TASTE

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1995

TASTE BUDS



Poor fruitcake suffers from a bad reputation

It has been around forever, and people either love it or hate it.

"It" has been the brunt of many jokes, and employees crings whenever they see the circular or log shape hidden discreetly under their super-

or tog simps induced uncerted, which that a provisor's armpit.

It has been said that fruitcake makes an excellent door stop. Maybe you even heard the joke—there's really only one fruitcake in the world, and it's been passed around for years?

Family tradition

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Poor fruitcake. It has such a bad reputation. Many people don't even want to taste it, let alone make it. My distlike of fruitcake is notorious throughout the Janes Gang family. In our family, fruitcake is a holiday symbol of our roots. Momma has been making them since I can remember. She always starts the day after Thanksgiving. This gives her ample time to use a clean dish towel to 'pat' the fruitcakes biweekly with cheap whiskey which, in my opinion does nothing more than help kill the taste buds of whomever is crazy or drunk enough to eat it. Unlike other members of the clan, my disduin is more verbal, and it has been rumored that the source of my discontent might eventually cost me a share of the inheritance.

With my luck I'll get the fruitcake pans, all 12 of them!

of them!

As much as I can tell, there are many reasons for cooks not to like fruitants. Too many of them have been made just as a holiday commodity. Does anyone over cut those fruitants that grace the check-out lines at stores?

Of course the cheanse fruitants are attented.

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Of course the cheaper fruitcakes are stretched by the addition of a lot more batter (not always good tasting) while being pretty shy and skimpy on the fruit and nut!

Then there are shipping costs \$37.95 to ship a fruitfake at the fourth class book rate. Most people think fruitcakes should be dense and weigh at least as much as a cinder block.

Miss Manners once said that "if so inclined to give a fruitcake, especially as a host or hostess gift, one should at least include a new pan in which it was baked so as not to make the gift a total loss."

Use fresh ingredients

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But believe it or not, there are trendy ways to make a finiticake that someone will want to taste. If you dare to bake your own fruitcake, begin with good ingredients. Look for a fresh supply of dried fruit and nuts. Vie's in Novi and Beverly Hills, the Marketplace in Plymouth, Papa Joe's in Rochester, Westborn in Berkley and Dearborn, Joe's in Livonia, Nine Salvaggio in Farmington Hills and Morchant of Vine will offer a freshor selection of dried nuts and fruits than any groery store.

If you can, taste the nuts before you buy them Fruitcake junkies (yes, there are some who actually admit to being fruitcake afficionados) will be in seventh heaven at Bocky Peanut Company in the Eastern Market area of Detroit. They stock dried fruits galore and the absolute freshest nuts

dried fruits galore and the absolute freshest nuts money can buy.

Ask any professional baker, and they will gree that you must always use the freshest eggs, the best flour (unbleached) and whenever possible, fresh ground spices.

Cookbook author Fio Braker gets her eggs from a local farm, triple sifts her flour and uses an old electric coffee grader to fresh grind cinnamon, nutmeg, cardamom and crystallized ginger.

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If you're looking for reference material, there
are a multitude of great holiday cookbooks and
magazines with holiday baking recipes. I was
lucky enough to stumble upon a \$8.05 tiltel javel
of a book at the Friends of the Library gift alsop
at Livonia's Civic Center Library. Dubbed "Baking for Christmas" (copyright 1950 by Maria
Robbins, St. Martin's Griffin Publishers, \$6.95),
this tiny 100 page book is jam packad with tatty
treats that can be made and given as holiday
gifts or simply enjoyed at home. Trust me, if you
bake, you'll snjoy this book.

Happy baking!

Chef Larry Jones is a free-lonce writh for the Neutron & Eccentric Newspapers. To lieve a vice mail message for him dial (314) 963-2047 n a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number

LOCKING AHEAD

watch for Ex Taken next wee

The state of the

Festival of lights illuminates traditions

BY NORMAN PRADY . SPECIAL WRITER

o all need a winter celebration.

"And this is ours," said Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine of the
Birmingham Temple in Farmington.

"Both Hanukkah and Christmas are responses to the winter
solatice," said Wine, talking about late December's lengthening
of days and renewal of light, symbolized by the lighting of the

of days and renewal of light, symbolized by the lighting of the menorah candles.
Called The Festival of Lights, Hanukkah traditionally celebrates the rededication of the ancient Jewish Temple in the second century B.C.
Following desceration of the temple by Syrian forces, Judas Maccabeus load the Maccabees family in the restoration work, using the only lamp oil available, a one-day supply that lasted for the eight days required for the

led the Maccabees family in the restoration work, using the only lamp oil available, a one-day supply that insted for the eight days required for the selving of human problems lies within human beings, said Wine.

In his congregation, the rabbi says, "emphasis is not on the miracle of the lights, but on the courage of the Maccabees, because it's a story of people/fighting for their natural freedom."

Traditional control of the matter of the fights, but on the courage of the Maccabees, because it's a story of people/fighting for their natural freedom."

Traditional dishen and once-e-year desserts.

This year, Hanukkah eleberations begin at sundown on Sunday, Dec. 17 with the lighting of a single candle in the eight-branched menorah. On the second night, two candles are lit, three on the third, until finally, on the eighth night, the monorah is fully ablaze in commemoration of the miracle of the ameient oil lamp.

At Congregation BYNsi Moshe, West Bloomfield, members are planning a little dinner for 400, featuring vegetarian and dairy dishes. All preparation and cooking will be done members, according to the coordinators, Ruth Shuyne, of Farmington Hills, and Renee Levine, of West Bloomfield. Word is that "Reneo's Rice" is sure to be as big a hit this year as last.

