

FOCUS ON WINE



RAY & ELEANOR HEALD

Drink chardonnays your way

While it remains the top-selling wine in the U.S., outselling its nearest red wine competitor cabernet sauvignon, two to one, chardonnay still has its critics. Since it's top billed, it may be that there's a feeding frenzy to top it.

However, detractors will have to try harder because, now, the world's largest winery E&J Gallo of California is pouring out chardonnays in multiple styles. You can get chardonnay your way.

Tracing the history of wine in America, one looks back to wine going from bulk to bottle, then to varietal labeling. Today, super-premium wines are distinguished by growing regions on the label. The latter is just another way of spelling diversity.

Wines from a particular place offer taste and style differentiation, and above all, a choice.

Currently, no U.S. winery has the breadth and depth of vineyard sources of E&J Gallo. If you're still in the days of Hearty Burgundy with Gallo, you've let a lot of choices pass you by. We recently met with winemaker Dr. George Thoulakis who has lived a 38-year winemaking life with Gallo.

"Over the last two years, Gallo has introduced a collection of wine brands showcasing the unique character of several California growing regions," he said.

This collection includes the brands Indigo Hills, Annapamu, Zabaco and Marcelina. Thoulakis pointed out that the brand names were also chosen to reflect region of origin.

Indigo Hills is a reference to the at dusk, blue-hued mountains of the Coastal range viewed from Mendocino, principal grape source for these wines.

Mildred Blass Wines calls their range of offerings "The Four Rivers of Chardonnay." All fruit comes from wine regions in South Central Australia.

■ **1996 White Opal Chardonnay \$11.50** is unadorned representing a totally fruit-driven wine.

■ **1997 Black Opal Chardonnay \$11.50** was oak-matured three months in a mix of 75 percent American and 25 percent French oak.

■ **1998 Flame Opal Chardonnay \$11.50** is aged in the same percentages of oak as Black Opal, but for a month longer.

This month doesn't make that much difference, but using grapes from the cooler climate regions within South Eastern Australia and not filtering the wine does.

■ **1996 Boulder Opal Made-Oak Chardonnay \$10.50** showcases integrated fruit and oak flavors from 25 percent barrel fermentation and malolactic fermentation.

■ **1997 Boulder Opal Chardonnay \$11.50** is aged in the same percentages of oak as Black Opal, but for a month longer.

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FABULOUS FAST FOOD

Prepare meals for your family 'Lickety-Split'

By KEELY WYGONIK
STAFF WRITER

Everyone knows one should eat better, but that's easier said than done.

"Recipes never tell you how to get the whole meal on the table," said Zonya Foco, a registered dietitian and author of "Lickety-Split Meals For Health Conscious People on the Go" (ZHI Publishing, Wall Lake, \$29.95).

"I wanted it to be easy," said Foco of Wall Lake explaining why she wrote this fun, motivating book designed to sit on your kitchen counter, not on a bookshelf. You can even prep "Lickety-Split Meals" in the child seat of your grocery cart, and refer to it as you shop. Foco is working on a pocket-size version of her grocery list also.

While working at NutriCare of St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor she learned clients would follow her advice if it was easy.

She's not buying the excuse - "I don't have time to cook," because some of her meals can be prepared more quickly than stopping at the drive-through, or getting a carryout.

"Time is the driver," she said. "It helps to have a routine."

Foco's book will help you achieve a healthier lifestyle through eating better and exercising.

"No kitchen should be without this book," said Gail Posner of West Bloomfield, a registered dietitian. "I recommend it to all my clients who even slightly cook."

Jackie Kelly of Wall Lake and her husband, Chris, each lost weight in just four weeks of cooking from the book, which never leaves their kitchen countertop. Zonya's neighbor, and Kelly said she waited three years for the book to be published.

"I wouldn't call this a diet book," said Jackie. "It's a healthier way of eating. We enjoy it. I have more energy, because the foods I'm eating give me more energy."

After reading "Lickety-Split Meals" I know why people are so excited. Few cookbooks are as comprehensive as Foco's. Her weekly menu solution makes sense:

■ Monday - Slow Cooking Night
■ Tuesday - 15 Minute Meal Night
■ Wednesday - Pasta Night
■ Thursday - On Exercise Eat Night - Tasty oven meals cook while you exercise

■ Friday - Pizza Night
■ Saturday - Stir-Fry Night
■ Sunday - 30-Minute Meal Night

"The recipes change, but the base menu stays the same," she said. "This allows plenty of variety, while saving hours of time. There's no floundering at dinner time."

To get started, Foco recommends taking an inventory of your cupboards, refrigerator and freezer. Clean and organize them so you'll know where everything is. Inspect your spice rack, and toss anything three or more years old. Organize your utensil drawer too.

With that out of the way, you can pat yourself on the back for the good work, and getting a jump on spring cleaning. Now, the hard part, stocking a pantry so you won't have to run to the store at the last minute.

If you use her comprehensive grocery list, which includes product information, Foco said you will have everything you need to make the recipe in her book.

In addition to listing items to have on hand, she offers tips for buying produce and vegetables. Beside many items such as canned kidney beans, are recipe suggestions - 3-Bean Chili, Mexican 5-Bean Soup, and Crockpot Fajitas.

LIVING BETTER SENSIBLY



BEVERLY PRICE

What motivates an individual to turn to vegetarianism. Do they wake up one morning and say, "That's it, no more meat, chicken, fish or dairy for me." Or is this a lifestyle that evolves over time. Let's explore two true stories, which can be eye-opening and motivating for many.

