



Side dish

Fun popcorn

ASAP Popcorn of ASAP Food Products of Solon, Ohio, has created a new popcorn that officials there say is healthier and offers a fun way to serve it to your children. The company's A Super Amazing Popcorn microwave



popcorn bags feature cartoon characters, such as Bugs Bunny, Tweety, the Tasmanian Devil and Scooby Do or sports graphics. The 3-ounce bags stand up out of the microwave. The company says it is the first microwave popcorn in the United States to use sunflower oil, which is healthier than oils currently in other brands, resulting in lighter, better-tasting popcorn. Retailers that carry the popcorn include Kroger and Meijer. For more information on ASAP Popcorn and food products, visit www.asappopcorn.com.

School partners

Bob Evans Restaurants is sponsoring the development of an in-classroom teaching guide to be used in more than 26,000 classrooms throughout Florida, Indiana, Michigan and North Carolina. The teaching guide, developed by Scholastic Marketing Partners, Scholastic's consumer marketing division, and sponsored by Bob Evans Restaurants, promotes reading and literacy skills for students in third, fourth and fifth grades through a series of interactive reading activities. Starting this month, the guide will be distributed to schools within a five-mile radius of a Bob Evans Restaurant in the four states. The teaching guide, comprised of a classroom poster, teacher lesson plans and student worksheets, emphasizes reading and literacy skills. Through lesson plans, students can take a "Reading Road Trip," compose a classroom constitution, write a book report and participate in an essay contest. Participants in the essay contest are eligible to win savings bonds, a Scholastic shopping spree for his or her teacher and a classroom prize from Bob Evans Restaurant.

Tropical Escapes

Enjoy wines at Tropical Escapes, a wine tasting and auction gala to benefit student scholarships and educational projects at Madonna University, at 5:30 p.m. Friday, March 28, at Laurel Manor, 39000 Schoolcraft in Livonia. The wine tasting and silent auction are scheduled for 5:30 p.m. while dinner and the live auction will be held at 7:30 p.m. Wines, art, crystal, fine jewelry and unique items are among items to be sold at the silent auction. Entertainment will be provided by the Livonia Symphony String Quartet. Tickets are \$125 per person. For information, call (734) 432-5421 or visit www.madonna.edu (click on Auction 2003).

Winning food and wine matches



Ristorante Cafe Cortina garners top honors

BY ELEANOR AND RAY HEALD
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In culinary circles today, no subject gets more attention than food and wine matching. Many theories abound from it doesn't matter, drink what you like, to "rules" such as brie is quite nasty with most red wines, except less fruity and earthier styles of Pinot Noir. (A good rule, by the way.)

It seems, though, that all this chatter has only contributed to consumer confusion on how to choose the perfect wine to complement a dish.

At the eighth annual Michigan Culinary Food & Wine Extravaganza, local wine purveyors and restaurant chefs teamed to impress us, and the palates of area food and wine writers, with their "matching" skills. This year, the annual Mardi Gras event benefited the area chefs scholarship fund and Team Macomb, which will compete in the 2004 World Culinary Arts Salon in Germany.

GETTING IT RIGHT

For food and wine pairings, area wine purveyors worked with several chefs the same way a home cook does. The chef chose the recipe and then there was collaboration on the best wine match. Or using personal wine knowledge, the chef called the pairing directly.

"For a good harmony, the weight of the wine must match the weight of the food," said Anne Keller, on-premise sales manager for AHD Vintners. Keller along with other area wine purveyors used another good recommendation: the correct wine never overpowers the dish.

"Moderate oak in a wine doesn't overpower," said Carl Boehm of Decanter Imports. "On the other hand, unaged red wines may lack needed richness to match a dish. The best food wines are medium bodied, not blockbusters, that may be impressive on a restaurant wine list or when served for a special dinner prepared at home, but they do not necessarily enhance a dish. They're often too big and powerful."

TOP HONORS

At the competition, Ristorante Cafe Cortina in Farmington Hills garnered top honors for Ravioli Fatta in Casa Ripieno di Agnello e Rosemarino (Lamb Ravioli in Rosemary Cream Sauce), AHD Vintners' Keller chose 1999 Allegrini La Gola (\$20), a new wave red blend of Corvina, Rondinella, Syrah and Sangiovese from Italy's Verona region, as the perfect wine to accompany the recipe of Chef



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER (STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER)

The warmth of the fireplace at Ristorante Cafe Cortina in Farmington Hills adds intimacy to a winning recipe. Above, Chef Jeffrey Hoffman places lamb filling for the ravioli on the dough.

PLEASE SEE MATCHES, B2

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