

'Rhone rangers' chart success in California wineries

California wineries have experienced success with production of wines from grape varieties indigenous to France's Rhone Valley. About 10 years ago, the lead was taken by "Rhone Rangers" Bonnie Doon Vineyard's creative winemaker Randall Graham. Today, in California, from northern Sonoma County south to Santa Barbara, winemakers have charted success on the course of Rhone varieties production and the Rhone Rangers are legion.

Among them is Michigan State University grad and St. Clair Shores native Doug Danielak, winemaker at Jade Mountain winery in northern Sonoma County. Danielak's ride into winemaking is circuitous, but interesting. "My wife and I sort of hung out in Burgundy during our honeymoon in 1983," he said. Upon his return to the United States he sold wine for Detroit Metro area distributor Chip Delaney until the end of 1985 when he pulled up stakes to work and attend grape-growing and winemaking school in Beaune, the heart of Burgundy. Fluency in French helped Danielak, although he was unable to land a job as winemaker for a Burgundy producer. Traditions ran too deep for that!

FOCUS ON WINE



ELEANOR & RAY HEALD

He returned to the U.S. in 1987 to work harvest at Saintsbury winery in California's Corners region. In 1988, Jade Mountain winery needed a winemaker and Danielak was hired. In the last five years, he has engineered conversion of the winery's Cloverdale vineyards from riesling, sauvignon blanc and cabernet sauvignon to 31 acres of the Rhone varieties syrah, marsanne and a small percentage of mourvedre.

Jade Mountain's owner James Pates acquired a second property of 22 acres on Mount Veeder in Napa Valley and Danielak uprooted Bordeaux varieties and planted Rhone varieties — more syrah and mourvedre, plus vignier, grenache and cinsault.

Jade Mountain's first release of a Rhone-style wine was 1988, a

varietal mourvedre made from purchased grapes. Today, Jade Mountain's wine portfolio includes a varietal mourvedre and syrah, two proprietary wines, La Provencale (a blend of Southern Rhone varieties and Les Jumeaux (a blend of cabernet sauvignon and mourvedre sourced from 60-year-old vines). If your French isn't as strong as Danielak's, we'll explain that. Les Jumeaux is translated as "the twins."

"This innovation puts Jade Mountain in the annals of California wine history and gives California red blends a new definition. Danielak explains the twinning. "When California cabernet sauvignon is picked at prime ripeness, it's lush, delicious and chocolatey," he says. "In Les Jumeaux, I try to express full cabernet sauvignon flavors with mourvedre softening the tannic impression." It works, because this wine is absolutely delicious.

Tasting Jade Mountain
Jade Mountain's production is minuscule compared to that of the industry's giants. They may not be available in every wine shop, but they are definitely worth searching out.

Jade Mountain Grenache (\$10) is not made each year. The current release was made from a blend of 1990 California and Washington State grapes. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms regulations require that as such, it must be labeled "American" and may not be vintage dated. It is a perfect summer barbecue or picnic wine.

1991 La Provencale (\$13), a blend of syrah, mourvedre, grenache and carignane, sports solid fruit and is delicious, full and round with a powerful finish. **1990 Les Jumeaux (\$13)** has the distinct aroma of mourvedre with complementary peppery spice and black truffles making it complementary to red meat and heartier dishes.

Two versions of the **1990 Mourvedre (\$14)** are available. One was filtered and the other was not. The label indicates the difference and they are slightly different when tasted.

Our preference is the unfiltered, which seems to showcase each characteristic of the 60 to 120-year-old vines more intensely. **1990 Syrah (\$22.60)** is a big wine not intended for the faint hearted. Complex and concentrated, it ranks at the very top of Cali-

Wine Selections of the Week

■ **1991 Qvitra Zinfandel, Dry Creek Valley (\$13.25)**. A delicious rendition of an all-American wine with harmonized ripe berries, pepper, spice and fragrant oak.

■ **1991 Merryvale Reserve Chardonnay (\$25)**. Lobster, smoked trout and grilled salmon are the suggested accompaniments for this Burgundy-like chardonnay boasting solid fruit, oak and buttery elements.

■ **1990 Pine Ridge Selected Corley Reserve Chardonnay (\$17.50)** is the correct selection. 1989 Monticello Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley (\$14) is highlighted by blackberry, bright cherry, spice, and oak with a fair amount of tannin.

■ **1990 Pine Ridge Rutherford Cuvée Cabernet Sauvignon (\$15)** carries an early component with blackberry,

black currant and great fruit extraction in an agreeable style.

■ Three Monticello wines impressed us with their flavor and value. The 1991 Monticello Chardonnay, Napa Valley (\$15) shows excellent pear, apple and mango fruit in a wine where the barrel fermentation character complements rather than hides the fruit expression. For those who prefer toasty, vanilla-oak and a touch of butter along with fruit, the 1990 Monticello Reserve Chardonnay (\$17.50) is the correct selection. 1989 Monticello Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley (\$14) is highlighted by blackberry, bright cherry, spice, and oak with a fair amount of tannin.

