonnay and cabernet sauvignon. These super-premium wines are either estate bottled or appellation designated, and reflect the hand-crafting of winemaker/owner Jim Allen. The following are current releases available in this market: 1988 Carneros Chardonnay, (\$19); 1988 Estate-Bottled Chardonnay, (\$22); 1987 Napa Cabernet Sauvignon, (\$20); and 1987 Estate-Bottled Cabernet Sauvignon, (\$27).

Sequoia Grove estate-bottled chardonnays are made in a Montecito style from 35-year-old vines. They are complex, layered and structured with oak nuances.

"I want a classic, old-world chardonnay," Allen said. "It's important to me that the Sequoia Grove style showcase regional charm."

"I also want the wines to age well. Consequently, malolactic fermentation is avoided."

SEQUOIA GROVE'S Carneros appellation designated chardonnays are intentionally crisper and fruitier with earlier approachability.

Acids are higher due to the Carneros climatic influence, and the wine as a whole is tight-knit with up-front fruit and a crisp finish — a perfect accompaniment to shellfish.

"Monstrous wines are not my favorites."

TO AVOID a big, tannic style, Allen applies his winemaking tools to the Napa-designated cabernet sauvignons to keep them immediately supple and simultaneously complex.

"These wines, deserving a separate bottling should be unique."

Sequoia Grove Estate Cabernet Sauvignon is consciously made as a Bordeaux blend (90 percent cabernet sauvignon blended with 10 percent cabernet franc, merlot and petit verdot).

A 21-day extended maceration has given the wine complexity with a delicate finish.

"AGING CABERNET in small oak cooperage allows the wine to extract wood tannins that make the finish hard."

"Following fermentation, all Sequoia Grove cabernet spends the first six to eight months in large, neutral oak upright tanks. After this, the wine is aged further in small cooperage of which only 10 percent is new oak."

SINCE ALLEN was wearing the hats of winemaker, CEO and marketing director at Sequoia Grove, it became necessary to search for a wine marketing company.

"Our efforts led us to Kobrand, a respected group of professionals, which had been looking for an investment opportunity in California for 10 years."

Sequoia Grove wines, but have become limited partners in the winery.

In hindsight, it may now be said that Kobrand found an established winery with an outstanding product, but one that lacked the finances needed to market it.

The infusion of Kobrand's capital allowed the Allens to build a new winery behind the century-old barn — the first in Napa Valley to have a below-ground barrel-aging cellar.

# Family cookbooks are their specialty

See Larry Janes' column Taste Buds, Page 1B

price chart, payment policy, marketing ideas and deadlines.

• **Federal Publishing**, 410 Highway 72 West, Collierville, Tenn. 38017 (phone, 1-800-3517822). Brochure provides information about cover options, payment policy, marketing ideas.

• **Circulation Services Inc.**, P.O. Box 7398 Indian Creek Station, Kansas City Road, P.O. Box 1250, Olathe, Kan. 66061 (phone, 1-800-227-7282). Their introductory packet includes a variety of front cover and divider sections, how-to steps, prices and payment plans.

## new products

### • GREEK FOODS

Peloponnese has added four products to its line of farm-grown Greek foods and wines: Savory Eggplant Meze, Ladolemono (Lemon Caper) Dressing, Country Olive Mix and Glykadi Vinegar.

Savory Eggplant Meze is a vegetable mixture that can be stuffed into pita pockets or served on crusty bread.

It can also be used as a topping for baked fish, pasta and pizza, or served as a side dish with grilled meats or poultry. It is packaged in a 7½-ounce jar.

Ladolemono (Lemon Caper) Dressing is a classic Greek dressing made with olive oil, wild capers, garlic and lemon juice. It is available in a 12-ounce bottle.

COUNTRY OLIVE Mix is a blend of five distinct olive varieties packed in a delicate brine flavored with wild oregano and olive oil.

This product can be combined with lemon peel, garlic, chili flakes or herbs for hors d'oeuvres, or used as a garnish for soups, sandwiches and hot entrees. It is available in a 7½-ounce jar.

Glykadi Vinegar, which means "sweet vinegar," can be drizzled over roasted onions or tomatoes, pear and walnut salad, or any sweet-and-sour recipe. It is packed in a country-style, half-liter glass bottle.

These products are available by mail.

(For a catalog, write to: Peloponnese, 2227 Poplar St., Oakland, Calif. 94607.)

### • ICE CREAM

New from Haagen-Dazs: Coffee Toffee Crunch Ice Cream and Cookies & Cream Ice Cream.

Coffee Toffee Crunch Ice Cream is studded with pieces of all-natural toffee. Cookies & Cream is a blend of vanilla ice cream and chocolate wafer cookies. Both products are available in pints (suggested retail price: \$2.59).

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# Olive oil adds zest to bread and salads

## BRUSHETTA

Reprinted from the recently published, *Cranbrook Reflections, A Culinary Collection*, August 1991, Cranbrook House and Gardens Auxiliary \$19.95.

1 loaf crusty sourdough French bread, sliced  
¼ to ½ cup virgin olive oil  
5-6 large garlic gloves, peeled  
5-6 medium size ripe tomatoes, sliced ¼ inch thick  
20 large fresh basil leaves

Preheat broiler or barbecue grill. Slice several pieces of bread (¼-inch thick) and toast both sides. Remove, brush one side of each slice liberally

with olive oil. Rub each slice with a garlic clove, top with tomato slice and a basil leaf. Serve immediately. Continue repeating the process until all ingredients are used. Serves 8-10.

Cranbrook Reflections, A Culinary Collection is available at some local bookstores and by mail: \$19.95 plus \$9 cents tax plus \$3.50 postage and handling, Cranbrook Reflections, 380 Lone Pine Road Box 801, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303-0801.

**BASIC VINAIGRETTE DRESSING**  
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil  
2 tablespoons red wine or champagne vinegar  
salt to taste  
freshly ground black pepper to taste  
1 ½ teaspoons to 2 teaspoons quality

white wine mustard or fresh herb mustard

Mix ingredients in a blender or in a shaker jar. Shake or blend just before tossing.

**INSALTA DI MOZZARELLA**  
4 red peppers, cored, seeded and roasted  
¾ lb. fresh mozzarella cheese, cut in slices ¼ to ½-inch (available in Italian markets and gourmet shops)  
1 small head bibb lettuce

Dressing:  
6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
2 tablespoons lemon juice  
1 ½ tablespoons fresh, snipped basil leaves  
1 teaspoon anchovy paste

cracked black pepper salt, to taste  
Garnish: Watercress leaves, 12-16 small Nicola olives

To prepare peppers, coat the quarters with oil. Place them skin side up on a cookie sheet and roast under a broiler until skins are browned. Remove peppers to a small brown paper bag, close tightly, allow to set 5 minutes. Remove peel using a paring knife, cut into 1-inch strips and refrigerate. Mix dressing in a jar or a blender. At serving time arrange lettuce leaves on individual salad plates. Arrange pepper slices alternately with slices of cheese. Drizzle dressing over each. Garnish with watercress leaves and small Nicola olives. Serves 4.

## On vacation

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

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