

MONDAY, AUGUST 1, 1994

TASTE

TASTE BUDE



CHEF LARRY JONES

Give meat a rub down for best barbecue flavor

Ask my momma what she likes to make on a hot sultry summer evening for dinner, and her response would probably be like many who read this column - "reservations."

But leaving the kitchen to swelter on the deck in the backyard, especially with a tall cold one in one hand and a pair of long handled tongs in the other near the grill, is my way of coping with the dog days of summer.

When the Jones Gang gets the urge to cook on the grill, chicken, fish, beef and freshly picked vegetables seems to be just what the doctor ordered. Since our summer budget always seems to be stretched a few days before payday, the chicken, fish and lesser cuts of beef usually end up marinating for a few hours in a delightful mixture of citrus juices, oil and fresh herbs.

Tonight was a little different. After a searing softball game in 90 degree heat and equal humidity, we ventured in to find the lowly chicken sitting unadorned and cold in the refrigerator. Thinking that reservations were in order, and realizing that tomorrow night and the two following would find us away from home, we decided to cook the chicken.

We just couldn't toss the chicken on the grill plain, yet nobody wanted to wait until the chicken finished its bath in marinade at 9 p.m. Instead, I followed the advice of Chris Schlesinger and John Willoughby, authors of the newly published "Big Flavors of the Hot Sun" (William Morrow & Co. copyright 1994, \$27.50) and used a spice rub for a different taste treat.

Dry Rubs

Rubbing food with spice mixtures prior to cooking is a key technique in creating highly flavored foods. Schlesinger and Willoughby claim "when food that has been rubbed with a spice mixture is cooked, the dry rub creates a super-flavorful, slightly crunchy crust on the outside, while the interior retains its own distinct flavor."

Dry rubs have been around for decades and are very popular in the barbecue pits of the South. Before a beef brisket or a pork shoulder undergoes the long, slow roasting of the barbecue process, it is rubbed with a blend of spices that each pit master refers to as "mah special secret rub."

The authors claim that dry rubbing is a kind of marinating. Not only is dry rubbing faster but the tastes derived from using a dry rub are far more intense than a wet marinade which usually ends up muddled.

Wet marinating has a tendency to tenderize more than accentuate the flavor, especially when vinegars and high acid citric juices are used.

Dry rubbing, on the other hand, especially over the higher temperatures of a grill provides a spicy crust and a great flavor. "Big Flavors of the Hot Sun" is packed with hot recipes and cool tips from the spices.

Schlesinger and Willoughby suggest that when using a dry rub, begin with small handfuls (yes, your hands as no other tools work as well) and coat the entire surface of the food that you choose to cook. Using a bit of pressure to rub in the spices (that why they call it a rub) mix the spices into the flesh so they adhere. When cooking, don't be concerned when the spice rub begins to darken; this is what usually happens when spices cook. As long as the rub is not burning over direct flames, everything should be fine.

Cooking Tips

Schlesinger and Willoughby offer five ways to work smarter, not harder, when cooking. Their first suggestion is to "salt and pepper just about everything." Use kosher salt and fresh ground pepper, the two tastes most widely appreciated by just about everyone who eats.

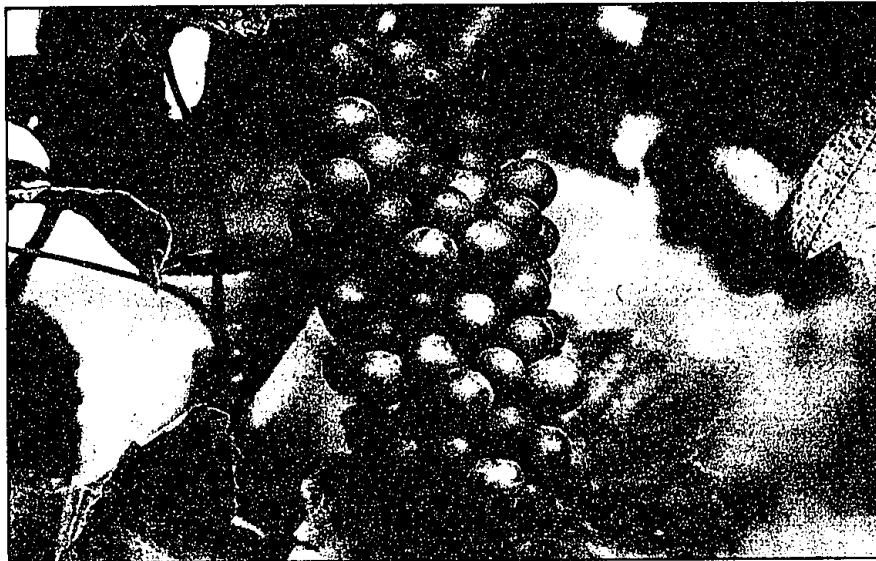
Second, they recommend that the cook "purchase good ingredients." Your dry rub is going to be only as good tasting as the spices you rub on. If that jar of garlic powder has seen the light of the vernal equinox, reinvest in fresher spices. Most importantly, the authors suggest that everyone who cooks "learn how to check for doneness."

