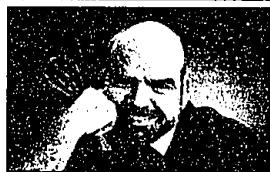


MONDAY, MAY 2, 1994

TASTE

TASTE BUDS



CHEF LARRY JONES

Walk your way to good food in 'City by the Bay'

Having experienced my first "red-eye" flight from San Francisco to Detroit, I sit at my word processor slugging down the fourth in a series of mugs of coffee from the highly touted Starbucks fame.

Now I know why they call it "Starbucks." My wallet was "starbuck" naked after the purchase. San Francisco is a coffee town, and coffee shops abound, but without a doubt, good fresh coffee with aroma, coffee that wakes and then says "good night," is readily available here. I like the house blend from The Coffee Beanery.

The "City by the Bay" hosted the International Association of Culinary Professionals conference, and the 16th annual Julia Child Cookbook Awards. Unfortunately, it was sunny and beautiful the five days we were held up at the Fairmont Hotel. Mother Nature decided to give the drought-stricken area a good dose of rain on the two days fellow foodies and I decided to check out the city and wine valley.

Cookbook awards

The Best Cookbook of the Year Award went to Dorra Goldstein's "The Georgian Feast: The Vibrant Culture and Savory Foods of the Republic of Georgia" (Harper-Collins \$27.50).

The book also claimed the Silver Whisk Award for best international cookbook. Other winner included Steven Raichlen's "Miami Spice" (Workman Publishing \$22.95), Daniel Leader & Judith Blahnik's "Bread Alone" (William Morrow, \$25.00) and, for all our vegan friends, Anne Sommerville's "Field of Greens" (Bantam Books, \$26.95) took top honors in the general competition.

All these books should be marked with a silver seal as winners in your local gourmet shop or cookbook store and are worth having on hand. San Franciscoers may be surprised to find any other city in our nation in accessible restaurants. I say accessible because with a great mass transit system or a good pair of shoes, you can walk just about anywhere and get great food. They do things a little different in the city known for fog and hills than they do here in metro Detroit.

Flavorful flowers

First off, folks on the West Coast must certainly love flowers. I sampled a deep-fried flower of unknown origin for an appetizer at LuLu's, sipped flower tea at the Pearl City dim sum palace in Chinatown, downed a salad with fresh sage flowers at Simi Vineyards in Sonoma, and cooled my palate with rose flower ice cream from the China Moon.

When I mentioned to momma that one salad I sampled was smothered with lilac blossoms, she rolled her eyes and muttered something about having your rollers too tight.

Then there were the restaurants. What kind of food do you like? was the big question. In addition to our dim sum visits, we sampled steamed chicken feet at a Hakkan style restaurant in North Beach, Tuscan cuisine from a trattoria in Little Italy and the cuisines of Singapore, Malaysia, Yugoslavia, Switzerland, Sweden, Vietnam, Australia and Hawaii, to name just a few. We ate with everything except our feet.

On a surprising note, we sampled the updated airline food on the flight via Northwest Airlines.

Northwest Airlines gathered a gaggle of chefs from around the country including chef Brian Polcyn of Acadia and Chimayo to try to update and upgrade the quality of airline food. Now there are two words seldom seen in the same line: quality and airline food.

Northwest's dinner buffet offered a choice of an Oriental salad that was mediocre (but better than an unidentifiable sandwich) or a gourmet lasagna with sausage, imported mushrooms and noodles that were superior to anything boxed.

A locally produced ice cream bar stuffed with Mackinaw Island Fudge was delicious, and I must say that the group was impressed.

I know we're rushing the season here a bit, but Denny Wright and the friendly folks at Wright's Hardware in Livonia are presenting an outdoor grilling clinic 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 7. Wright's Hardware is on Five Mile, just east of Middlebelt. Call (313) 422-2210 for more info.

See Larry Jones' sampling of some of the best foods he tasted in San Francisco inside. To leave a message for Chef Larry, dial 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number 1888.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

■ Area bakers share recipes for breads containing no fat but only trace amounts of fats.

■ Whether she's staging a super supper for her family or a local theater production, Lisa Andres stars in the role.



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Kitchen duty: Mike Battersby (left) and his daughters Clare, 9, Margaret, 13, and Katie, 11, work together to make Mother's Day brunch.

GIVE MOM THE Royal Treatment

BY SANDRA DALKA-PRYBY
SPECIAL WRITER

On Mother's Day, four Oakland County dads, including Michael Battersby of Beverly Hills, cook and clean and do other nice things for the women in their lives.

Battersby rounds up his three daughters to help him treat his wife and their mother, Trish, to a Mother's Day brunch. Oftentimes other Battersbys, including his mom and dad, Chris and Helen of Farmington Hills, and his five brothers and two sisters and their families, are invited to participate in the celebration.

"It's nice to be treated like a queen," said Trish. "It's also special when the whole family is included. They give my daughters the opportunity to tell their grandmother and aunts how much they are appreciated."

Michael, who is no stranger to the kitchen, decides the menu, does the shopping, prepares the food, serves it and cleans up afterward. With the help of Margaret, 13, Katie, 11, and Clare, 9.

