

Wrap up your holiday shopping with wine gifts

Tailoring wine gifts to a recipient's taste can be fun, even if you believe you can't know if you need to know how much you wish to spend. In general, wine enthusiasts are easily pleased.

Wine lovers enjoy reading about wine almost as much as they like drinking it. The latest vintage of wine books released for the holidays is above average.

Three books by the British writer Hugh Johnson, published by Simon & Schuster top the list. "Vintage: The Story of Wine" (paperback \$25) is an outgrowth of the basic work Johnson did for the PBS masterpiece of the same name. Within the nearly 500 pages, with 200 four-color photographs, Johnson traces the history of wine from biblical times to the present. The reader is left with a great appreciation of the importance of wine on civilization.

In "The Vintner's Art" (hardcover \$40) Johnson teams with Australian vintner/writer James Halliday to explain how technology

FOCUS ON WINE



ELEANOR & RAY HEALD

has, in the last two decades, revolutionized the art of winemaking. In clear and understandable language, but with accurate detail, the authors explain how great wines are made.

Every wine enthusiast who has fantasized about making wine and owning a winery will enjoy reading about the technological advances available in the vineyard and winery enhancing the winemaker's skills.

Over the years, "Hugh Johnson's Pocket Encyclopedias of Wine" (\$11.99) have sold more than three million copies. The 1993 edition offers a brief but

complete look at wine producing countries, vintages, grape varieties, wine types and basic food complements. The book's size makes it a perfect stocking stuffer.

Cheese is one of wine's favorite matches and many area wine merchants stock a dazzling array. "The Simon and Schuster Pocket Guide to Cheese" by Sandy Carr (\$13), as the subtitle suggests, a complete guide to the cheeses of the world. It includes, in addition to interesting facts about the world's stock of cheeses, hints on buying, storing and serving them. The tips on harmonizing wines and cheese cover a brief half page and is the book's drawback for a wine connoisseur.

In every wine vintage, some bottles just don't make it. Some wine books are the same. "Making Sense of California Wine" by Matt Kramer (Morrow, \$20) falls short of his 1990 work "Making Sense of Burgundy." Kramer, a Portland, Ore. resident, must not have spent much time in California wine country. His book, al-

though offering a fresh perspective from the appellation point of view, omits wineries of significance.

Kramer also needs to study California geography and learn the correct spelling of winery names. We don't agree with its advance billing of the must-read wine book of the year.

To add to the wine enthusiasts liquid assets, a fine bottle of champagne or sparkling wine will always be welcome. Champagne prices have come down over last year, but they still bear a pricey tag. If money's no object, the 1985 Champagne Taittinger Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs (\$90-95) is an exceptional chardonnay pour produced exclusively from 100 percent grand cru vineyards. This cuvee rested on the yeast for a full seven years before being recently disgorged.

Some champagnes come gift packaged with one or two invariably overpriced wine glasses. This may be an attractive gift, but an unwise purchase.

Tasting very similar to the real

bubbly from Champagne is Domaine Chandon's California bottling Etolle (\$22.50). Essentially, it comes with its own gift bagged 750-mL bottle inspired by the antique Saran Nature bottle from the French parent company Moet et Chandon and decorated by hand in 22kt gold, silk screened letters.

California's ultra-premium sparkling wine producer Schramsberg has released a stellar bubbly named J. Schram (\$50). It is a limited production wine with the first release from the 1987 vintage about 2,000 six-bottle cases. This reasonably rare bottling also comes handsomely packaged with an exquisite fabric gift bag. The bubbly contents represent the 25-year sum of acquired knowledge at Schramsberg and are described in one word, excellent.

A wine enthusiast loves wine gadgets. The most popular is a table-model corkcreeper. These are available through specialty catalogs at significantly inflated prices. To save the markup, you can

Wine Selections of the Week

Add sparkle to your holiday entertaining or gift giving with: Roadover Estate Anderson Valley Brut (\$17) Iron Horse 1989 Brut (\$25) Iron Horse 1989 Blanc de Noir Wedding Cuvee (\$27.50)

Superior recently-released gift-worthy red wines: 1990 Kendall-Jackson Proprietor's Cabernet Sauvignon (\$17) 1988 Simi Winery Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (\$34) 1988 Pomaroso, Coppo, Piedmont (\$42)

order directly from the manufacturer, Roger International Corporation, P.O. Box 5585, Richmond, VA 23230-0585, Toll Free 800/351-1420 or FAX 804/358-8407. Several models are available.

To leave a message for the Healds, and hear their Voice Mail Wine Selection of the Week, dial 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number 1864.

Apple tart just right for parties

The holiday season is baking season, and what better way to celebrate the season than to combine two all-natural ingredients—sugar and apples.

