

**WINE**  
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marketing, detailed the characteristics that make the Edna Valley a superior grapegrowing region.

"It's located four miles from the Pacific Ocean," he began, "and as such, the vineyards are some of the closest to the sea of any in the world. It's also unusual because it's warmer in spring and cooler in summer. Bud break occurs two weeks earlier than in the Napa Valley and the growing season is

longer with a later harvest. "This means that the grapes hang on the vine longer to develop exceptional flavor depth. Since it's cool, the grapes also retain natural acidity better than in warmer regions."

Niven went on to cite the topography of the eight-mile-long Edna Valley, which runs east and west, rather than north and south, like most winegrowing valleys in California. Cool Pacific Ocean breezes are channeled straight to the mouth of the Edna Valley, bringing frequent fog and creating a remarkable climate that is perfect for grapegrowing.

**AVAILABLE FROM BAILEYANA**

■ 2000 Sauvignon Blanc \$11 is a steal at this price. The grapefruit, lime-citrus characters and overall freshness match it perfectly to seafood.

■ 2000 Chardonnay \$14 sports apple crispness, yet is full and plump. A real deal at this price.

■ 2000 Firepeak Chardonnay \$28 is twice the price but more than twice as nice. This is a fruit-loaded

wine with balanced oak from start to finish.

■ 2000 Baileyana Pinot Noir, Edna Valley \$18 is chock full of Bing cherry flavors and is one of the best under \$20 pinots you can buy.

■ 1999 Firepeak Pinot Noir \$35 is flat out outstanding from its floral, rose-like aromas, that little bacon rind character found in a great French Burgundy, to its black cherry finish.

■ 1999 Syrah, Paso Robles \$15 has bright aromas with classic black fruit and spice characters. Full, rich and com-

plex, the wine is generous and plump and easy on the palate.

■ 1999 Firepeak Syrah \$35 is a Cote-Rotie knock-off with a solid fruit core. It's a serious wine for syrah lovers.

Compare the two syrahs side by side if you can. You'll notice the difference between the warmer climate Paso Robles wine and the cooler Edna Valley syrah from Firepeak Vineyard.

The Heids are Troy residents who write about wine, spirits, food, and restaurants for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. To leave them a voice mail message, dial (734) 953-2047, mailbox 18648.

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**CHOCOLATE**  
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mitsvah and received inquiries from brides looking to create elaborate chocolates to give wedding guests.

One possibility is a three-tier chocolate cake that fits in the palm of your hand. When you lift off the dark-chocolate top, you'll find a single fresh-dipped strawberry inside.

People in need of a personalized gift are always welcome to stop in. Scher has a seemingly endless variety of molds for every event, interest and occupation.

"If we don't have the mold, I'll find it," she said, adding she'll do what she can to make certain customers create the candy of their dreams.

It's as simple as picking out an appropriate mold, brushing on candy-flavored "paint," and pouring melted milk or dark chocolate inside. The decorated molds are cooled in a refrigerator for about 10 minutes. While you're waiting for the chocolate to cool, you can choose from a variety of containers such as a Batmobile or fancy satin box decorated with lace and dried flowers.

**MAKE IT YOURSELF**

**OR BUY PRE-MADE**

Pass through the store's archway and enter Chocolate By U's



sister company, Scher Delites, for exquisite already-made chocolates. Scher is the founder of Scher's Delites, which also makes cookies. The shop has a widespread reputation for interesting candies such as dark-chocolate-covered mango, milk-chocolate-dipped fresh cherries with the stems still on, real peanut butter cups and white chocolate drizzled on every kind of nut imaginable.

Both stores carry bittersweet chocolate, milk chocolate, and white chocolate.

"I love new chocolates. I've always liked being in the kitchen," Scher said. Consider the many possibilities - dried ginger, apples, dried pineapple, fresh grapes, potato chips, caramel chips, nuts, and toffee dipped in chocolate. You can also make sugar-free candy. Children are wide-eyed when they see what can be accomplished. They have fun dipping marshmallows on a stick in chocolate, and decorating chocolate dipped pretzel rods with sprinkles.

"I like the (graham) crackers and decorating them," Sia Krill, 3, of Sylvan Lake, told her mom, Chris. Together they decorated cookies and candy while staffers happily tended to the mess.

Lily Przybylowicz of West Bloomfield gave the mothers a lesson in drizzling - she's an expert at drizzling white chocolate artfully over dark. "I love working with candy because no two pieces ever look the alike," Przybylowicz said.

She loves chocolate and received her drizzle training from Scher's mother, Cissy Gorden of Southfield.

"She's the No. 1 chocolatier," Scher said of her mom.