"This is fun for me because I like cooking and I enjoy working with the girls," said Mike.

They're anticipating a big celebration this year, and everyone will bring a dish to pass. "Otherwise I'd be in the kitchen for a long time," said Mike.

Pampering mom on Mother's Day is a tradition in four Oakland County families. While the men and children cook and clean up, the women relax.

While the youngest Battersby, Clare, believes that "every day should be Mother's Day," Margaret can't understand why there isn't a "Kid's Day."

However, these two sisters agree that having a special day for mothers gives them a chance to let their mother know how much they appreciate her.

While the Battersby clan is enjoying brunch, three other south Oakland County men will be busy cleaning the patio, dragging outdoor furniture, checking the grill and preparing food for a late afternoon barbecue for their wives.

"We've done this for the past five years," said Stuart McCracken of Southfield. The work detail includes his father-in-law, William Littlejohn also of Southfield, and Paul Cullis of Bloomfield Township. The recipi-

ents of their labor are Vivienne McCracken, Margaret Littlejohn and Anne Cullis. All the couples are transplants from Great Britain.

According to the Littlejohns, Mother's Day is similar to an English tradition - "Mothering Sunday," which is celebrated in March.

"This day is celebrated simply. Children present their mothers with a flower, such as a daffodil, and maybe a small box of chocolates in church," said Margaret.

She added that she has the good fortune of being recognized as a mother twice a year. "My son in London sends me flowers in March, and my daughter honors me at the barbecue in May."

The traditional barbecue is a welcome treat for Vivienne, whose sons Jonathan, 11, and

Alister, 7, help their father with preparations. "A mother of two active boys should be waited on at least one day a year," she said.

"Any mother deserves special treatment once in a while, and the men do a pretty good job of pampering us," said Anne, who also has a son, Jonathan, 8, and daughter, Emma, 6.

The men also get good reviews for their cooking. Each year the main dish changes, but Paul's "Key Lime Pie" is a consistent favorite. "I'm just a 'sometimes cook,' so I like to stick with something I know," he said.

William cooks on a regular basis and likes to try new dishes. "It's usually my job to select the menu," he said. This year the menu calls for marinated flank steak, a dish assigned to Stuart.

"The nicest part of our Mother's Day tradition, according to the three women, is that they don't have to clean up. 'It's such a treat to get out of washing dishes and putting things away,'" Vivienne added.

Since one good turn deserves another, will the three women give the royal treatment to their husbands on Father's Day?

"Do we have to?" they asked. Then, with smiles on their faces, they said that they always try to make Father's Day as nice for their husbands as the men have done for them.

Refreshing Cru Beaujolais a spring arrival

FOCUS ON WINE



ELEANOR & RAY HEALD

Wine consumers think of Beaujolais just before Thanksgiving when the Beaujolais Nouveau is released as the first wine bottled after the harvest. It is young, very grapey and barley wine. Cru Beaujolais arrives in the spring. It has more complexity, it is real wine, and, when slightly chilled, can satisfy a red wine drinker on a warm day.

Beaujolais is made from the gamay grape and grown in the northern Burgundy region of the same name. Technically, Beaujolais is Burgundy, but it is a fruity wine without the depth or longevity of red Burgundies made in the Cote d'Or from the more aristocratic pinot noir grape.

These rains made 1993 a dismal year for the rest of Burgundy.

Didier Mommessin represents the fourth generation in his family to make wine in Burgundy and Beaujolais.

"The wines of Beaujolais represent a brilliant exception to the rest of the 1993 vintage," he said. Mommessin recommends the 1993 Cru Beaujolais, wines grown in 10 specially designated regions where they develop increased roundness and flavor depth. Of the 10 Beaujolais "crus," Mommessin divides them into two groups.

The first five are light with good fruit and early attractiveness. They are Brouilly, Chénas, Chiroubles, Côte de Brouilly and Regnie.

The second five "crus" have increased complexity, fullness and longevity. They are Morgon, Julienas, St. Amour, Fleurie and Moulin-A-Vent.

We found the 1993 Mommessin Brouilly (\$10) showing fresh cherry and raspberry aromas and flavors in a light refreshing style. Serve it chilled below room temperature to enhance the fruitiness. The 1993 Mommessin Fleurie (\$10) has exuberant fruit, good depth, with a slight spritz in a

Wine Selections

If you are interested in tasting Mommessin 1993 Cru Beaujolais and can't find them in your favorite wine shop, ask your merchant to get them for you. They are available now, and at \$10 per bottle, represent very good values.

Other wines worth a search:

1992 Rosemount Cabernet Sauvignon (\$10)
1992 Rosemount Merlot (\$10)
1992 Kenwood Reserve Chardonnay (\$18)
1991 Kenwood Merlot (\$16)
1992 DeLoach Chardonnay (\$15)
1992 Chateau Ste. Michelle Chardonnay (\$13)
1991 Joseph Phelps Merlot (\$18)
1991 Fattor Reserve Zinfandel (\$12.50)

Best buys:

1992 Antinori Santa Cristina, Sangiovese Toscana (\$7)
1992 Chateau Souverain Sauvignon Blanc (\$8)
1991 Napa Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon (\$8)