Marjorie Marriott, a 69-year-old Royal Oak resident, and director of Cool Green World - a non-profit organization for animals rights and animal protection, has changed her eating habits tremendously.

She is a non-insulin requiring diabetic, and consulted me in 1993 for weight loss and prevention of diabetes complications. Since our initial meeting, Marjorie has lost 32 pounds and keeps her blood sugar under tight control.

The winter of 1996 clinched Marjorie's decision to adopt a vegetarian diet. After the "Mad Cow" disease incident in England, and as the e-coli in raw or undercooked hamburger became news, Marjorie's concern about the treatment of animals, and the substances that wind up in their feed, grew. Although

she never ate much meat prior to developing diabetes, Marjorie decided to give it up entirely.

Regina Goebel, a 47-year-old special education teacher who lives in Livonia, has been working with me since June. Regina has suffered from rheumatoid arthritis for years. Approximately 15 years ago, she turned to vegetarianism, hoping it would lessen her symptoms.

Over two years she lost 70 pounds, and was taken off all of her medications. She felt well, but over time started eating meat again. She gained back the 70 pounds, and began taking medication again for her arthritis. The more dependent on medications Regina became, the more medications she found she needed. The effectiveness of her medications did not last long either. As Regina began to develop side effects from her medications, she consulted me for help returning to the diet she refers to as, "eating lower from the land," a vegetarian diet.

Regina has gradually given up eating meat and dairy products again, and has lost a realistic 10 pounds in about one year. More importantly, she says she has a ton of energy, the painful symptoms of arthritis have abated, and she is off most of her medications. Regina wants to share this message with

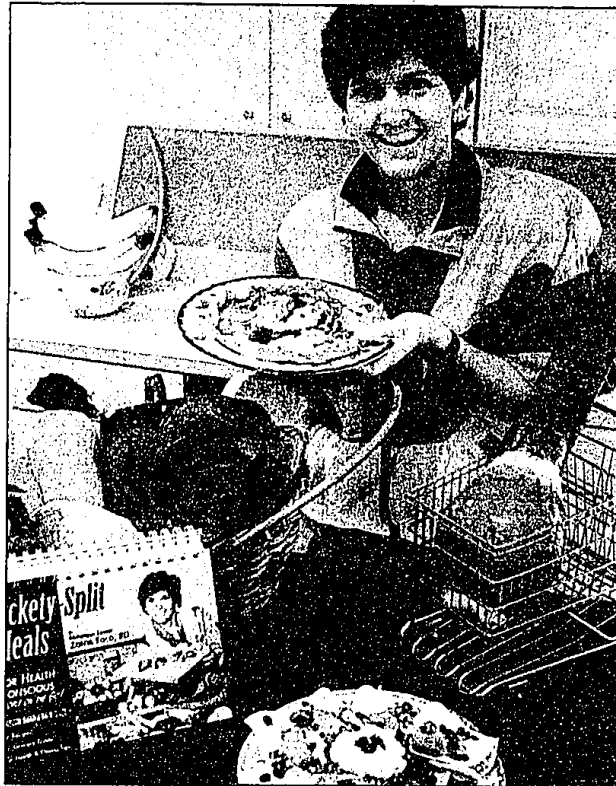
readers. "You must be in control of what you do," she said. "You are what you eat."

Regina says that when she indulges in dairy products such as cottage cheese, pizza and milk, her joint pain and swelling recurs in 12 to 24 hours. This happens when she eats poultry also.

This time around, Regina believes her dietary changes will be life long, as she is approaching her diet more sensibly. It is more balanced and nutritious, and filled with a variety of foods. Her weight loss is gradual, and filled with constant learning.

Whatever way of eating you choose is not right or wrong. If it works for you, and you feel good while achieving your health goals - more power to you, and good luck.

Beverly Price is a registered dietitian and exercise physiologist. She operates Living Better Sensibly, a private nutrition practice in Farmington Hills that offers programs for individuals and corporations. She is the co-author of "Nutrition Secrets for Optimal Health." Tall Tree Publishing Company. Look for her column on the first Sunday of each month in Taste. Visit her website at www.nutritionsecrets.com. See recipes inside.



STAFF PHOTO BY DAN DEAN

Meal messenger: Nutrition expert Zonya Foco, shows readers how to get meals on the table "Lickety-Split" in her newly published cookbook.

"I tried to challenge old ways of cooking," she said. "You don't have to boil noodles before making lasagna. Eliminating unnecessary steps saves time."

Foco also didn't like the way most cookbooks are organized. Each recipe has a menu, for example, Turkey Joes, Sunshine Carrot-Raisin Salad and Applesauce.

"A lot of people make a healthy entrée but don't serve it with healthy side dishes," she said.

"I would make things quick like roasts with gravy in the crockpot, but they weren't necessarily healthy," said Kelly.

Foco organizes recipes to be easily followed and used. Ingredients are on the left and directions on the right with arrows pointing from ingredients to preparation steps.

Book Signing/Recipe Demonstration Appearances

■ 3 p.m. Sunday, March 8 - Media Play, 28400 N. Telegraph, Southfield.

Zonya Foco will demonstrate two of her favorite five minute meals, and answer your nutrition questions.

■ 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 19 - Barnes & Noble, 17111 Haggerty Road, Northville.

Want to save five hours a week, all while putting healthy and delicious meals on the table, night after night? Foco will share her innovative "Lickety-Split" system for weekly meal planning, grocery shopping and cooking. Let this one hour event save you 260 hours over the next year.

■ 8 p.m. Sunday, March 22 - Borders Novi Town Center. Foco will demonstrate two of her favorite five minute dinners, and answer your nutrition questions.

Good health is reward of vegetarian diet