

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1996

TASTE

B

TASTE BUDS



CHEF LARRY JANES

Cookbook puts new spin on salads

Salads have long taken a bad rap. To most people, salads are diet food; flavorless, low-calorie bowls of boring greens and lifeless vegetables. Finally, someone has come up with something new, and refreshing. "Lettuce in Your Kitchen" by Chris Schlesinger and John Willoughby, (William Morrow Publishers, copyright 1996, \$22.50) redefines salads, and will forever change its negative image.

Schlesinger and Willoughby, who also wrote "The Thrill of the Grill," and "Big Flavors of the Hot Sun," have put together a book that gives salad a whole new spin, with dressings that do double duty, the best part about it, most of the recipes don't require turning on a stove, or microwave oven. The majority of these recipes are, as Maynard G. Krebs used to say, "cool, man."

Beyond tradition

In "Lettuce in Your Kitchen," the authors widen the definition of salad, opening the door to creativity. They tell readers everything you may want to know about traditional greens like lettuce and spinach, and give a wide definition of spicy greens such as watercress, arugula, and cooking greens such as beet, turnip, kale and Asian greens.

I don't want you to think we're discussing rabbit food here folks, because after the chapter on greens, the book explains how to develop a salad, and add flavor combinations. Black beans, lentils, chicken, seafood, fruits, nuts, and even lemon flavored bread crumbs, are suggested ingredients for cool, satisfying salad meals.

There are recipes for salads for every appetite — big salads, brown bag salads, fancy salads, and even vegetarian salads.

Dressing lovers will be able to gauge their expertise on making everything from a simple chunky blue cheese to creamy chipotle vinaigrette. There are more than 98 dressing recipes in "Lettuce in Your Kitchen."

Nutrient rich

Lettuce and other greens have traditionally been a dietary staple in the U.S. But now, we're finding that like grains and legumes, greens are very good for you. They are universally high in fiber, contain large amounts of vitamins C and E and beta-carotene, which are antioxidants, which supposedly help prevent cancer. In addition, the darker the green the greater amounts of folic acid, which help prevent certain birth defects, and may also assist in preventing some forms of cancer. Greens of all types are also rich in phytochemicals, the macro nutrients that aid in disease prevention.

There are some basic rules about salad making the authors suggest.

"The first rule is that there are no rules," writes Schlesinger, "just important things to keep in mind when choosing greens and vegetables."

Choose only the freshest ingredients. Leaves on greens should be crisp, free from dark spots, and when possible, purchased with the roots still attached.

John Willoughby claims the biggest problem when making salads are "wet greens because they prevent the dressing from clinging to leaves."

Without a doubt, this book is particularly timely, but its appeal shouldn't be limited to the peak produce season. The authors have spun thrill back into salads, transforming them from a usually familiar course into an inventive, unexpected eating experience. You won't go wrong with this book on your cookbook shelf.

Here's a recipe to try:

CUCUMBER MINT DRESSING

- 1/3 cup peeled, seed and chopped cucumber
- 1/4 cup non fat plain yogurt
- 1/4 cup prepared mango chutney
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh mint
- 1/4 cup chopped curry powder
- 1 tablespoon black pepper to taste

In a blender or food processor, puree the cucumbers, yogurt, chutney and oil until smooth. Add mint and curry powder and pulse to blend. Transfer to a bowl and season with salt and pepper. Makes 2/3 cup.

Nutrition information: 45 calories per tablespoon, 1 gram protein, 3 grams fat (0.6 saturated fat), 5 grams carbohydrate.

• See more recipes inside.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:
■ Laura's Fat Free Kitchen.



Bag a lunch your kids will eat

And don't forget to surprise your child with an occasional note or picture.



Lunchtime fun: (Top photo) Gilbert the Fish, a new lunch kit from Rubbermaid Specialty Products Inc., provides easy access to lunch through its oversized mouth that unzips to fold down as a place mat. (Photo above) S'mores S'mores, an easy cookie bar, pairs a crunchy cookie crust with layers of melted chocolate, marshmallow and oatmeal cookie crumbs.

BY CHRISTINE VENEMA
Home Economist

It's that time of year again — new lunch boxes waiting to be filled and hungry kids waiting to eat their contents. Your child's school may or may not have a lunch program, but even if it does, there are good reasons for packing his or her lunch:

- It saves money.
- It allows your child to spend more time eating instead of waiting in line to buy lunch.
- It assures that your child has food he or she likes and that you know it is a good nutritional choice.

The food that children eat affects their growth, their behavior and their ability to learn. A hungry child may get drowsy or restless and have difficulty focusing on classroom activities.

If you have a choosy eater in your household, it's OK to pack the same foods every day. Food likes and dislikes are often shaped by what foods are offered in the home, the way they are offered and how frequently they are offered. Keep this in mind as you pack lunches, you can occasionally try something new in the lunch box, but remember that kids need to see and taste food many times before they decide to like it. They also grow in and out of times when it is easier to introduce something new.

With a little planning, you can make it a treat for your child to open the lunch box. Try some of these healthful and practical ideas.

