

MONDAY, APRIL 3, 1995

TASTE

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TASTE BUDS



CHEF LARRY JONES

Strike a balance with the fats in your diet

The human body needs more than 40 different nutrients. These are divided into five major classes — fats, proteins, carbohydrates, minerals and vitamins.

Nowadays, fats are perceived as sinful, and fat people are no longer "jolly" or even "voluptuous." Fat has become a bad word.

But it is essential to remember that fats are a vital nutrient. The body needs some fats for good health, and food doesn't taste good without any fat.

A good goal is to try to balance the amount and type of fat you need with the amount of fat you desire.

Chemically speaking, fats belong to a group of organic compounds called lipids. In the simplest sense, lipids are compounds that will not easily dissolve in water. Lipids can be solid or liquid.

Important roles

Fats play many roles. They supply fuel for many tissues. When fat is ingested, the body utilizes some of it for energy, then stores the rest in tissue increasing the amount of fat in blood plasma and other body cells. Body fat also serves as insulation against climatic temperature changes, prevents body heat loss, and helps protect vital organs.

Fats hold and carry flavors and aromas, contributing to taste appeal. Oil-soluble flavors coat the taste buds, so they remain on the tongue, lingering to create a complex taste quality scientists call "mouthfeel." Foods lacking fat lack mouthfeel; they don't taste as good of subliminally urge us to take another bite. Oil-soluble aromas also linger, remaining to give pleasure, even after food is swallowed.

After dietary fats are eaten and digested, they tend to leave the stomach slowly, thereby contributing to a feeling of fullness.

According to the American Heart Association, the average American diet presently gets more than 40 percent of its total calories from fat. Most health authorities recommend a daily fat intake of no more than 30 percent, while conservative voices prefer 20-25 percent or even less.

Needless to say, I don't have to tell you that diets high in saturated fats raise cholesterol levels, are a risk factor for coronary heart disease, atherosclerosis (clogging of the arteries), inadequate circulation, strokes, late-in-life diabetes and certain cancers. But in my opinion, fat makes the food I eat taste good. Omitting it and substituting it with low-fat or no-fat products greatly alters the food to such a degree that I would almost prefer not to eat it in the first place.

To me, fat-free cream cheese tastes like hardened plain non-fat yogurt. Fat-free mayonnaise has no taste whatsoever. Fat-free salad dressing is loaded with things that make all the herbs and spices remain suspended throughout the bottle. Even vigorous shaking barely moves the emulsified mixture. Skim milk tastes like water to me.

Trimming fats

I've lost 62½ pounds in the last eight months. To lose this weight, I had to start adding up and cutting the amount of fat in my diet. What am I doing to trim the fat from my diet?

First off, I stay away from purchasing "no fat" items. Not only do I not like the way they taste, but I believe "moderation" is the key. We need to control what we put into our mouths.

Secondly, if there's one thing I've learned the last year, it's that we must read labels. You would be shocked at the amount of sugar, sucrose, syrup, artificial flavorings, artificial colors and assorted chemicals that are placed into our food supply.

Next, I've cut down my fat intake simply by increasing the flavor in my foods. Where once my refrigerator was filled with eggs, now fresh lemons take their place. Where once the salt shaker reigned supreme, now a Mrs. Dash table blend is inescapable.

I used to douse my spinach salad with bacon grease; now I use a heated herb-infused canola oil. Where just last month real vegetable oil would only be used in my quick breads and muffins, I have cut the oil in half and substituted pumpkin puree, fruit butters and applesauce. The lesson is this — you don't have to give up all the foods you enjoy to become healthier. All you have to do is exercise restraint and substitute fatty flavorings with ones that are good for you.

See Larry Jones' family-tested recipes inside. Chef Larry is a free-lance writer for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. To leave a voice mail message for him dial (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number 1888.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- For some families, Honeybaked Hams are an Easter tradition.
- Super supper features taste of the Old West.



KEAT ZOLYNSKY/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Holiday fare: Paul Kohn, president and owner of Quality Kosher Catering (left to right), Michael Miller, executive chef and Patricia Paterni, executive director with some holiday dishes and pastries.

BY ANNE LEIDMANN
STAFF WRITER

For observant Jews, preparation for Passover starts weeks before the actual holiday begins. It's spring cleaning gone wild, ridding the home of every morsel of chametz — foods made from grains and leavened products; stocking kitchen shelves with Passover cookware (dishes, silverware, cookware that is not used for the preparation of foods, which include grains and leavened products throughout the year); shopping for Passover foods, and preparing meals for family and friends who gather for the eight day holiday.

The first Seder, the commemorative meal which recalls the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt, will be held on the evening of April 14, many foods which grace the Seder table, from the matzo to the bitter herbs,

KOSHER CATERER EASES Passover PANIC

are symbolic of the years the Israelites spent as slaves in Egypt and their ultimate redemption.

Preparing for the holiday and the Seders is an awesome task that for many can be overwhelming.

