



focus on wine

**Eleanor and
Ray Heald**

Treasured gift has a special bottle

'Tis the day before Christmas and celebration is near. Pop the champagne, the beverage of cheer.

The first shipment (2,400 bottles) packed in 200 wicker baskets of Perrier-Jouët champagne arrived in New York City in spring 1837. Today, "PJ" is the third-largest-selling champagne in the United States.

At the turn of the century, during the height of Art Nouveau, Emile Galle, a renowned French artist and glassmaker, created the now-famous "Anemone Garland" flower design of the Perrier-Jouët bottle.

The decorative bottle, which disappeared during World War I, was rediscovered in the early 1960s and inspired Perrier-Jouët to develop its prestige cuvee Fleur de Champagne. It was first released as the 1964 vintage. In 1970, in the 1980s, the first Fleur de Champagne Rose was introduced.

It is around the superb bottle created by Galle in 1900 that the spirit of "PJ" revolves. For the last two decades, a decorated box with a bottle of Fleur de Champagne and a pair of hand-painted champagne flutes has been a treasured holiday gift.

If you are a last-minute shopper, this gift idea will delight the palate of any wine lover on your Christmas gift list.

OF ALL THE champagne producers, Champagne Bollinger, makes one of the fullest and richest wines. Bollinger owns 350 acres of vineyard that provide two-thirds of the total required.

Bollinger is unusual in the sense that all vintage wines are totally barrel fermented in lots and kept separate until the blend is made. Barrel fermentation adds to the richness and character of the wine. It also requires a full-time cooper to repair old and build new barrels.

After fermentation, reserve wines are not put into stainless steel tanks but undergo a small second fermentation in magnums and are cellared at 1.5 atmospheres pressure to maintain freshness.

Currently, 250,000 magnums of reserve wines dating back to 1973 are stored in the caves awaiting future use.

Most houses base their reputation on the style and consistency of the non-vintage champagne. Special Cuvee is Bollinger's non-vintage brut and accounts for 60 percent of total sales. Vintage champagnes have been a tremendous success at Bollinger, the most impressive being its Grande Année, Grande Année Réserve, and RD (recently disgorged) vintage champagnes.

Champagne has many styles. When planning holiday celebrations, remember that one style is not better than another. All champagnes have an appropriate place before,

WINE SELECTIONS OF THE WEEK

Perrier-Jouët Grand Brut (\$25) is a versatile champagne that enhances appetizers and lighter first courses. Its exceptionally fine balance makes it especially appealing.

Bollinger Brut Special Cuvee (\$32) showcases the toasty aromas of barrel fermentation and a high percentage of pinot noir in the cuvee. Fresh bread dough flavors are accented with hints of citrus. Crisp and clean, it is a perfect meal accompaniment.



Christian Bixot, president of Champagne Bollinger, at winetasting at the Whitney in Detroit.

LIGHT, DELICATE wines are best as aperitifs. Fuller wines with a greater percentage of pinot noir and roses harmonize best with food. See and semi-secco champagnes have their place at the table as the dessert course or following it.

Ethnic heritages are celebrated

See story on ethnic Christmas customs, Page 1B.

TRADITIONAL ARABIC KIBBEH

1 cup bulgur
2 cups chopped onion
1 pound ground lamb or beef, or ½ pound each
¼ cup ice water
2 teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Rinse bulgur in cold water, pour into a wire strainer and drain. Put into the onion in a blender and whirl until liquified. Add half the meat and water, whirl until you have a smooth paste, repeat with remaining onion, meat and water.

Combine the mixture with seasonings and bulgur. Knead until well blended. Chill at least 30 minutes before using in either of the following ways.

KIBBEH PATTIES

Divide chilled kibbeh into 8 patties. Dip hands in cold water and shape each portion into a patty about ¾-inch thick. Cook in 2 tablespoons each butter and salad oil over medium heat, turning to brown, about 12-15 minutes. Serve with Yogurt Sauce.

BAKED KIBBEH

1 recipe chilled kibbeh
1 tablespoon butter or oil
1 pound ground lamb or beef, or ½ pound each
1 large onion, finely chopped
¼ cup pine nuts or silvered almonds
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon pepper
½ cup parsley, finely chopped

Heat oil, crumble ground meat and fry with onion until meat loses its pink color. Add nuts and cook 2 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in remaining ingredients. Grease a shallow 2-½ quart baking dish. Spread half the chilled kibbeh evenly over the bottom, pressing with wet hands. Spread the cooked meat over it, then top with a smooth layer of the remaining kibbeh. Score top of loaf in diamonds. Bake uncovered in 350-degree oven for 1 hour. Remove, drain excess fat. Let stand 5 minutes, cut and serve with Yogurt Sauce.