"How long should I cook?" is one of the toughest questions in cooking. The answer, of course, is "till it's done." Schlesinger and Willoughby also suggest that when you choose to cook, be prepared, organized and clean. The French call it "mise en place," and everyone, for health and safety sake, should oblige. Lastly, the cooks claim that their number one, numero uno, the biggest principle to cook by is: Relax and have fun. My sentiments exactly, boys. Buy the book, you'll love it.

See Larry Jones' family-tested recipes inside. To leave a message for Chef Larry, dial 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number 1896.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:
■ Minty desserts are refreshing on hot days.
■ Three busy women share super recipes.



Good Harbor Vineyard

MICHIGAN Wineries

FULL OF PROMISE

BY RAY & ELEANOR HEALD



After the coldest growing season in 1992, and the second coldest growing season in 1993, followed by the severest winter in nearly two decades, we can still say with pride, the Michigan wine industry has only survived the vagaries of mother nature, it has made strides.

We talked with some of those vintners, who despite the weather, are full of hope.

Bruce Simpson of Good Harbor Vineyards in Lake Leelanau explained the last growing season by saying that the vintage of 1993 presented many of the same weather-related obstacles as did 1992. May and June were cool and damp. This caused a reduced fruit set in vineyards throughout Michigan. Yields were 30-40 percent lower than normal.

Just how cold did it get? The coldest temperature Simpson recorded in the Leelanau area vineyards was 10 degrees below zero. "Good Harbor is at the northern grape boundary, however many times it is more moderate in northern Michigan than inland areas of southern Michigan. We had about 200 inches of snow and my pruning crews, on snowshoes,

bent over to reach the top two wires of a six-foot trellis."

Bruce Zabadal, an associate professor in the Department of Horticulture at Michigan State University, and Director of the Southwest Michigan Research Extension Center, said that around Jan. 19 temperatures ranged from 17 degrees below zero to 29 degrees below zero in southwest Michigan.

"There will be no vinifera crop in 1994 from southwest Michigan," he said. "In late spring, there were less than 5 percent live buds and at some sites only 1 percent. In northwest Michigan, about 25 percent of the buds survived. Wineries there will have a very small crop."

Is it worth battling mother nature in Michigan? "I'd say yes," said Larry Mawby of L. Mawby Vineyard in Suttons Bay. "If severe winters occur only once in every 15 years, it's an acceptable risk."

Mawby's been saying for several years that Michigan should focus on sparkling wine production from the classic Champagne grapes, chardonnay and pinot noir. These grape vari-

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Harvesting grapes: Pinot gris (top) is one of the state's most promising varieties. A worker at Good Harbor Vineyards, south of Leelanau, carries a load of freshly harvested grapes in from the field.

Winemakers look toward the future

A non-vintage Brut sparkling wine made by a Solera process from L. Mawby is on the horizon. Our research doesn't indicate that anyone else in the world has tried this. If you know of one, call our voice mail, please.

"I think it's a neat idea," Larry Mawby said. "The sparkler will always be made from grapes originating in the same vineyard. This is a long-term project, and I'll probably release the first bottles in 1997."

Mawby's also thinking about the new millennium. For the year 2000, he'll release about 100 cases of a Prestige Sparkling Wine Cuvee. "I wanted a wine of the millennium; somewhere in between, I'll release the Solera Champagne," he said.