"Everything she creates is a hit." Julie Erbe of Birmingham and her daughter Natalie, 2, also had fun playing with chocolate. Each child was given his own personalized plate of goodies to play with.

Parties require reservations. Individuals can just stop in whenever they want to make treats, but Scher recommends calling first in case a busy party is in the works.

The sticky-fingered children had fun making a mess. The parents liked the idea of hosting a party where they didn't have to clean, and curious customers stopped in excited by the possibility of creating personalized holiday gifts made with sweet, creamy, chocolate.

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**California's healthy cuisine is easy to create**

I love cuisine from California and recently traveled there to explore the trendy restaurants and search for new recipes. There are a few places in the L.A. area that I visit a couple times a year because they're so good - and happen to be good places to celebrity-watch.

■ Real Food Daily in Santa Monica and Beverly Hills is a fashionable restaurant that serves only organic fare. You won't find meat, fish, dairy products or anything made with refined sugar or microwaved on the menu. The place has been bustling for years. Try the vegan loaf made of soy-based tempeh and topped with vegetarian gravy made from nutritional yeast.

■ Fig Tree in Venice Beach has been a successful beach spot since the 1970s. Even the ketchup is spicy and fresh. Their specialty is pasta with ginger and tofu sauce.

■ Whole Foods Market in Santa Monica, near the airport, has an enormous food bar that offers hot and cold food. It's where I had a sweet damage (cooked soy beans) salad with rice vinegar. Damage is more



popular than tofu in southern California right now.

Some people collect souvenirs on vacation. I bring home recipes. The edamame salad is easy to make. The recipe is from a friendly Venice Beach resident, formerly of Huntington Woods, whom I met and chatted with at a coffeehouse.

The recipe for the veggie loaf with veggie yeast gravy, served as a TV-style dinner, is similar to the one I had at Real Food Daily. It was made of a tempeh, nutritional yeast, and vegetables. Tempeh is fermented soy seasoned and formed into a loaf.

Nutritional yeast is derived from beet molasses and contains vitamin B12, protein, other nutrients. The flakes are used to make dairyless cheese or gravy. Serve with a side of mashed potatoes and steamed okra.

**ASIAN-STYLE EDAMAME AND CORN DRESSING**

1/3 cup rice vinegar  
1 teaspoon sugar  
2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce  
1 teaspoon sesame seeds, toasted  
1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil  
1/2 teaspoon minced garlic  
1 teaspoon minced ginger root

**SALAD**

2 cups cooked and shelled edamame (found in the frozen food sections)  
1 cup frozen corn  
1/4 cup diced red bell pepper  
4 large lettuce leaves  
Whisk dressing ingredients together, adjust seasonings to taste. Set aside.  
Cook corn and edamame according to their package directions and drain water.  
Add the corn and bell pepper to the edamame, toss with dressing. Serve on lettuce greens. Makes 4 servings.

\*To toast sesame seeds, place in dry skillet over medium heat. Shake gently until seeds begin to pop and turn golden brown. Cool.

**TEMPEH LOAF**

8 oz. tempeh  
1 cup vegetable stock  
1 bay leaf  
2 cups soft bread crumbs, packed.  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 large onion, chopped small  
1/4 cup parsley, minced  
1 tablespoon tamari or 1/2 tsp. salt  
1/2 teaspoon marjoram  
1/2 teaspoon oregano  
1/2 teaspoon thyme  
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

Cut frozen, but thawed unseasoned tempeh in half. (Look for it health food stores). Place in a small saucepan.

Cover tempeh with vegetable stock and bay leaf and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove tempeh, cool, and grate or crumble with fingers. Pour hot stock over bread crumbs. Let bread soak while sautéing onion in olive oil.

Grate the tempeh, mix with the bread, fried onions, parsley, tamari or salt, marjoram, oregano, thyme, and Dijon mustard.

Pack mixture into a lightly oiled loaf pan. Cover with foil and bake in 350°F. oven for 30 minutes. Bake 15 minutes more uncovered. Let loaf cool 10 minutes before slicing.

Recipe source: vssjrecipes.com

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**NUTRITIONAL YEAST GRAVY**

1 1/2 cups vegetablebroth or water  
1/2 cup nutritional yeast  
1/4 cup tahini  
1/8 onion, diced  
1 garlic clove, diced  
3 tablespoons tamari  
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder  
1/2 teaspoon basil  
1/2 teaspoon oregano  
1/2 teaspoon sea salt

Combine the stock, nutritional yeast and tahini in a blender; blend at medium speed for a minute. Add the remaining ingredients; blend well at high speed. Add more liquid or tahini to taste or adjust thickness. Season to taste.

Recipe source: www.recipecollage.com