■ **1990 Pine Ridge Rutherford Cuvée Cabernet Sauvignon (\$15)** carries an early component with blackberry,

ifornia-produced Rhone-styled wines.

"It holds the structure and promise of cabernet sauvignon, but shows fruit nuances found

only in pinot noir," Danielak said.

To leave a message on the Healds' voice mail — dial 953-2047, mailbox 1864.

Beat the heat with heavenly soup, salad

See related story on Taste front. CHILLED HUNGARIAN BERRY SOUP

- 1 package (10 to 12 ounce) frozen blueberries, strawberries, or raspberries or use fresh fruit in the same amount
 - ¼ cup sweet Madeira
 - 2 containers (8 ounces each) blueberry, strawberry or raspberry yogurt
 - 1 container (8 ounces) plain yogurt
 - 1 to 4 tablespoons superfine sugar or as needed to taste (optional)
- In food processor fitted with metal blade, puree all ingredients, us-

ing two or three 30-second churning of motor (scrape work bowl down between churning with rubber spatula).

Pour into stemmed goblets and garnish by floating an orange slice on each portion, adding a mint sprig and a cluster of fresh berries (blueberries look great!). Serves 4 to 6. Recipe from "The Christ Child Inspirational Cookbook."

RICE SALAD

- 4-5 cups cooked long grain or brown rice, chilled
- 1-2 bunches scallions, finely chopped
- 2 large tomatoes, skinned, seeded and diced
- 2 avocados

Juice of ½ lemon

- 1 14-ounce can artichoke hearts, quartered and drained on paper towel
- 1 green pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 4-ounce jar pimento, diced
- ½ seedless cucumber, unpeeled and diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 1 1 ½-ounce can flat anchovy fillets, chopped
- 1 6-ounce can pitted black olives, halved lengthwise
- 1-2 pounds frozen shrimp, cooked and cooled
- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons tarragon wine vinegar

- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ½ teaspoon dried tarragon
- Salt to taste
- Pepper to taste
- 2-3 hard-cooked eggs, sliced (garnish)
- Parsley or watercress (garnish)

In a large bowl combine rice, scallions and tomato. Peel and dice avocados and toss in the lemon juice. Add to rice. Add artichokes, green peppers, pimento, cucumber, celery, anchovies and olives.

Save a few olives for garnish. Halve or chop shrimp if too large. Add to bowl. In small jar with screw top combine oil, vinegar, mustard, tarragon, salt and pepper. Toss with salad until well-mixed. Garnish with eggs and watercress. Serves 10 to 12.

Recipe from "Amazing Taste Cookbook."

Angels from page 1B

lished some 40 years ago. In it we found wonderful sketches of our patron saint, St. Hugo the Abbot of Cluny preparing meals in and about the St. Clare Chapel.

"So with the help of artist Doris Spinnak, we added those sketches illustrated by another Alter Guild member Hope Ruessmann along with a number of additional sketches illustrated by Doris to be the divider pages in the book."

The volunteers and especially the six member executive committee organized the format of the recipes, established a testing committee and worked with a local printer to design the book.

"We wanted to take the guesswork out of the recipes for the reader," said DiMambro so, we shopped and checked out the recipe ingredients in grocery stores making sure the recipes had the exact sizes for the ingredients listed.

Also an addendum was inserted which recommends substitutions for recipes which called for raw eggs or egg whites.

There are a number of unusual ethnic dishes to be found amongst the 564 pages of "Amazing Taste" such as East African Fish Stew, Armenian Lamb Shank and Japanese Salad.

In the book you'll also find recipes from Mary Ann's Kitchen, Bloomfield Hills, the Fox and Hounds, Bloomfield Hills, Opus One, Detroit the Machus Sly Fox, Birmingham, De Edwards, Grosse Pointe Woods, the Rome Cafe, Detroit, the Golden Mushroom, Southfield and more.

In the forward the cookbook committee expresses gratitude to Monsignor Anthony Tocco for his

support and encouragement, but they are especially grateful to him for his culinary contributions to the cookbook for parishioners "to be an outstanding gourmet cook."

Tocco shared a number of special recipes in the book including Lobster Antonio — lobster tails

made with seasoned bread crumbs, butter and Chardonnay wine and Pollo a la Monsignore — a marinated, grilled chicken dish made with a medley of colorful sautéed peppers in a wine sauce of balsamic vinegar and mushrooms.

See recipes inside.

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LOOKING AHEAD

- What to watch for in Taste next week:
 - Taste Buds — Growers are predicting a bumper crop of tart cherries this year. Chef Larry Janes shares recipes for cherry veggie dip and muffins.
 - Stone fruits — Apricots, cherries, nectarines, peaches and plums. They smell good, and taste good too. Jean Boram will tell you all about these stone fruits.
 - Wine column — Roy and Eleanor Heald explain why Chaptoulier is a name to remember in Rhone wines.