

Beringer Vineyards and Contadina harmonize

Elegant wine-dining at home prepared in 15 minutes. Sound too good to be true? A current product promotion at local grocery markets and wine outlets links the wines of Beringer Vineyards and Contadina Fresh pastas and sauces to make it all possible.

Generally, we don't bite when we see these marketing gimmicks. Ber-

inger wines — OK, they're consistent top quality. Packaged pasta and sauces? Not for these two purists who make them at home from scratch using authentic Italian recipes.

SINCE THEY were introduced, we've pushed the shopping basket right past the Contadina Fresh pastas and sauces. We've resisted the

convenience because we "knew" they wouldn't be at all similar to homemade.

A wise man once said, "don't knock it till you try it." The current promotion caused us to do just that. We were more than pleasantly surprised.

The store displays of Beringer wines attract attention with eye-catching neckhangers. Some stores couple this with cross-merchandising displays in the refrigerated section near the Contadina Fresh pastas and sauces. Whichever you find, do capitalize on the mail-in, \$2 off coupons good on the Contadina products and the wines.

Featured wines include Beringer Chenin Blanc, White Zinfandel and Gamay Beaujolais. Since sweetened wines (chenin blanc and white zinfandel) don't pair well with red sauce, you need to consider your purchasing choice in advance for a proper food and wine harmony.

A WHITE sauce such as the Contadina Fresh Alfredo Sauce will work with the off-dry chenin and the slightly sweet white zinfandel. If you want to keep it light and white.

We concentrated on the red sauces with various pastas since this is our preference. Following the package directions, we prepared the Angel's Hair pasta and sampled it with each of four sauces (Plum Tomato with Basil, Fresh Garden Vegetable, Bolognese and Marinara), heated according to the microwave directions,



focus on wine

Eleanor and Ray Heald

The best wine and food harmony was achieved with the Fresh Garden Vegetable and the Bolognese sauces.

and a slightly chilled bottle of Beringer Gamay Beaujolais.

The best wine and food harmony was achieved with the Fresh Garden Vegetable and the Bolognese sauces. The first sauce should please any vegetarian. The vegetables are crunchy and the sauce is piquant, enhancing a slightly spicy element in the wine.

The Bolognese meat sauce is richly flavored and sticks to the pasta — a sign of quality. The balance between the wine's fruitiness and the richness of the sauce is a tempting taste treat.

Part two of the taste test consisted of preparing both the Contadina beef and chicken ravioli and sampling each with the same four red sauces evaluated previously with the An-

gel's Hair pasta. To introduce a note of creativity, we added a bottle of zinfandel to the taste arena.

THE GAMAY Beaujolais stood up to the challenge, but the zinfandel was a clear winner. Again, our preference was the Fresh Garden Vegetable sauce with the chicken ravioli and the Bolognese sauce with the beef ravioli.

Zinfandel served with the Bolognese and beef ravioli enriched the taste experience. The sauce's richness was complexed and the beefy flavor of the ravioli came forward. What's been discussed so far is an under 15-minute dinner preparation. Buy the pasta and sauce of your choice, prepare according to package directions, open a bottle of wine and you're done.

Grate some Parmesan cheese and assemble a fresh green leaf basil garnish while the pasta is cooking. No more prep time is added, but a note of elegance is.

Wine Bulletin Board

At the Rattlesnake Club in Detroit, 7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 14 — an exceptional opportunity to taste the entire line of Krug Grand Marque Champagnes with a five-course dinner prepared by Jimmy Schmidt. Cost is \$150 per person inclusive of tax, gratuity and valet parking. For reservations, call 567-4843.

On Monday, Sept. 16, at Glen Oaks Country Club (15 miles between Orchard Lake and Middlebelt) the Winemasters Great Wine Shootout — one of the most fun wine evenings presented in the area. This event, which sells out quickly at \$15 per person, offers an opportunity to sample many new wines available in the marketplace this fall. Call Dennis Walsh at 852-5533.

The 10th annual Detroit International Wine Auction will be 6 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 21, at the Edsel and Eleanor Ford House in Grosse Pointe. Auction proceeds support Detroit's Center for Creative Studies. Tickets for the black tie auction and dinner can be purchased by phoning 872-WINE at \$175 per person.

BUY IT. SELL IT. FIND IT...O & E CLASSIFIEDS

Elegance is easy with packaged pasta, sauce

To add greater notes of elegance to quick and easy meal ideas, the following recipes have been suggested by Contadina.

TORELLINI BROCHETTES IN PESTO SAUCE

Makes 12 servings as an appetizer
1/4 cup (7-oz. container) Contadina Fresh Pesto Sauce
3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
1 pkg. (9-oz.) Contadina Fresh Cheese Tortellini (Egg or Spinach) cooked and drained
1 1/4 cups green pepper, cut into 1/4-inch pieces
12-15 butter mushrooms
20-24 small cherry or yellow plum tomatoes
12 wooden skewers

In small bowl, combine pesto sauce and 2 tablespoons olive oil. Set aside.

Alternate tortellini, pepper, mushrooms and tomatoes on skewers using 7 to 8 tortellini per brochette. In shallow glass dish, marinate brochettes at room temperature in pesto and olive oil mixture for one hour, turning occasionally.

In large skillet, saute brochettes, a

few at a time, in 1 tablespoon olive oil until golden brown; about 30 seconds each side.

Arrange on platter; spoon remaining sauce over brochettes. Serve immediately.

SPINACH FETTUCCINE WITH SMOKED SALMON IN FOUR CHEESE SAUCE

(A tasty first or main course serving eight)
1/4 cup whipping cream
2 1/4 cups (two 12-oz. containers) Contadina Fresh Four Cheese Sauce
3 pkg. (9-oz. each) Contadina Fresh Spinach Fettuccine
2 cups (10-oz.) thinly sliced smoked salmon, cut into 1/4-by-1/4-inch strips
2 tablespoons fresh chopped chives

In medium saucepan, heat cream and four cheese sauce over low heat for 2 minutes or until heated through, stirring constantly. Keep warm. Cook fettuccine according to package directions. Drain. Divide sauce, pasta and salmon evenly between two large bowls. Toss gently. Arrange contents of bowls onto a large serving platter. Garnish with chives. Serve immediately.

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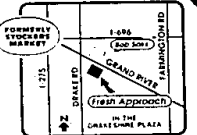
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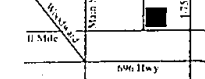
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