

Learning about European labels

One of the major differences between American and European wines is the label. Most American wine labels are dominated by a grape name, such as cabernet sauvignon or chardonnay. European wine labels emphasize the place where the wine was made, such as Bordeaux or Burgundy.

As you become more interested in wine and its origins, place names become important to identifying a wine's quality. With the long history of winemaking in Europe, a classification of wine quality evolved based principally on a wine's geographic origin.

Without being predisposed to geography, an interest in wine tends to generate a curiosity to learn everything you've ever wanted to know about Italian wines in Italy and Anderson's "The Wine Atlas of Italy and Traveler's Guide to the Vineyards" (Simon & Schuster, \$40).

The book is well written by one of the best authorities on Italian wines.

"OZ CLARKE'S New Encyclopedia of French Wines" (Simon & Schuster, \$24.95) is an accurate, refreshingly humorous text covering all the wine regions of France. The book's features offer a comfortable introduction to French wines.

Clarke, a British wine authority and broadcaster, has traveled the length of France. He understands the wines and gives superb descriptions of aromas and flavors. Clarke is opinionated and doesn't mind letting

clarification

An important ingredient — 2 eggs — was missing from the list of ingredients for Larry Jones' recipe for Basic Muffins which ran in the Feb. 25 issue.

cooking calendar

MEXICAN FOOD
Cooking authority Diane Kennedy will present two lessons on the original and traditional food of Mexico at 6:30 p.m. Monday-Tuesday, April 8-9, at Kitchen Glamour in West Bloomfield. Fee is \$85 a class, or \$125 for the two-part series. For more information call 537-1380.

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focus on wine Eleanor and Ray Heald

WINE SELECTION OF THE WEEK

Shenandoah Vineyards Vintage Port. At \$10, this wine is a bargain for those seeking a full, rich, creamy-textured dessert pour with balanced sweetness. Produced from authentic Portuguese grape varieties, this California-style port makes an exceptional complement to warm apple pie.

1990 Marita Brothers Dry Chianti. A delicious alternative to many pricey chardonnays. Floral, melon, pear and pineapple aromas are followed by fresh fruit flavors in a user-friendly style.

WINE BULLETIN BOARD

Domaine Drouhin Oregon Pinot Noir. 6:30 p.m. Sunday, March 24, at the Hatfield Club, Detroit, in collaboration with the Cloverleaf Market. Meet renowned Burgundy producer Robert Drouhin and his winemaker daughter, Veronique, on a 10-city whirlwind tour celebrating the official opening of their Dundee, Oregon, winery. An exceptional six-course meal with nine Drouhin Burgundies and a sampling of both the 1988 and 1989 Domaine Drouhin Oregon Pinot Noir is a bargain at \$95 per person. For reservations, phone Jim Luty, Cloverleaf Market, 357-0400.

you know. He calls Muscadet "the perfect easy-going light, soft, fresh dry white." For good value he predicts, "We're going to see more and more Corbières, Minervois, Fitou and Côtes du Roussillon." He contends that Beaulieu's Gamay grape "can perform brilliantly but frequently

doesn't." Of the famous red Bordeaux wines of Chateau Lafite Rothschild, Clarke said, "I wish I could draw near in humble mood to worship at this shrine of perfection, but I can't, and the reason is simply that the wine is so wretchedly inconsistent." On the other hand he admits, "La Lagune

has given me more pleasure than any other single wine." Despairing about the quality of the white wines of Macon, Clarke suggests that although we should see a steady stream of enjoyable, fruity, fresh, creamy Macon-Villages Chardonnay, the wines of Australia and New Zealand have twice the flavor at half the price.


"THE SIMON & Schuster Beginner's Guide to Understanding Wine" (Michael Schuster, Fireside Books, \$12.95) is a guide for the novice and experienced alike. Schuster expertly focuses on tasting techniques, grape varieties and winemaking methods, accompanied by illustrative color photographs.

A proponent of language as a part of wine enjoyment, Schuster emphasizes correct vocabulary as he describes tasting techniques. He uses all the senses (sight, smell, taste and touch) to encourage a complete experience.

Grapes, and the wines they make, are discussed from viticulture to vinification, for whites, and cabernet to zinfandel red wines. Sparkling and fortified wines are explained and a brief discussion of spirits also is included.

Books are the best way to expand your wine education. They will heighten your wine enjoyment.

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Sugar-nut topping for special pears

AP — For an elegant dessert, top wedges of firm, ripe pears with a spicy, sugar-nut topping. Serve warm, topped with non-fat yogurt.

BAKED PEARS WITH ALMONDS
4 large ripe pears, pared, cored and cut into wedges
1/4 cup light brown sugar, packed
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
3 tablespoons extra-light olive oil
1/4 cup sliced unblanched almonds
Plain non-fat yogurt, to taste (optional)

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly brush a 2-quart shallow baking dish

with oil. Arrange the pears in even rows in the baking dish.

In a separate bowl, combine the brown sugar, flour, cinnamon and cloves; stir to blend. Add the 3 tablespoons oil and 1/4 cup almonds. Stir with a fork until well blended. Sprinkle over the pears in an even layer. Bake in a 350-degree oven until the pears are tender and topping is golden, about 30 minutes. Serve warm with a spoonful of yogurt, if desired. Makes 8 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 201 cal., 9 g fat, 2 g pro, 32 g carb., 3 g dietary fiber, 0 mg chol., 5 mg sodium.

Recipe from Bertolt Olive Oil

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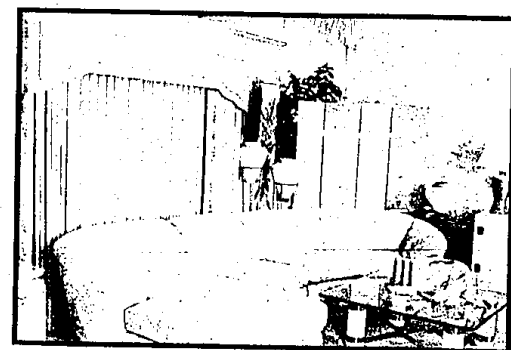
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