

## FOCUS ON WINE



RAY &amp; ELEANOR HEALD

## Fine wines from Chile reasonably priced

**M**apo Valley is Chile's most recognized winegrowing region. Located southwest of Santiago, with the Andes Mountains to the east and coastal mountain ranges to the west, its soils, climate and elevation are well-suited to grapegrowing. Vina Tarapaca's wines showcase these advantages with a New Age twist at very reasonable prices.

The history of Vina Tarapaca dates to 1874, but it was only in 1996 that Beringer Wine Estates began importing these wines into the U.S. for the first time. They've been in our market since mid-1997, but it was only recently that we were able to meet with winemaker Sergio Correa and learn the full story.

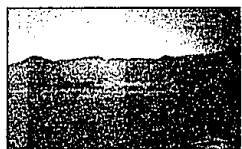
### Winemaker

Correa, a 27-year-veteran of the wine industry, has been a major force in the development of the modern wine era in Chile. He spent several harvests studying in Bordeaux and his regular visits to both France and California keep him up-to-date on the vast wine improvements made in both wine regions.

There are many comparisons to be made between Chile and California, both in climate and experimenting with new grape varieties such as viognier and syrah. Correa's extensive knowledge of Chile's growing regions and his use of satellites, providing soil profiles, allowed him to plant varieties in the places they will grow best.

Rocky soils with round river stones became home to cabernet sauvignon,

Please see WINE, B2



**Ideal growing conditions:** Proximity to coastal mountain ranges brings multiple benefits to grapevines of Vina Tarapaca in Chile.

### Wine Picks

Picks of the Pack: 1995 Quintessa \$90. Yes, it's up there in price, but give it a blind taste challenge against a first growth Bordeaux at twice the price and you'll be amazed! Hands down, the best Bordeaux-blend from California we've tasted from the 1995 vintage.

If you're opting for red wines only, you may be missing some very tasty and versatile whites. Try: 1997 Murphy-Goodie Pinot Blanc \$14; 1996 Morgan Reserve Chardonnay \$25 (dynamic!); and 1997 Murphy-Goodie Fume II \$25 (wow!).

Cabernets and cabernet blends pair with the hearty and more savory foods of winter. Among the best: 1996 Estancia Due \$25; 1996 Murphy-Good Cabernet Sauvignon \$20; 1996 Pine Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon, Rutherford; and 1995 Mount Veeder Cabernet Sauvignon \$30.

Best buys at \$10 and under: 1997 Dolas Cotes du Ventoux (red) \$7; 1997 Hogue Semillon \$7; 1997 Forest Glen Merlot \$10; and 1997 Veramonte Merlot \$10.

### LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Cheers for Beer
- Recipe to Share

### Maple Syrup Festival

**WHEN:** 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, Feb. 27-28.

**WHERE:** Cranbrook Institute of Science, 1221 N. Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills.

**ADMISSION:** Included with admission to the Cranbrook Institute of Science, \$7 adults, \$4 children (ages 3-17) and senior citizens (age 60 and over), children age 3 and under, and members, free. Call (877) GO-CRANBrook for more information.

**HIGHLIGHT:** All-you-can-eat pancake breakfast Sunday, Feb. 28. Seatings at 8 a.m. and 9 a.m., followed by a 90-minute program. The cost is adults \$10, children (age 12 and younger), \$8. Preregistration required, call (248) 645-3230.

### Tree Tapping Tromp

**WHEN:** 1-3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27

**WHERE:** Meet at the Pony Barn on Fairlane Dr., University of Michigan-Dearborn campus, off Evergreen between Michigan Ave. and Ford Road.

**WHAT:** Learn how maple trees are tapped for sap.

### Maple Sugaring Demonstration

**WHEN:** 1-4 p.m. Saturday, March 6.

**WHERE:** Walks leave on the hour from the terrace of the Henry Ford Estate on the University of Michigan-Dearborn campus. Learn how maple syrup is made from maple sap.

Call (313) 593-6338 for more information about the Tree Tapping Tromp or Maple Sugaring Demonstration.

### It's a fact

■ Michigan ranks 7th in maple syrup production in the United States behind Vermont, New York, Maine, Wisconsin, New Hampshire, and Ohio.

