

TASTE

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MONDAY, MARCH 20, 1995

TASTE BUDD



CHEF LARRY JAMES

Discover the pleasure of making your own bread

Americans are rediscovering the importance of bread. The bread you and I were raised on (wrapped in a colorful package with a texture as soft as a marshmallow and just about as much nutrition) is now passé.

Quality bread bakeries are helping change the old view that bread is fattening and full of empty calories. High quality bakeries are producing real bread — bread that is wholesome and nutritious.

People who make their own bread know the special satisfaction that comes from producing a homemade loaf — the satiny feel of the dough when kneaded, the smell of the yeast, the miracle of the dough doubling and tripling in size, the aroma of the finished bread when it comes out of the oven, brown and crusty, and the hollow sound the bottom of the loaf makes when tested for doneness.

While growing up in Wyandotte, we had a neighbor who used to bake bread every Saturday. Mrs. Rosini lived two doors down, but all it took was a bike ride past her house on Sycamore Street to know she was making bread.

Now I have nothing personal against those modern day wonders dubbed "bread machines." As a matter of fact, I got one last year and sent it back. I was more than satisfied with the finished results — all accomplished in less than four hours. The price was right, and it can't get much easier, but I missed something. To make bread in the machine all you had to do was measure flour, salt, liquid, and yeast. But that was just it; I needed to knead.

The machine clunked and rattled as a tiny two-inch steel knob did the work of two powerful hands. The machine heated itself to just the perfect temperature for the first rise as I recalled that sky blue checked dish towel Mrs. Rosini always used to cover her massive glass mixing bowl.

The machine baked the bread perfectly and even dispensed of the heat and steam after the baking had finished, not unlike the way Mrs. Rosini would throw in a quarter cup of warm water to "help set the crust" of her bread. The machine was just too good and too easy.

Gratifying task

Few tasks gratify me more than making bread. Plugging in a machine and allowing it to do all the work took away all the fun.

One of the many pleasures of bread making is that the ingredients aren't hard to find or expensive. The utensils you need aren't complicated either.

You probably already have everything you need in your kitchen to bake a delicious loaf of bread. We have all heard people say they wish they had grandma's or a "Mrs. Rosini's" recipe for one thing or another. But chances are, grandma and Mrs. Rosini never had a recipe for the bread they baked. They probably added a bit of this and a dash of that. They simply trusted their instincts and the feel of the dough.

Breads come alive with a handful of raisins or a spoonful of honey. The older and darker the pan, the more evenly the bread will bake, but a modern day pan will do just fine.

The only "homemade" bread my momma ever made was of the "frozen and let rise" variety. Remember the kind that came four frozen loaves to the bag? Momma would bake two, eat one by herself and serve the other for dinner. The only reason I knew this was once it was my turn to do the dishes and there were two bread pans with only one loaf appearing at the dinner table. With Mrs. Rosini long gone and momma the expert on the frozen variety, I went right to the source — Belay Oppenauer — who wrote "The Bread Book" (Harper Collins, \$27.50) and asked what the secret was to making great bread. Oppenauer responded — "To make perfect bread each and every time you bake, you must learn to trust your instincts and make the bread by feel."

Oppenauer says that kneading and baking has just four basic steps: activation of the yeast, using the right amount of flour, kneading the dough long enough, and taking care to be sure the bread does not burn.

Sound simple? It is! But for some crazy odd reason, I couldn't get Oppenauer to agree on the fact that to make the best bread, you needed sky blue checked dish towels and big old glass bowls.

If you know someone like Mrs. Rosini, bring back the memory and make a loaf of bread — who knows, you might just start a Saturday morning tradition and the little kids who ride by on their bikes might write about you someday.

See recipes inside. To leave a voice mail message for Chef Larry James, dial (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number 1898.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Joe Sansonetti produces 600 pounds of pasta products a week in Birmingham.
- Mama Mucci's Pasta Company recently moved to Canton and is expanding.

The Great American Meatout Saturday, March 25th



The food will be vegan, meaning meatless & dairy-free



STAFF PHOTOS BY ART EMANUELE

Delicious meatless dishes: Mary Melville (left) and Lynn Donell present some of their favorite meatless dishes including walnut burgers and pasta with bean tomato sauce.