Levine, who invented the dish, is a Moreccan native who moved to Montreal at age 15 and came to the U.S. some years later. Her recipe uses the spice turmeric, which she calls "curcuma," using the New Latin word derived from Arubic as it appears in her French-language Jewish cookbook published in Morecco.

The Birmingham Temple alse is planning a family dinner, featuring acanoned roust chicken and potato latkes (pancakes), by Clausic Cuisine Catering, operated by Jania Levin-Gorelick and Jeff Swider, and headquartared at the temple.

Levin-Gorelick is happy to tell the world how she makes and her special chicken, but politoly refuses to reveal the recipe for her allegedly incredible dessert, somewhat suggestively named Chooc-Chunk Cookies.

■ The Cougregation B'Nai Moshe dinner is scheduled 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 18. Call (810) 788-0660 for information.

■ The Birmingham Temple dinner is scheduled 6:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 15. Call (810) 477-1410 for information.

See recipes inside.

It's fun to buy wines at a benefit auction

cliaring a case of wine from a wedding year, birth year of children or any sentimental occasion is becoming more commonplace. We receive voice mail inquiries about acquiring wines from a particular vintage year. One of the ways is through an auction. Currently, an improved economy has resulted in an energized wime auction market with aggressive bidding and rising prices for many clder wines, especially Bordeaux from top vintages such as 1982. Since Michigan has two charity wine auctions receiving international attention, we decided the address the issue of wine seutions. Each fall, The Dutroit International Wine Auction raises money for the Center for Creative Studies. Each spring, the Ann Arbor Art Center conducts WineFest which literally turns wine into art.

Traditional ioo, are family and congregational dinners with special main

and side

dishes, and once-a-year desserts.

Ann Arbor Art Cemes
WineFest which literally turns wino
into art.
Conducting wine auctions can also
be a business. For about 15 years,
Chicago has been a center for wine
cution activity. Given the city's
central location, idders spend a
weekend shopping and dining and
also attending a Davis & Company
auction at the University Club of
Chicago, a landmark facility across
the street from the Art Institute.
Devis & Company is the only wine
succion house operating in North
America which has maintained its
buyers commission at 10 percent, A
other suction houses are charging;
15 percent against the hannes.

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at \$2,310 per case. Understand, this is not a charrity auction. This is a letthogood-times-rull purchase either for consumption or cellaring, in hopes that the price will rise further and a profit can be made.

"An auction is a fun way to buy wine." Mary Lou Janes of Bloomfield Hills said, She and her husband Richard are avid supporters of CCS and were active bidders at the Detroit International Wine Auction. "We mark up the auction catalog totally, Mrs. Janes continued." We love wine and we like the charity. The Detroit International Wine Auction reserved \$100,000 corporate love wine and we like the charity. The Detroit International Wine Auction reserved \$100,000 corporate Auction reserved \$100,000 corporate and the contract of the contra

the Detroit Auction. He hause una year's event as "the most well-run and lively in the 10 years I've been attending." When saked about ham mer prices; he believed people over paid for wine, but added 'people viswed it as a tur way to buy wine.

Tobaccus School Services the politics of Reprises. It is the number 1993 Boigle Cabernist Sauvignon \$6 1993 Gayler Peak Cabernist Sauvignon \$12 1993 Gayler Peak Cabernist Sauvignon \$12 1993 Hess Beller Cabernist Sauvignon \$10 1992 Raymond Cabernist Sauvignon \$17 1992 For Springs Cebernist Sauvignon \$17 1992 For Springs Cebernist Sauvignon \$40 1993 Reculled Vineyard Goorgen de Latiour Private Resorve \$40

Join the ANC Clab (Alternatives Separal Chardo

uni ma amu cusi (Amerikani Reynol Chardoning) (1994 Mirmolo White Bullyninol) ((Hoto blanc) 37 1994 Villa Mi Exter Priori Blanc \$10 1995 Children Vingyard Priori Blanc \$10 1994 Children Frait (1994 Priori Blanc) 1994 Children Fall (1994 Priori Blanc) 1995 (1994 Priori Bl

Zichandol gernes marr han each year — a greet af 1993 Kunde Zinfandel Contury Vines \$14 1993 Konwood Nun's Carrion Zinfandel \$12 1993 Haywood Zinfandel Rocky Terrace \$18

Our quick research into lots and prices at Davis & Company showed that people used the charity attitude for some lota, but for others, high bidders were not only charitable, they got a good price.

With waning endowments for the arts, the Ann Arbor Art Center counts heavily on its Winefest auction and activities to support such programs as Art Start, roviding free classes for elementary school-aged children. ArtVentures promotes art history and cultural swarmages in a drop-in activity ron on the Art Center.

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Although WineFeel oceme a long
way off, Saturday, April 27, 1996 to
he mant, adjutation is well under
well, Mathiania Creek Winery borne

Sandra MacIver will serve as hon-orary chairperson. In speaking with MacIver by phone she commented that wine is art and WineFost makes this connection very well.

For further inquiries about wins

Davis & Co. Wine Auctioneero, Ltd., 361 West Chestnut Street, Chicago, IL 60610, (312) 654-1800: Center for Creative Studies, 201: Center for Creative Studies, 201 E. Kirby, Detroit, MI 48202, (318) 872-3118.

Ann Arbor Art Center WineFest, 117 W. Liberty, Ann Arbor, MI 48104, (313) 994-8004.

To leave a message on the Heald's police mail - dial 953-2047, mailba