Blend 1 cup unflavored yogurt with ¼ teaspoon salt and 1 small clove garlic, minced.

GREEK SPINACH PIE

from Dorothy Flakas
One 10-ounce package frozen, chopped spinach
¼ cup chopped onion
3 tablespoons butter
3 tablespoons flour
¼ teaspoon dried tarragon, crushed
½ teaspoon black pepper
1 cup milk
2 eggs, beaten
1 cup cottage cheese
1 cup crumbled feta cheese
10 sheets of Phyllo dough
¼ cup melted butter.

Cook spinach, drain and press out all liquid. In saucepan, cook onion in 3 tablespoons butter. Stir in flour, tarragon and pepper. Add milk all at once and stir well, cooking until mixture is thick and bubbly. In a separate pan, mix ¾ of the hot mixture with eggs. Return to saucepan on the stove. Fold in cheese and spinach. Set aside.

Butter Phyllo dough and layer in 8-by-9-inch glass baking dish. Alter-

nate layers of dough with spinach mixture. When finished layering, pour remaining excess butter over the top. Bake in oven at 375 degrees for about 30-40 minutes, or until golden brown.

ANOSHABOUR

Armenian Christmas Pudding
from Emma Minasian
1 cup skillets whole grain wheat
1 ½ cups bleached raisins
1 ½ cups dry apricots
¾ cup water
2 cups sugar
2 tablespoons rose water (obtained from drugstore or Eastern food markets)

Wash wheat and place in saucepan with 3 quarts water. Bring to boil, cover and set aside overnight. The next day, bring to a boil and simmer for 1 ½ hours, until wheat is soft. Wash raisins and apricots and cut apricots into quarters. Add fruit and sugar to wheat. Simmer 30 more minutes. Remove from fire and add rose water. Pour into a deep dish. While warm, garnish with walnuts and blanched almonds. Serve cold. 20 servings.

SILLSALLAD

Swedish Herring Salad
from Margareta Berker
2-4 fillets of salt herring or 1 can
soaked fillets of salt herring
2-3 cold cooked potatoes

2 pickled beets
1 large apple
1 pickled cucumber
1-2 tablespoons liquid from pickled beets
White pepper
¼ cup whipping cream
1 hard-boiled egg
Finely chopped parsley

Soak the fillets in lots of cold water for 6-8 hours, or follow the directions on the package. Cut the herring, potatoes, beets, apple and cucumber into small cubes. Mix it all and combine with liquid from pickled beets and a little pepper.

Whip the cream and fold into the salad. Transfer to a serving bowl and garnish with strips of finely chopped egg, white, egg yolk and parsley. Or pack the salad in a bowl and then unmold and garnish. Can also be used as an hors d'oeuvre, served with fry bread. This is good without the herring. Many Swedes prefer it without.

clarification

The recipe for Thumbprint Cookies that ran along with the article on "Candy Man" Bill Hayes (Dec. 17, Taste), should have read: ¼ cup soft shortening or ¼ cup each shortening and butter, for the first ingredient.

GET OUT OF THE DARK.

Open your eyes and see just how many subjects are covered in the new edition of the Consumer Information Catalog. It's here just for the asking and so are nearly half of the 200 federal publications described inside. Booklets on subjects like financial and career planning, eating right, exercising, and staying healthy. Housing and even care, federal benefit programs. Just about everything you would need to know. Write today.

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Cook a goose

A HOLIDAY ROAST GOOSE

1 goose
Salt
4 cups water
6 peppercorns
¼ pound butter (1 stick)
½ onion, sliced
2 tablespoons flour

Remove the wings, neck and feet from the goose. Cover with cold water and soak for 15 minutes. Drain and pat dry. Rub with salt inside and out. Place the bird in a roaster on a rack, if desired. Add water, onions and peppercorns. Roast in a moderate (325-degree) oven. After the water has boiled down, baste the bird with the butter that has been melted and slightly browned. Allow about 25 minutes per pound for the bird to cook. Place the bird on a heated platter. Place the roaster on top burner of the stove, stir in flour and 2 cups of water and boil for 3 minutes or until smooth and slightly thickened.