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undergoes malolactic fermentation and remains on the yeast lees for about seven months. Don't misunderstand, the wine does not imitate chardonnay in its flavor profile. It just benefits from the tools.

The 1992 Chalk Hill Sauvignon Blanc (\$16) is a happy blend of ripe tropical, melony fruit with the slightest hints of new-mown grass. It has tantalizing palate texture that is creamy, rich, full and flavorful. The bad news is that this wine is targeted principally for on-premise sale in your favorite restaurant — ask for it specifically and complement just about any seafood dish you choose.

This was the general consensus of our table as we sampled it with a variety of seafood at Charley's Crab in Troy. The wine made a perfect match to soft-shell crab, crab cakes and several species of broiled white fish. Yes, the wine's a touch pricier than many other sauvignons on the market, but there's none more stylish.

We compared the 1990 and 1991 Chalk Hill Cabernet Sauvignon (\$18.50) side-by-side.

It was a tie-said for the 1990 because of its overall bigness and Bordeaux-like flavor. He said for the 1991 for the brighter fruit expression and resolved tannins. You should still be able to find both wines — although the 1990 may take a search — and make a similar comparison.

At Chalk Hill, the cabernet is aged exclusively in Bordeaux-coopered barrels, 50 percent new each vintage, for a period of about 20 months. Shallow, gravelly soils on the estate are ideally suited for cabernet sauvignon.

If great winemaking continues at Chalk Hill as it has so far in the 1990s, it's destined to be on our list of wineries of the decade

Wine Selections of the Week

For oenophiles lovers

- 1992 Cypress \$7.75
- 1992 Domaine de Bernier (France) \$9
- 1993 Santa Rita #17
- 1992 Dry Creek Vineyard \$18.25
- 1992 Bernardus \$13.50
- 1992 Silverado Vineyards \$14.50
- 1992 Hess Collection \$14.50 - dynamite flavors
- 1992 Burgess Cellars, Triere Vineyard \$19

Sauvignon blanc for summer seafoods

- 1993 Santa Rita 120 (Chile) \$6.50
- 1993 Santa Rita Reserva #2 1993 Silverado \$9.50

Best reds under \$10

- 1992 Santa Rita (Chile) Merlot \$6.50
- 1992 Round Hill Merlot \$7
- 1992 Cypress Merlot \$9
- 1991 Castello d'Albota Chianti Classico \$9

A different cut above

- 1990 Nozzolo Chianti Classico \$12.50
- 1992 Chateau Souverain Camerone Pinot Noir \$13.50
- 1991 Madiran Creek Merlot \$28.50
- 1988 Greppone Mazzi Reserva Brunello di Montalcino \$38

by the new millennium.

To leave a message on the Herald's voice mail — dial 953-2047, mailbox 1864.

Have a little more taste with pasta

See related article on Taste front.

CAPELLINI POMODORO

- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 pounds plum tomatoes, seeded and diced
- 1 ounce fresh basil leaves, minced
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 ounces Parmesan cheese, freshly grated
- 12 ounces angel hair pasta, cooked
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Cook pasta according to package instructions. Keep warm. Meanwhile, mince garlic and basil. Set aside. Seed and dice tomatoes. Grate Parmesan cheese. Heat olive oil in 1 1/2 quart skillet over medium heat. Add garlic and cook until it turns white. Add tomatoes and pepper and heat through, stirring constantly, about 2 to 3 minutes. Tomatoes should not lose their shape. Remove from heat. Transfer hot, cooked pasta into a large bowl. Toss pasta gently with tomato mixture, basil and half the Parmesan cheese. Serve immediately and pass remaining cheese.

Recipe provided by The Olive Garden. Although this is a warm dish, it is a great summer main course because of its simplicity.

GRILLED CHICKEN PASTA SALAD

- 12 ounces pasta
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 cup olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 tablespoons basil
- 2 teaspoons oregano
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 grilled chicken breast, boneless and skinless
- 1 zucchini, sliced 1/4-inch thick
- 1 summer squash, sliced 1/4-inch thick
- 2 cup thin sliced red onion
- 1 cup thin sliced red bell pepper
- 2 Roma tomatoes chopped
- 6 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

4 tablespoons chopped Italian parsley, fresh

Cook pasta in 4 quarts of boiling water. Put two tablespoons of salt in the boiling water with pasta to prevent sticking. Cook pasta until al dente, about 4 minutes. Drain, rinse with cool water, toss with 2 tablespoons oil and refrigerate. Mix 1/4 cup olive oil, 1 clove garlic, 1 tablespoon basil, 1 teaspoon oregano and 1/4 teaspoon black pepper.

Pat chicken breast, zucchini and summer squash with oil mixture; grill (vegetables should only stay on the grill about 1 minute). Cut chicken into 2-inch strips, combine with remaining vegetables and places over pasta.

Combine remaining olive oil, garlic, spices and vinegar and pour over salad; toss lightly. Chill and serve. Serves 4.

Recipe courtesy of Mama Mucci's Pasta in Plymouth.

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Faye Fitzgerald, a HeartSmart dietician, recommends working with julienne to flavor pasta salads without the fat.

Other salad dressing might incorporate yogurt or mayonnaise. If pecking for a picnic, these are best avoided because of the bacteria that may grow as a result of exposure to the heat.

Basil is perhaps the most basic seasoning for pasta salad dressings. In the summer months, Chimento said only go for the real thing.

The fresh basil is readily available and will make a big difference in the taste. Italian parsley is another flavorful addition to a pasta salad. It is more robust than the traditional curly American variety.

Mucci recommends going crazy with the vegetables.

"Try all kinds of vegetables," Mucci said. "You might surprise them or grill them before tossing them in."

The Chef responds

See Larry Jones' Taste Buds column on Taste front.

Eva Gent of Westland wanted to know about Gostaborn peppers, an elongated Italian roasting pepper that's also growing in her garden. Gent wanted to know the best way to roast them.

Roasting peppers eliminates the bitter skin. Slice peppers in half lengthwise, remove the seeds and place peppers under a broiler or over hot coals to char and blacken the skin.

Place blistered peppers in a small brown paper bag to steam, and then run them under a faucet. The skins should peel right off. You can use them in sauces or purées.

Mrs. Gross of Troy wanted to know if you can dehydrate fresh tomatoes. All tomatoes can be dried using a food dehydrator, but the best ones are Roma tomatoes, which have less water and an intense flavor when dehydrated.

Follow manufacturer's directions for dehydrating.

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