



Renaissance revelry

King Edward welcomes visitors to the fifth annual Michigan Renaissance Festival, weekends through Sept. 30 at the Colombero Center in Clarkston. Below: The King and Queen romp on turkey drumsticks, one of the hand-held foods that are available at the festival. Quiche, baked potatoes and seafood are other edibles offered. During the festival, guests stroll in a 16th century village, with crafts on display and continuous entertainment. Hours are 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. every Saturday and Sunday in September, as well as Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 3. Admission is \$9.95; children ages 5-12 are admitted for \$3.



Sweeter wines win most medals

The sweeter, dessert-type wines have dominated the eighth annual Michigan State Fair competition at the fairgrounds in Detroit. The competition precedes the official, public opening of the fair by several days.

Nine Gold Medals were awarded (compared to two in 1982 and 12 in 1983), most of them in the late-harvest style that seems, increasingly, to be compatible with the viticultural conditions of our state.

"Best of Show" honors this year went to Chateau Grand Traverse for its 1982 Late Harvested Johannisberg Riesling. This is the same winery that has had such a history of ownership its future remains cloudy even today, yet it wins this year as it has before.

Perhaps the most impressive winery winner, however, was Fenn Valley which captured three of the nine Golds. Its winners were the 1983 Vidal Blanc Reserve, 1983 Dry Vidal Blanc and 1983 Seyval.

ONLY OTHER multiple Gold winner was venerable Tabor Hill, with a 1983 Vidal Riesling, and the second most successful wine of the event, its Seyval Dry Berry Special Harvest.

Other Gold Medal winners were Frontenac, the Paw Paw property that has not before, I believe, hit the big time with its Ceresia, a rather pale but interesting rose-type, the new Olsen Family Cellars with its 1983 Vidal Blanc — Select Sweet Harvest — and Good Harbor Vineyards with a Cherry Wine. Each of the 90-plus wines entered received one of four judgments from the esteemed panel of judges. In addition to the nine Gold Medals, 37 Silver medals and 23 Bronze Medals were awarded.

Greatest collector of medals was St. Julien which gathered 11, while Tabor Hill and Good Harbor each earned nine.

Three wineries made their debuts this year, each in its initial year of winemaking. Seven Lakes Winery of Holly (soon to be reviewed in this column) earned a pair of Silvers for its De Chauxme Rose and its Apple Wine. Olsen Family Cellars earned its Gold in addition to three Bronzes for its '83 Seyval Blanc Demi-Sec, its late-harvest Seyval and its Seyval Blanc Sec.

FINAL NEW entry was wholly unfamiliar to me, the name being Peterson and the location being the Kalamazoo area and, reportedly, makers chiefly of

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wine
Richard Watson

dessert wines. Peterson earned no medals this year. But to have two of three new entrants win prizes on maiden entries is no small accomplishment.

Two former participants were not in attendance. Broste has gone under after 50 years of production. Larry Mawby did not enter any of his fine wines from Leelanau County for reasons unidentified. I presume he will return next year.

For those of you unfamiliar with how these judgments work, a word.

In this case some 18 judges assembled at 9 a.m. ready to begin their arduous day. Broken into three

groups of six, each tasted about a third of the competition for the day.

The judges tasted wines in groups (i.e., dry white, sweet white, red, etc.), and each group made a list of its favorites. The six members of each group then met to discuss their lists, and a final list was made. The six members of each group then met to discuss their lists, and a final list was made. The six members of each group then met to discuss their lists, and a final list was made.

When the judges met to discuss their lists, they were taxed sorely in many instances. The quality of the wines was such a mixed bag that, of course, that is such a normal occurrence. That is why a four-digit code is used to identify each wine.

All wines were tasted, and then participants in a final round. Each person's number being asked to evaluate and rank each of the wines. The most favored of these received first place.

By the end, usually about 4 p.m., most judges race to the nearest Woodward Avenue bar for a very cold beer.




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