■ Jazz up peanut butter sandwiches with

raisins, grated carrots, banana or apple slices, chipped prunes or apple butter.

■ Add crunch to sliced or low-fat cheese sandwiches by adding pickles, sliced cucumber, chopped celery, grated carrots and/or pepper slices or rings.

■ Stuff pita halves; fill and roll low-fat tortilla skins or lettuce leaves or cut sandwiches into exciting shapes with cookie cutters.

■ Pack bright, colorful fruits and vegetables — carrots, peas, pepper rings, oranges, plums, kiwi, dried apricots, spinach leaves, cabbage slices, grapes, zucchini or turnip sticks.

■ Get kids involved in making their lunch. Play a game — "Guess who or what is going to lunch with you" — and let them cut the shape of the sandwich.

■ Make carrot curls and raisin eyes on sandwiches.

■ Choose fruit filled shredded cereals, pretzels, low-fat muffins or popcorn for treats.

■ Fill thermoses with low-fat or skim milk, orange juice, pineapple juice, apple cider or sparkling juice.

■ And don't forget to surprise your child with an occasional note or picture.

Remember a lunch box offers you a chance to shape foods your child eats for lunch. Make it full of healthful surprises that will keep him or her looking forward to tomorrow's treats.

Christine Venema of Westland is a home economist for Michigan State University Extension, Wayne County.

• See recipes inside.

Michigan native makes stellar Lynmar wines

BY ELEANOR & RAY REARD
Special Writers

On a recent trip to California wine country, we visited Farmington, Mich. native Dan Moore at his new winemaking home, Lynmar Winery in Sonoma County's Russian River Valley appellation.

You may recall that Moore and his wife Natalie Zuccarelli were owners of Z Moore Winery, a small, hands-on operation crafting dry gewürztraminer and an off-dry style called Quaff. In the early 1990s, Moore made acquaintance with shipping magnate Lynn Fritz and his wife Mara (thus the winery name Lynmar) who own Quail Hill Ranch, 43 acres planted to chardonnay and pinot noir.

"Making wine from this property was the chance of a lifetime," Moore said. With Lynmar winemaking success in vintages 1992 through 1995, Dan and Natalie decided their future was with Lynmar and closed Z Moore Winery earlier this year.

After earning a degree in food science from Michigan State University, Moore moved to California because as he said, "It was the only place where I could swim and ski in the same season." He admitted that he was a white zinfandel drinker who learned winemaking from his boss hauling days in the cellars of Milano Winery in Mendocino County. His got turned on to gewürztraminer making wine at Hop Kin Winery in Sonoma County.

"While I still love dry gewürztraminer, I

expanded my horizons and I'm now passionate about pinot noir," he said. "There's no better place for it than Sonoma County's Russian River area."

Lynmar wines are in limited production, but more vines were planted this year. Plans for a new winery are on the drawing board. The splendid pinot noir character stems from the Quail Hill Ranch location where long hang time between bud break and harvest are combined with moderately warm days and cooling, evening fog intrusions that build in great fruit characters. Additionally, vineyard blocks have been identified as offering distinct qualities to a blend.

After assessing barrels from the 1992 production of pinot noir, Moore and Lynmar's owners decided that they would buy barrels exclusively from Tonnellerie Sirugue, a small cooper in Burgundy's Nuits-Saint-Georges. Great decision. The spicy elements from these barrels are in total harmony with the estate's fruit and yield wines of dynamic fruit prowess, but finishing with elegance, grace and finesse.

While only the very good 1993 Lynmar wines are in our market currently, vintage 1994 was nearly perfect in the Russian River and Lynmar's 1994 offerings demonstrate this. A cool, long harvest gave grapes extra hang time to develop flavor intensity and concentration. All fruit is hand-picked then hand-sorted on a conveyor table culling out anything but exceptional fruit.

Fermentation of pinot noir is done in small open-top fermenters where the cap is gently treated and gravity racking and bottling all maintain the wine's natural character.

The 1994 Lynmar Quail Hill Pinot Noir (\$21) was just released. Made from 100 percent free-run juice, it is a blend of all the vineyard blocks. When 16 months barrel aging in the Sirugue barrels which were 70 percent new is added in, the sum is a dynamic harmony of aromas and flavors. The 1994 Lynmar Quail Hill Reserve Pinot Noir will be released before Christmas. It represents the culmination of a four-year study of the pinot noir blocks for the best soil and exposure profile. The very limited quantity is a blend of only five 100 percent new Sirugue barrels. The powerful, extracted fruit is complemented by the new wood and matches it in a seamless whole.

While we've raved about pinot noir, Moore's handling of fully-mature chardonnay fruit is noteworthy. The 1994 Lynmar Chardonnay (\$25) has depthful flavors from both barrel and malolactic fermentations, extended aging on the lees and 18 months in 30 percent new French oak.

Look for Focus on Wine on the first and third Monday of the month in Taste. To leave a voice mail message for the Reards, dial (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, mailbox 1864.

• See Wine Selections inside.

