

Enjoy a taste of Michigan

See related story on Taste front. Recipes from the Michigan Cafe at Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn.

PINCINNING CHEESE SOUP

- 1 1/2 sticks margarine
- 2 cups onion, diced
- 1/2 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup carrots, diced
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon white pepper
- 2 1/2 quarts water
- 3 chicken bouillon cubes
- 1/2 pint half and half
- 1 pound Pinckney cheese, shredded

Sauté vegetables in margarine until tender. Add flour. Cook for 5 minutes. Add water and bouillon. Simmer for 20 minutes. Add cream, nutmeg and pepper. Stir in cheese at the end of cooking. Serves 6-8.

GREAT LAKES WHITEFISH BOAT

- 2-3 pounds whitefish, skinned with pin bones removed, cut into 6 ounce portions
- 2 sheets puff pastry dough
- Sauce for topping fish
- 1 pint sour cream
- 1/4 cup fresh dill, chopped

- 1/4 teaspoon salt
 - 1/4 teaspoon white pepper
 - 1/4 teaspoon fresh garlic
 - 1 teaspoon horseradish
 - 1 teaspoon lemon juice
 - 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
 - 1 tablespoon melted butter
 - Egg Wash
 - 1 egg
 - 1/4 cup milk
- Place 6 ounce portion of whitefish in buttered individual casserole dish. Season with salt and pepper, brush with butter. Cut puff pastry to fit top of casserole dishes, using casserole

dish as a template. Beat egg and milk together to make egg wash. Brush puff pastry tops with egg wash. Bake puff pastry tops on cookie sheet and fish in casserole dishes at same at 400°F for 10-14 minutes. To make sauce for topping fish: Combine sour cream, dill, salt, white pepper, garlic, horseradish, lemon juice and Parmesan cheese in a bowl. Set aside. Spoon 1 1/2 ounces of the sauce onto the fish, and top with prebaked puff pastry. Serves 6-8 people

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brown. Turn and repeat on other side. Pat excess oil off with paper towel. Four room temperature herb butter on top and serve.

ASPARAGUS AND MOREL SALAD WITH CHARDONNAY THYME VINAIGRETTE

- Serves 4
- For the salad
- 1 pound fresh Michigan asparagus
- 1/2 pound fresh Michigan morels
- 1 pint red pear tomatoes
- 1/2 pound mixed spring greens
- 1 medium Vidalia onion, sliced
- Small amount of olive oil to sauté morels

CHARDONNAY THYME VINAIGRETTE

- 4 sprigs of fresh thyme, no stems
- 1/4 cup Chardonnay
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup corn oil
- 2 tablespoons elder vinegar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- Zest of 1/2 lemon
- 1/2 tablespoon Dijon mustard

Salt and white pepper to taste

To make dressing: Place all ingredients, except oils, in blender, blend until smooth. Add oils slowly while blending to form an emulsion. Taste and adjust seasoning.

To make salad: Cut off bottom 2 inches of asparagus and discard. Blanch remaining tips in boiling water with salt, remove and cool in ice water.

Cut asparagus 1-inch long on a bias cut. Place in large stainless steel bowl. Clean and cut morels in half from top to bottom then soak in cold, lightly salted water for 5 minutes.

Quickly sauté morels in small amount of olive oil. Remove and place in bowl with asparagus.

Cut pear tomatoes in half, add to bowl. Cut onion and add to bowl, along with spring greens. Toss all ingredients with about 1/2 cup of vinaigrette. Serve.

Chef Randy Smith is the Executive Chef at Big Rock Chop & Brew House in Birmingham. Look for his next Cooking Conquests column on July 18.

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they see this," she said.

Her customers also love the pretzel-loving Beer Barrel Mustard from Kalamazoo and all the Country Home Creations dips — Chili Con Queso, Horseradish and Bacon, Lemon Cooler and Ambrosia.

And if you're fond of chocolate mints, Kuhn carries an assortment of Hanover's candies from St. Johns, the self-proclaimed mint capital of the world. The mints are stamped with an imprint of the state and individually wrapped in foil.

"We sell a lot of these to

brides," said Kuhn.

Michiganian

One of the newest products at Michiganian in Birmingham, a shop specializing in Michigan-made products, is Michigan Asparagus Quacamole. It is distributed by the Michigan Asparagus Advisory Board and comes in mild and hot.

"We cannot keep it in. People look at it and go, 'Eck,' but if they try it they come back and buy it by the dozen. We've shipped it to Texas. We've shipped it everywhere," said manager Debbie Carpenter.

Customers also love the Benjamin Twigg's Three Pepper Lemon and Apple marinade, said Carpenter. "It's great poured over cream cheese with crackers. I have used it as a basting sauce for barbecue chicken on the grill. You just warm it up a bit and it spreads just nice."