■ The production of maple syrup is the oldest agricultural enterprise in the United States.

■ Only about 1 percent of Michigan's maple forest resource is used in maple syrup production.

■ In an average year, each taphole will produce 10 gallons of maple sap, enough for about a quart of syrup.

■ Maple syrup is the first farm crop to be harvested in Michigan each year.

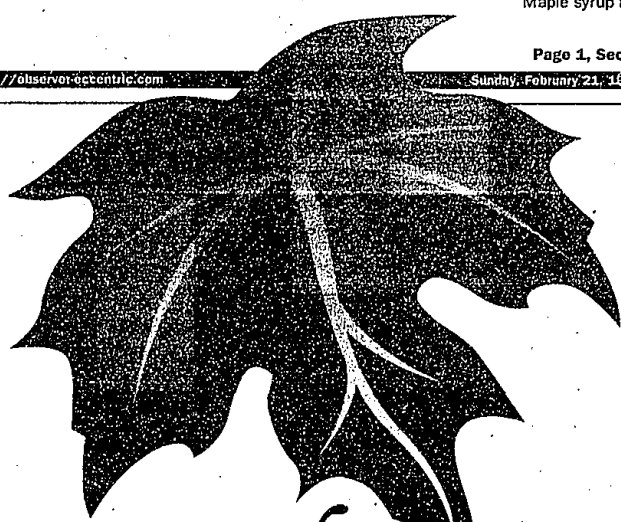
■ A maple tree needs to be about 40 years old before it will be large enough to tap for syrup.

■ While the sugaring season may last 6 to 10 weeks, most of the sap will be collected in 10 or fewer days.

■ Maple sap is boiled to remove the water and concentrate the sugars in a process called evaporation.

■ Pure Michigan maple syrup has 40 calories per tablespoon and is fat-free. It has no additives, no added coloring and no preservatives.

Michigan Maple Syrup Association



## Cranbrook Institute of Science gets

# sap-happy

By KEELY WYONIK  
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**W**arm days, cold nights, believe it or not, spring is just around the corner. Michello Goyette and her staff are getting a little sappy at the Cranbrook Institute of Science where they're planning the 25th annual Maple Syrup Festival Saturday-Sunday, Feb. 27-28.

"As soon as the sap starts running the trees will start budding, unless we cool off," said Goyette. "The sap is a sure sign of spring."

Like berries in a berry patch, you can't predict when the sap will start running. "You need warm days 40°F or above, and cool nights 25°F or lower," said Goyette who is head naturalist at the Cranbrook Institute of Science.

If you've ever wondered how maple syrup is made, you'll want to attend the festival.

A maple tree is ready to tap when it is at least 10 inches in diameter. You can add a second collection spout to trees over 18 inches in diameter. According to the Michigan Maple Syrup Association, a single taphole produces a quart to a gallon of sap per flow period (from a few hours to a day or more) with a seasonal accumulation of 10 to 12 gallons per taphole.

"It takes about 40 gallons of sap to produce one gallon of syrup," said Goyette. "Sap is 98 percent water and tastes like water."

Because sap is mostly water, you have to boil it until the water evaporates leaving only syrup. "You have to boil the sap until it reaches seven degrees above the boiling point of water, about 219°F," said Goyette. "It takes a couple of hours to make syrup and the kitchen gets very

steamy, not good for wallpaper."

They don't tap maple trees at Cranbrook Institute of Science for the maple syrup but to show visitors how it's done. "It's a nice family activity," said Goyette. "It gives you a lot of information."

At the festival you will learn about the history and science of making maple syrup, and observe tree tapping along Cranbrook's Nature Trail. There will be maple candy demonstrations, and you'll even get to sample some. Maple syrup will also be offered for sale.

After seeing how maple syrup is made, you might decide to give it a try. You can buy supplies at the Cranbrook Nature Center, or call The Sugar Bush, (617) 349-5185.

The Michigan Maple Syrup Association provides a lot of information about making maple syrup at their web site, [www.mimapsyrup.com](http://www.mimapsyrup.com)

The University of Michigan-Dearborn is also hosting some sappy events.

