

## FOCUS ON WINE



RAY & ELEANOR HEALD

### M. Trinchero wines pay homage to family's heritage

Over the last few years, more Napa Valley wine brands have been launched.

Several are products from vineyard owners who originally sold grapes. Considering escalating wine sales, they couldn't resist the temptation to have a brand of their own.

In many cases, such inaugurations have brought the market high-priced wines with little track record. However, this isn't the case with M. Trinchero (pronounced Trin-chee-oh), Sutter Home's new wine brand, a tribute to its founder, Mario Trinchero.

Hearing the story from current generation owners Bob and Roger Trinchero and winemaker Derek Holstein, we sensed a serious dedication to grape growing and winemaking, not just as a business, but as a whole way of life—one with hardships, where hard work ultimately paid off.

With all that's new in wine country today, when one visits modern St. Helena in the Napa Valley, stories of its heritage are often missed. We think this is one you should know.

#### Winery revived

Born over 100 years ago in Italy's Piedmont, Mario Trinchero emigrated in the 1920s and made his first home in New York. To join his brother in joint winery partnership in 1948, Mario trekked his wife and three children across the U.S. to the then small town of St. Helena in the Napa Valley.

"My mother started crying when she saw the beat-up old barn that had been dormant for 30 years," recalled Bob Trinchero. "It was covered with weeds; it had dirt floors; no electricity or running water. My mother continued to cry for the next three months."

Crying eventually stopped as she saw her family begin the revival of Sutter Home and the original winery dating back to 1874.

Now, a little over 50 years later, Bob Trinchero, his brother Roger, and their sister, Vera Trinchero Torres, celebrated a golden anniversary with the introduction of M. Trinchero Founder's Estate wines, a tribute to their late father Mario.

With this tribute, the Trincheros have a commanding place in the ultra-premium wine segment of Napa Valley appellation wines. To offer popularly-priced wines to a broader consumer base, they released M. Trinchero's Family Selection series including a chardonnay, merlot, and cabernet sauvignon, all with a California designation, in the \$10-15 price bracket.

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#### Wine Picks

■ **Pick of the Pack:** 1989 Alexander Valley Vineyards Cyrus Meritage (\$45) is a smooth, elegant blend of all five Bordeaux varieties: cabernet sauvignon, merlot, cabernet franc, malbec, and petit verdot.

■ **Cellar pick:** 1997 Pine Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon, Howell Mountain (\$50) has a broad spectrum of flavors and all the stuffing for long-term aging.

■ **Not to be missed:** 1996 Trentadue Old Patch Red (\$14), a blend of infandoli, petite sirah and cagnone is simply delicious. A bargain at this price.

■ **Merlots worth the money:** 1997 Hogue Barrel Select Merlot, \$15; 1996 Trentadue Merlot, \$16; 1997 Louis Martin Merlot, Chiles Valley, \$25; and 1997 St. Clement Merlot, \$20. (Intensity increases with the price in the listing.)

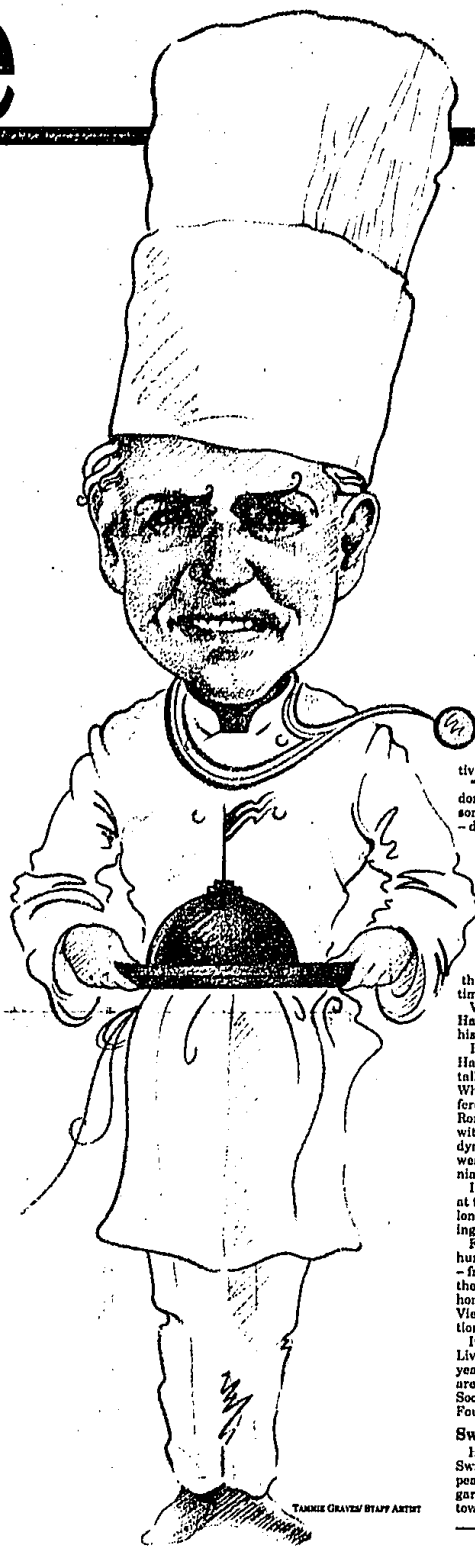
■ **Lush and lovely pinot noirs perfect for spring lamb:** 1998 Morgan Pinot Noir, \$21; 1997 Archery Summit Pinot Noir, Archery Summit Estate, \$75; (tops from Oregon)

■ **New-age whites:** 1998 Stage Leap Winery Viognier, \$25.

## LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Main Dish Miracle
- Eating at Comerica Park



TAKES GRAY/STAFF ARTIST

# HAIL TO THE CHEF

## HE COOKED FOR 5 PRESIDENTS

STORY BY KEN ABRAMCZYK

President Lyndon B. Johnson grabbed strings off the pole beans on his plate and gave them to Henry Haller, White House executive chef.

"If you can't take off the strings, then don't serve them to me," snapped Johnson in his typical "Texas-style" manner—direct and on the spot.

About 15 years later, Nancy Reagan instructed Haller to prepare low-calorie, low-cholesterol meals, and limited her husband to only one egg a week. Haller admitted sometimes the pastry chef "cheated a little bit" to create dessert for the president.

"Sometimes Mrs. Reagan would go visit her mother in Phoenix, and the president and I would have a good time," said Haller.

With such anecdotes, you might say Haller cooked on the front burner of history.

Haller recently appeared at a Town Hall lecture series in Livonia and talked about his nearly 22 years as the White House executive chef for five different presidents, from Johnson to Ronald Reagan, and their families, with tastes as varied as their political dynamics, ranging from simple, Midwestern and Southern styled to California.

In fact, Haller occupied the kitchen at the White House nearly three times longer than Reagan, the longest serving president out of the five.

From 1965 to 1967, Haller prepared hundreds of dinners for heads of state—from peace talks at Camp David and the Statue of Liberty centennial to a homecoming for soldiers who fought in Vietnam and the bicentennial celebration.

It was only fitting that Haller visit Livonia during a presidential election year. Proceeds from the lecture series are donated to the Livonia Synagogue Society and the Livonia Community Foundation.

#### Swiss upbringing

Haller's cooking journey began in Switzerland. His mother grew snow peas, cabbage, leeks and onions in her garden. As a youth, Haller rode into town to sell the produce to chefs, and

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#### PRESIDENTIAL PALATE PLEASERS

If you threw your own party, what would you serve? Here are some presidential favorites from Henry Haller's "The White House Family Cookbook," (Random House, 1987), now in its 10th printing.



LYNDON B. JOHNSON

TERM OF OFFICE: 1963 - 1969

- Texas-Style Barbecue Ribs
- Garden Salad
- Diluted Okra
- Tapioca Pudding



RICHARD M. NIXON

TERM OF OFFICE: 1969 - 1974

- Double Sirloin Steaks in Herb Sauce
- Baked Potatoes
- Chinese Cabbage
- Sponge Cake



GERALD R. FORD

TERM OF OFFICE: 1974 - 1977

- Sunday Roast with Oven-Roasted Vegetables
- Braised Red Cabbage
- Lemon Sponge Pudding



JAMES EARL (JIMMY) CARTER

TERM OF OFFICE: 1977 - 1981

- Southern Fried Chicken
- Buttermilk Discuits
- Home-Style Cole Slaw
- Georgia Pecan Pie



RONALD W. REAGAN

TERM OF OFFICE: 1981 - 1989

- Swordfish Steak with Lemon Butter
- Popovers
- Belgian Endive Salad
- Apple Brown Betty

## Even if you aren't Jewish, you can enjoy kosher food



BEVERLY LIVING

BEVERLY PRICE

Approximately one third of supermarket products are certified as kosher, making that sector in the United States a \$30 billion industry, according to Rabbi E. Elditz ("Is It Kosher?" Feldheim, 1992).

Interest in kosher food is rapidly growing. Not only do Jewish people adhere to kosher dietary laws, but many Seventh Day Adventists, Muslims and vegetarians believe kosher certification is the best guarantee that products, and their ingredients, are being supervised carefully. In the United States alone, at least 6 million people buy products because they are kosher.

#### Food investigated

Why aren't only Jews buying kosher foods? To obtain kosher certification, a food manufacturer must first contact a certifying agency. The manufacturer supplies the certifying agency with a detailed list of every ingredient in the product, each step involved in manufacturing that product, and all other goods produced on the same premises.

The certifying agency analyzes each ingredient, including additives, to the absolute source. This means that if the item is cheese or a cheese byproduct, the item cannot be kosher unless the cheese source itself is strictly kosher. In addition, the process by which ingredients are produced must be carefully checked.

It is necessary that hygienic standards be upheld to the fullest. Other

basic principles are that milk and meat products are not prepared using the same equipment, as they are not eaten together in Jewish dietary law.

The results of investigation are forwarded to the rabbinic authority of the supervising agency. If changes need to be made, the manufacturer must comply before the agency continues with the certification process. Once all is acceptable, the rabbinic authority determines how much on-site supervision is necessary which is written into a contract provided to the manufacturer.

If the manufacturer wishes to make any changes of ingredients or suppliers, it must have prior written consent of the certifying agency. Reliable agencies leave symbols that indicate kosher certification, which also indicates that particular product is under the super-

vision of their agency. Unauthorized use of these symbols on labels is a violation of federal law. Common symbols indicating a food is kosher include the encircled letters U or K.

#### Eating out

Although many kosher items may be found at major grocery store chains, specialty grocery stores such as "One Stop Kosher" in Southfield are available and sell only foods that are strictly kosher. Restaurants can also go through the certification process.

Brian Jacobs, manager of Jerusalem Pizza in Southfield, said 25 percent of his customers are not Jewish and come from Eastpoint, Detroit and Livonia. That eatery's specialty items include pizzas topped with vegetarian bacon, ground beef, pepperoni, sausage, chick-

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