

## taste buds

Chef  
Larry Jones



### Sherry's popularity is gaining

In all my years of "playing the field," never once did I date a girl named Sherry. In all honesty though, I have enjoyed her namesake.

I'm talking about sherry, a very sweet dessert wine that most Americans know very little about. Let's face it, how many sherries do you know that come LIGHT, DRY (fino) or FULL BODIED (oloroso)? Last year's consumption of sherry in the United States was a little more than 2 million gallons, just a drop in the bucket to the more than 600 million gallons of wine enjoyed overall. However, the growing popularity of dry sherries is an indication that Americans are finally beginning to appreciate this great historic wine.

True sherry is produced in the town of Jerez de la Frontera in the sunny province of Spain's Andalusia area. This region, which is north of Cadiz and Gibraltar on the Atlantic coast has a climate that is ideal for growing wine grapes.

The Palomino grape, the major variety used in making sherry, is grown on vines that have a life span of 25-30 years.

Palomino vines are planted only in albariza soil, which is almost white because of its 40 percent chalk content. This earth, although troublesome to cultivate and low in yield, soaks up water in the rainy season while later in the summer, the surface dries, sealing in moisture to feed the vines during the long, dry growing season.

Although there are more than 6,000 growers in the region, most of whom have been making sherry for more than a century, the dominating companies have British rather than Spanish names. Can't really blame them, Britons consume nearly 40 percent of the sherry made compared to only six percent which reaches America.

Sherry lives its first seven years in oak casks. When the sugar content of the Palomino grape (some still crushed by stomping) has been completely converted to alcohol, it is classified into one of three categories.

Sherry is very individualistic, and actually decides by itself whether it is to be a pale fino or a heavier oloroso. The process by which this happens is still a mystery to winemakers. Two casks harvested at the same time have been known to mature differently (and you thought it was up to the little ol' winemaker).

After this period of classification, the wine is mixed with grape brandy, raising its alcohol content to between 15 and 18 percent. Then the sherry is introduced to the "solera" where young wines are blended with older ones to produce a product consistent in taste and characteristics. The solera system is made up of huge casks, stacked row upon row with each row containing wine one year older than the row above. Soleras are often ten rows high.

Wine is then drawn from the oldest (bottom) row of casks with never more than half the wine being withdrawn every year. The bottom casks are replenished from the top casks. This complex method of fractional blending eliminates the effect of any differences in vintages and creates a wine of extraordinary depth and complexity — let alone, sweet and tasty.

Prior to shipping, the wines are clarified with egg whites, which settle slowly through the wine, removing the impurities as they go. Then



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

Dessert wines come in two main varieties, fortified and late harvest. The fortified wines, such as sherries and ports, are heavier and are more typically consumed in lieu of dessert. Late harvest

wines, such as sauternes, are sweeter because the grapes are allowed to ripen longer before picking. They are often used as a dessert accompaniment.

## Dessert wines boast rich history

By Rebecca Haynes  
staff writer

If your taste buds need something to tell them dinner is over, yet indulging in cheesecake or chocolate mousse is too much to handle after that filling meal, a glass of dessert wine may do the trick.

Traditionally, these wines were sipped in lieu of dessert. But today they may be enjoyed with or without it.

Dessert wines fit into two basic categories — fortified wines and late harvest wines, said Ramsey Zawideh, co-owner and general manager of the Kingsley Inn in Bloomfield Hills.

Zawideh has been interested in these products of the grape since his studies in the hotel/restaurant management program at Michigan State University. Wine purchasing is among his duties at the Kingsley.

"THE FORTIFIED wines are your ports, marcellas, sherry and maderias, among others," he said. "Their history goes back 300 years to Spain and Italy."

They found that when they were transporting their wines they weren't traveling well and often were bad by the time they arrived to their destination," he said. "In order to ship the wines they needed a method to help stabilize them."

So, winemakers began to add

brandy to the wine. This helped preserve it and lengthen its life in the shipping process.

"The ports became a big part of English culture and tradition," Zawideh said. "There are certain customs attached to the port, such as it's always passed clockwise around the table."

"The women would usually retire after dinner and the men would sit around and smoke cigars and drink the port," he said. "As society has

changed its popularity has declined."

THE LATE harvest wines, the other type of dessert wine, usually are sweeter than the fortified wines.

"These wines get their sweetness from the grapes themselves," Zawideh said. "They're allowed to ripen longer on the vine, which increases their sugar content."

"A mold is actually allowed to de-

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LAURA CASTLE/staff photographer

Bob Burghardt, left, holds a loaf of his bakery's famous sourdough bread, which will be on special throughout April. Two employees,

Bill Vince of Garden City, center, and Steve Boback of Livonia have worked for Burghardt for the past six years.

## Bread baking is a family tradition

By Lynn Waldemith and  
Marie Chesney  
staff writers

One of the most well-known songs from "Fiddler on the Roof" sums up Bob Burghardt's feelings about his business pretty well: tradition.

Burghardt is the owner of Burghardt's bakery, located at 33309 West Seven Mile in Livonia. This year, the bakery is celebrating its 115th anniversary. The bakery has a history and tradition that goes back to 1872. And the bakery has always been owned by someone who had the last name, "Burghardt."

In 1872, Burghardt's great-grandfather, Anton Burghardt, opened a small bakery on St. Antoine Street in downtown Detroit. Anton had worked as a baker's apprentice in Germany. The first thing he did when he arrived in Detroit was to open a bakery to serve the predomi-

nately German neighborhood.

Right away, Anton's sour dough and rye bread became a hit. Today, the bread is still the backbone of the business. It's sold not only at the Livonia location, but in stores all over the metro area.

BURGHARDT'S grandfather, Anthony, took over the business in the 1920's when his great-grandfather died. In 1930, the bakery relocated to Detroit's east side and prospered.

Anthony had two sons, Robert and Joe, who became partners in the business when their grandfather died in 1950. And Bob took over from his father, Robert, when his dad died in 1976. In 1978, the bakery moved to Livonia.

"I had gone to the University of Detroit and fought in the war in Vietnam," Burghardt said. "Then my

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