If you want to see how maple trees are tapped for sap, stop by the Pony Barn, just past the Henry Ford Estate on Fairlane Dr., on the University of Michigan-Dearborn campus 1-3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27 for a Tree Tapping Tromp through the woods at the nature preserve on campus.

Maple Sugaring Demonstrations will be offered 1-4 p.m. Saturday, March 6. Groups will leave the terrace of the Henry Ford Estate on the U-M Dearborn campus every hour for a walk to the meadow where sap is collected, to the evaporator where sap is made into maple syrup.

See recipes inside.

## For quick pot roast try heat and serve beef

By KEELY WYONIK  
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Imagine, beef pot roast in 30 minutes, or 10 minutes if you cook it in a microwave. Sounds too easy to be true, but it's not.

"Heat-and-serve" fully-cooked beef products are what's new at your grocery store. "We're letting people know what's out there. You'll be seeing more of it," explained Monica Feaser, director of promotions for the Michigan Beef Industry Commission.

Heat 'N' Serve Beef Pot Roast with Gravy, produced by Illinois-based RMH Foods, is one of the new crop of fully cooked, heat-and-serve beef products being offered at Sam's Club, Mei-



MICHIGAN BEEF INDUSTRY COMMISSION

**Quick roast:** When you don't have time to cook, but crave comfort food, try a fully-cooked, heat-and-serve beef pot roast.

### DINNERS IN A HURRY



jer and Kroger.

"The manufacturer does all the work," said Feaser. "They're real easy, and they taste really good."

RMH Foods' products are made with Certified Angus Beef. They were among the top five finalists for "Best New Beef Product in America," an award sponsored by the National Cattlemen's Association.

Other products on the market, or soon to be, include Burnett & Son Beef Pot Roast, Mallard's Cooking Made Easy Beef Tips and Beef Pot Roast, Mosley's Time for Dinner Beef Pot Roast, and Lloyd's BBQ Beef. The cost ranges from \$4.99 to \$6.99 a pound. Look for these products in the meat department of your favorite grocery store.

"People are working longer hours than they were 20 years ago and don't have time to cook," said Feaser. "Today, 70 percent of consumers spend 30 minutes or less preparing a meal at home, compared to 2-1/2 hours in 1960. Nearly two-thirds of dinner decisions are made the same day and the majority of consumers wait until 4:30 p.m. to decide what to have for dinner because of their busy schedules."

With little time to cook, convenience has become more important than ever. One-third of all Americans have eaten

some type of ground beef in the past 24 hours, and burgers are the most popular use of ground beef. Steaks account for 17 percent of all beef meals served at home, but Americans are buying fewer cuts from the chuck and round, because they take longer to prepare. Thirty-six percent of consumers surveyed said pot roasts take too much time to prepare.

Fully-cooked, heat-and-serve beef products offer an alternative to people who crave mom's pot roast but don't have the time to prepare it themselves.

Consumers said they would probably serve pot roast once a month if it was fully cooked and only needed to be popped in a microwave for 15 minutes, according to a survey by the National Cattlemen's Association.

I kitchen tested the boneless Heat 'N' Serve Beef Pot Roast with Gravy by RMH Foods with good results. Consumers have the option of reheating the meat in the microwave, which takes 10 minutes, or in the oven at 350°F for approximately 30 minutes. I chose the oven.

The meat was juicy and tender and didn't taste salty. While the meat is cooking, you can quickly prepare a potato, vegetable and salad. Start to finish, this dinner is ready in 30 minutes. That includes time for reheating and thickening the gravy with cornstarch and water.

If you're counting calories and fat grams, or concerned about the amount



NATIONAL CATTLEMEN'S BEEF ASSOCIATION

**Hurry up dinner: Quick Beef Burgundy, made with fully-cooked, heat-and-serve boneless beef pot roast, is ready in 30 minutes.**

of sodium in your diet, be sure to read the label. These products might not be for you.

A 3 oz. serving of pot roast, but let's be realistic, have you ever eaten a 3 oz. serving of anything? Is 190 calories. Total fat is 14g, saturated fat 6g, cholesterol 50mg, sodium 400mg. Total calories from fat 130.

For taste and convenience, heat-and-serve beef products are worth a try. Just be sure to eat lots of veggies. See recipe inside.