Paul Kohn of Quality Kosher Catering understands this challenge well. A caterer with a reputation for innovative and unusual kosher fare, Kohn's operation goes into high gear to provide top-of-the-line oven ready kosher for Passover foods for his clientele. He has been doing this since 1981 for people from as far away as Mexico and California. His Passover menu includes traditional foods which are simple, elegant and flavorful including matzo ball soup, gefilte fish, an assortment of chicken and

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Wines of Guigal are famed worldwide

Since 1962, Marcel Guigal has carried on the scrupulous winemaking methods of his late father, Emme, who founded the firm of E. Guigal in 1946. Today, the wines of Guigal are famed worldwide as some of the very best from France's Rhone Valley. While he continues a traditional style of Rhone wines, Marcel has not hesitated to modernize and use the latest in technology ensuring perfection in every bottle.

Guigal's red wines are made with long contact among juice, skins and stems, known as maceration. After pressing, wines are aged in both large and small oak casks for three to four years. For most Rhone producers, it's a two years. Wines are racked, but not fined or filtered. For you, this means that if these wines are cellared for a few years, they will throw a sediment in the bottle and will need decanting before serving. While this sounds like a pain in the neck, it is well worth the effort.

From many producers over the years, we've tasted the same wine bottled and filtered and unfined and unfiltered. In every case, our preference is the unfined and unfiltered bottling. Fining and filtering leave a wine brilliant, but in the

process a wine is stripped of flavor components.

A modernization that has improved on tradition at Guigal is the use of a higher proportion of new oak barrels than is common in the Rhone.

"My historical research indicates that the best wines were traditionally aged in the newest casks available," said Guigal. "I am striving to make the best wines."

Since Guigal red wines age so long, they are released for sale one to three years later than most Rhone wines. This is a point to note since most American consumers are hyper vintage conscious. Guigal's latest red releases are 1990. Most other Rhones currently on the market are from the 1992 vintage.

Guigal's bottling line is ultramodern, providing protection against oxidation and spoiled wines. This allows less use of sulfur dioxide in the winemaking process from grape crushing through cellar aging and bottling.

Guigal's wines, solely from the traditional Rhone Valley appellations, include the white wines Con

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Tasting notes

- 1993 Guigal Condrieu (\$33) — generous fruit profile with vanilla accents in the nose. Delicate fruit flavors with balanced oak influence. Intriguing pleasure and aboultu charm. Served with lobster or monkfish with rich sauce.
- 1990 Guigal Gigondas (\$10) — Melange of fresh fruits with hints of anise and spice. Mellow and flavorful with onion soup.
- 1990 Guigal Chateaufort-du-Pape (\$20) — Delicious flavors and spicy, rich fruit.
- 1990 Guigal Cote Rotie (\$31) — Aromas of lavender, smoked bacon and peppery spice. Generous palate. Flavorful, lengthy finish just right for beef tenderloin accompanied by wild mushrooms as is the 1990 Guigal Hermitage (\$35) which is big, with firm aromas, flavor and generous fruit complexity by leather and spice.

Dates to remember

- By dialing the 1-800-BOLLA-03 hotline (24 hours, seven-days-a-week, until May 30) callers receive expert advice on cooking easy-to-prepare Mediterranean meals, recommendations for selecting complementary wines and a free recipe booklet produced by Bolla Italian Wines and Colanta Olive Oil.
- Mondays, April 24 through May 22, 7:30-9:30 p.m. — "Tracing Wine Origins," spring tasting seminar, \$10 person, at Birmingham's Townsend Hotel, conducted by Eleanor & Ray Heald. Call (810) 844-3443 for information.

Pick of the crop:

- 1992 Dry Creek Vineyards Old Vine Zinfandel (\$14) — one of the best old vine zins from California
- Serve these chardonnays with salmon, swordfish, scallops, veal, pork, chicken, rabbit, mild cheese gratin, polenta or a mild, nutty cheese such as Monterey Jack.
- 1992 Simi (\$13)
- 1993 Meridian Estate Valley (\$14)
- 1993 Clos du Bois Calcare (\$18)
- 1993 Beringer Private Reserve (\$20)
- 1993 Murphy-Goodie Reserve (\$24)
- Cabernets to complement well-seasoned beef, lamb shanks, pork and salty meats or tomato-based pasta.
- 1992 Fetzer Bonterra (\$8)
- 1992 Alexander Valley Vineyards (\$15)
- 1992 Javel (\$12.50)
- Salmon, smoked trout or richly-sauced pasta will match these pick nora:
- 1993 Villa Mt. Eden (\$14)
- 1993 Buena Vista Pinot Reserve (\$18)
- 1993 Chateau Souverain Reserve (\$18)
- Best buys under \$10:
- 1993 Mirasou Dry Chardonnay (\$6)
- 1993 Rebound Hot Chardonnay (\$7)
- 1993 Villa Mt. Eden Coler Select Chardonnay (\$8)