Michiganian ships Michigan-made products, including Vermont Ginger Ale and Sanders Hot Fudge, all over the country.

Denise Yackey, public information officer for the Michigan Department of Agriculture, said a particularly delicious new Michigan product is Peterson

Farms "pie kit," available in peach, cherry and blueberry.

Yackey, a busy mother of two young children, appreciates the kit's convenience. Everything comes in one package — crust, fruit and filling. The product is available at most Meijer supermarkets.

New Michigan-made food products continue to enter the marketplace all the time. Visit specialty food stores in your neighborhood or read labels when you shop at your favorite supermarket. You'll be surprised at just how much of Michigan is on grocery store shelves.

Lemony chicken ready in 30 minutes

AP — Sweet-and-sour sauce is the engine that powers this quickly prepared dish from ho-hum to Asian delight in less than 30 minutes. The rest of the recipe's ingredients are easily assembled, so shopping is a breeze, too.

A serving has a modest 10 grams of fat to its 33 grams of protein.

Registered dietitian Michele Peters included the recipe in the Express Lane Dinners feature she wrote for the May-June issue of Mr. Food's Easy Cooking magazine.

For serving suggestion: Accompany the chicken with rice or vermicelli pasta, and for dessert pick up a yellow cake with coconut icing from your supermarket's bakery.

THAI LEMONY CHICKEN STRIPS

- 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons vegetable oil

- 1 1/4 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breast halves, sliced into thin strips
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 4 cucumbers (about 1 1/4 pounds), peeled
- 1 onion, sliced
- 1/2 cup sweet-and-sour sauce
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh mint

In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil over medium-high heat. Sprinkle chicken with salt and black pepper. Add half of the chicken to the skillet and cook 4 minutes; turning once, until lightly browned. Transfer the chicken to a plate. Repeat with remaining chicken.

Using a vegetable peeler, slice cucumbers lengthwise into thin ribbons, or with a knife, cut them into very thin rounds. In the same skillet, heat remaining 2 teaspoons oil over medium-high heat. Add onion and cook 2 to 3 minutes, or until slightly softened. Add the chicken, cucumbers and sauce. Cook 3 to 4 minutes, or until heated through, stirring constantly. Stir in mint. Makes 4 servings.

Nutrition facts per serving: about 265 calories, 10 grams of fat, 86 milligrams of cholesterol, 665 milligrams of sodium, 10 grams total carbohydrates, 2 grams of fiber, 33 grams of protein.

Wine from page B1

found elsewhere in Italy, make the region ideal for white wines. But in the warmer microclimates of the region, red grapes such as merlot, pinot noir and cabernet sauvignon, ripen with bright red fruit aromas and flavors. Steep hillsides with degrading soil keep yields low and concentrates flavors in each grape berry.

Perfect summertime pours

Elena Walch wines, because of their deep fruit core, are perfect summertime pours. If you're looking for some new wine tastes, we can't think of any thing better to recommend than the following:

■ 1997 Elena Walch Pinot

Bianco \$10 has the lively, expressive fruits of pears and apples. Fruity, dry and very balanced, it makes a perfect aperitif sipper or will pair well with light fish.

■ 1997 Elena Walch Chardonnay \$12 is grown in the family's village of Tramin. Gorgeous fruit bowl aromas and deepthful flavor, mainly make it a pleasant departure from oaky chardonnay versions that come across too concentrated on a hot day. This is a delicious wine to serve with grilled chicken, pasta salad, seafood salad or grilled whitefish.

■ 1997 Elena Walch Pinot Grigio \$12 has dominant pear aromas and is crisper than either

the Pinot Bianco or Chardonnay. It's high-toned fruit finish and creamy texture make it a match for any seafood preparation. This bottling takes this all-too-often boring varietal to new heights of greatness.

■ 1997 Elena Walch Gewurztraminer \$14 is positively the best bottling of this tongue-twisting variety we've tasted in a long time. It's dry like the Alsace style of gewurztraminer, but without the plodding finish and high alcohol. It is hallmarked by ripe fruit, lychee nut notes, spicy finish and refreshing acidity. It makes a great accompaniment to all sorts of Oriental dishes, especially those kicked up with lots of hot peppers.

■ 1996 Elena Walch Merlot \$12 has sprightly, bright cherry aromas and flavors. We've criticized a significant number of Italian merlots for thin and awkward finish. The Elena Walch is a winner and a bargain at this price.

We detected vanilla hints in this wine and suspected some new French oak. "No new oak," said Walch. "Vanilla character is distinct in merlot grown in our region of the Alto Adige."

To that we say, Bravo! Look for Focus on Wine on the first and third Sunday of the month in Taste. To leave a voice mail message for the Healds, dial (734) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, mailbox 1804.

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