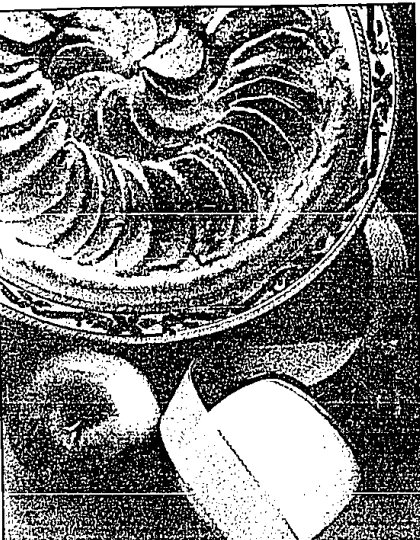
Pioneer Sugar (The Michigan Sugar Company) and the Michigan Apple Committee (representing the state's apple growers) have combined to bring you the season's cheer with Apples 'N Cream Tart, a kitchen-tested recipe just right for holiday gatherings.

APPLES 'N CREAM TART

Crust
½ cup margarine, softened
3 ounces cream cheese, softened
½ teaspoon salt
1¼ cups all-purpose flour
filling
6 cups thinly sliced, peeled Michigan apples
¾ cup sugar
¼ cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon nutmeg
½ cup whipping cream
1 egg
2 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
¼ teaspoon rum flavoring

In medium size mixing bowl, combine margarine, cream cheese and salt. Stir in flour, mixing until thoroughly combined. Press with fingers or roll dough to form crust in bottom and on sides of an 11-inch tart pan or 12-inch pizza pan; set aside.

Combine apples, the ¾ cup sugar, the ¼ cup flour, cinnamon and nut-



Apple tart: Apples 'N Cream Tart combines Michigan apples and sugar in a tasty holiday treat.

meg. Arrange single layer of apples on bottom of crust. Place remaining apple slices in circles.

Bake in 375 degree oven 45 minutes or until crust is golden brown. Meanwhile, beat together remaining ingredients until thoroughly mixed. Remove tart from oven and carefully pour cream mixture over apples. Do not let cream mixture run over crust. Return to oven and bake about 15 minutes longer or un-

til cream is set. Serve warm or cool. Store in refrigerator. Yield: 8 servings.

Suggested Michigan apples to use: Empire, Golden Delicious, Ida Red, Jonathan, McIntosh, Rome.

Chef shares veal dish recipe

See Chef's Secrets on Taste front.

ESCALOPES OF VEAL WITH LEMON

1½ pounds veal cut from the loin and pounded into ¼-inch thick medallions. Eight total.
1 teaspoon chopped shallots
¾ teaspoon chopped garlic
½ teaspoon coarse ground mustard
1 tablespoon butter
2 teaspoons lemon juice

2 ounces white wine
1 teaspoon olive oil
3 Tablespoons chopped leeks
5 mushrooms, sliced
12 pea pods
¼ pimento sliced julienne
Sifted flour to coat veal

Assemble, process and measure all of your ingredients. Have ready by the stove.

Heat saute pan over medium high heat, add olive oil. Dredge escalopes of veal in sifted flour. Shake

off excess flour from veal and place in saute pan when you see the first wisp of smoke rising from pan. Cook 1½ minutes and turn.

Add white wine, garlic, shallots, mustard, leeks, mushrooms, butter and lemon juice. Add pea pods and pimento. Cover for 60 seconds. Remove from heat. Salt and pepper to taste.

Serves four. Garnish with rice or potatoes and steamed fresh asparagus.

Toss low fat red pepper pesto on pasta

AP — Instead of pesto sauce that's swimming in oil, we've come up with a lower-fat version that you can toss into your cooked pasta and vegetables.

PASTA PRIMAVERA WITH RED PEPPER PESTO

1 cup snipped fresh basil leaves (or 1 cup fresh parsley sprigs plus 1 tablespoon dried basil, crushed)
1 medium red or green sweet pepper, cut up
½ cup low-calorie mayonnaise or salad dressing
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
1 tablespoon lemon juice

½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground red pepper
½ teaspoon black pepper
8 ounces fettuccine or linguine
2 large carrots, cut into julienne strips (1½ cups)
1 medium onion, cut into thin wedges (¾ cup)
1 medium zucchini and/or yellow summer squash, cut into julienne strips (1½ cups)
10 ounces cooked chicken or turkey breast, cut into strips

For pesto, in a blender container or food processor bowl combine fresh basil (or parsley and dried basil), red or green sweet pepper,

mayonnaise or salad dressing, Parmesan cheese, lemon juice, salt, red pepper and black pepper. Cover and blend or process until pureed. Set aside.

In a large amount of boiling lightly salted water cook pasta, uncovered, for 8 minutes. Add carrots and onion. Return to boiling; cook for 2 minutes. Add zucchini or yellow squash. Return to boiling; cook for 2 minutes more.

Drain pasta and vegetables; return to saucepan. Stir in pesto; add chicken or turkey. Toss to combine. Cook over very low heat for 2 minutes or until heated through, tossing occasionally. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.

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