Pinot noir, planted four years ago at Chateau Chantal, is beginning to show promise.

Bruce Simpson, master of proprietary names at Good Harbor, will release a riesling, vignoles, chardonnay blend from the 1993 vintage, but at this writing, he had not decided on a name. Simpson is also planting pinot noir for a sparkling wine program.

Via-a-Via White and Red will carry lot numbers. Up to now and for the foreseeable future, the wine does not bear a vintage date so the lot numbers will allow you to track the freshest wine.

Leelanau Cellars will not be for wine lovers only. Beer is on tap at the new Leelanau Brewing Co. The first brew will be named Aurora Beersale, complete with a hologram label.

"In the first year, availability will be by-the-glass through the winery tasting room only," Skolnick said. "Later, we'll expand to sales in Traverse City restaurants."

See WINEMAKERS, 2B

Visiting Michigan's wineries

- **Bookyard Vineyards, Lake Leelanau,** (810) 256-7272
- **Bowers Harbor Vineyard, 2896 Bowers Harbor, Old Mission Peninsula, Traverse City,** (810) 223-7615
- **Chateau Chantal, 15900 Rue de Vin (1.5 miles north of Mapleton on Old Mission Peninsula),** (810) 223-4110
- **Chateau Grand Traverse, 12239 Center Road, Old Mission Peninsula,** (810) 223-7355
- **Good Harbor Vineyards, 8100 122nd Ave (Exit 34 off I-96), Ferndale,** (810) 561-2396
- **Good Harbor Vineyards, 3 miles south of Leland on M-22,** (810) 256-7165
- **L. Mawby Vineyard, 4519 Elm Valley Rd., Suttons Bay,** (810) 271-3522
- **Le Montreux, 2365 Eight Mile Rd. N.W., Grand Rapids,** (810) 784-4554
- **Leelanau Wine Cellars, County Rd. 626, Omens,** (810) 388-5201
- **Lemon Creek Winery, 533 Lemon Creek Rd., Berlin Springs,** (810) 471-1221
- **Petersen & Sons, 5375 East P Ave., Kalamazoo,** (810) 826-9755
- **Seven Lakes Vineyard, 1111 Therman Rd., Fenton,** (810) 829-5685
- **Sharon Mills Winery, 5701 Sharon Hollow Rd., Manchester,** (810) 426-3270
- **St. Julian Wine Co., 716 S. Kalamazoo St., Paw Paw,** (810) 657-5588
- **Tabor Hill, 185 Mt. Tabor Rd., Buchanan,** (800) 283-3363
- **Torrian Hill, Rt. 612 Ave., New Era,** (810) 661-4637
- **Warner Vineyards, 700 S. Kalamazoo St., Paw Paw,** (810) 657-3165

Newsy wines from our state

- **1991 Reserve Vignoles, L. Mawby (\$18)** - The last time this wine was made was in 1987 and before that 1983. Only 165 cases were produced and it was released July 1.
- **1993 American Bistro Chardonnay, L. Mawby (\$7.50)** - The juice originated in Oregon's Willamette Valley, but it's made in the Mawby style with pineapple character and crisp finish.
- **1993 Pinot Gris, L. Mawby (\$10.20/500ml)** - Very competitive with many domestic bottlings from California and Oregon.
- **Dionysus Brut, L. Mawby (\$15)** - Slightly toasty and delicately stylish.
- **1992 Chateau Chantal Brut (\$20)** - has attractive aromas and gentle toastiness with a light and elegant finish.
- **1993 Chardonnay, Leelanau Cellars (\$10)** - is 25 percent barrel fermented and sports buttery oak and fruit. The creamy finish is delicious, generous and fulfilling.
- **Tall Ship Chardonnay (\$13)** - Was 100 percent barrel fermented and received most of the bell and whistle cellar techniques of a California chardonnay. The fruit was picked in the third week of October in a cold vintage, but generous fruit was integrated with oak in the wine.
- **Great White, St. Julian Wine Company (\$4.95)** - Together with the whole line of Village Wines at the same price, make an unbeatable portfolio for the money.