EVENT CELEBRATES VEGETARIANISM

BY BRIAN LYBAGHT
STAFF WRITER

According to "Vegetarian Times," 12.4 million Americans describe themselves as vegetarians, though 20 percent of them also say they eat red meat once a month.

Is that called having your steak and eating it too? No matter. They won't be eating animal products March 25 at the Great American Meatout, a celebration of vegetarianism at Oak Park's Community Center, 14300 Oak Park Blvd., just west of Coolidge and south of 10 Mile.

There will be chili, spaghetti,

burgers (of soy, not beef) and hot dogs (called Not Dogs), but there won't be a chop or filet to be had.

So while meat is not welcome at this food festival, which runs 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., anyone who's got \$2 for admission is. The event is organized locally by HARE (that's Humanitarians for Animal Rights Education) and the Farm Animal Reform Movement.

There will be Meatouts across the country that day. While not all vegetarians have political reasons for not eating meat, HARE members do. They don't like the treatment of animals that are

raised for food. They also don't like furs worn as clothing and occasionally protest against it, though never violently or unlawfully, member Mary Melville of Farmington Hills said.

Meatout seeks to educate people about vegetarianism and the politics of eating meat.

The event has proven popular. Last year hundreds waited in a line at the Pleasant Ridge Community Center. The first local Meatout was held in a small Royal Oak Library room, and 300 people attended.

HARE is planning for 2,000

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Wine Selections of the Week

- Exceptional Chardonnays**
- 1993 Geyser Peak (\$10)
 - 1992 Alexander Valley Vineyards (\$11)
 - 1993 Charles Krug (\$11)
 - 1993 Iron Horse (\$17.50)
 - 1993 Yulefest (\$18)
 - 1993 Geyser Peak Reserve (\$20)
- Delicious Reds**
- 1992 Columbia Crest Merlot (\$11.50)
 - 1991 Raymond Vineyard Ambergis Cabernet Sauvignon (\$11)
 - 1991 Villa Mount Eden Cabernet Sauvignon (\$14)
 - 1992 Murphy-Goodie Cabernet Sauvignon (\$15)
 - 1991 Sini Cabernet Sauvignon (\$15)
 - 1992 Silverado Cabernet Sauvignon (\$19)
 - 1991 Beringer Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve (\$40)
- Good Buy Under \$10**
- 1993 Fazzar Barbara Chardonnay (\$9)

Sterling is silver, but these wines are pure gold

A frequently used phrase in the wine industry is, "wine is made in the vineyard." Nowhere is this truer than at Napa Valley's Sterling Vineyards where growing and buying the finest grapes is the most important factor in the winery's consistent wine quality.

"Grape farming is a dynamic, changing effort," said Gary Gott, executive vice president in charge of vineyards and wineries for The Sengram Classics Wine Company which owns Sterling Vineyards, Mumm Napa Valley and The Montevie Winery.

For these wineries, Gott is responsible for wine production from more than 2,500 acres of grapes in Napa and Monterey counties.

"Our vineyards are organized to service our winemakers," Gott explained. "We attempt to have Sterling's winemaker Bill Dyer's eyes and ears in the vineyards as much as possible." In 1994, Dyer celebrated his 18th harvest. "Many people who entered the industry when I did, built Dyer said, "I stayed at Sterling and everything has changed around me. It has always been my opinion that wine should showcase fruit. I'm not a member of the 'do it to it' school of winemaking."

The spread of phylloxera, a louse destroying grape vine roots, has caused Sterling, like many

of its North Coast winery neighbors, to engage in a replanting program. This is a positive in Gott's opinion.

"It explains the dynamism of grape growing," Gott said. "It's not detrimental to quality. As a matter of fact, it may improve quality. Yes, it's depressing to spend so much money on replanting, but we know that this crisis is accelerating the rate at which we incorporate new information and technology into our vineyards."

"Sterling is prepared to make all the correct replanting decisions. We have experimental blocks of several varieties that have aided us in selecting the best variety, rootstock, clonal selection, planting density and trellis system for each vineyard that's replanted."

Sterling has also taken a very active position on low-pesticide farming. Gott believes Sterling has an obligation to protect its employees, consumers and the environment from any unnecessary dangers associated with the use of agricultural chemicals in the vineyard. In the winery, Dyer has taken a "natural" approach to winemaking and no longer uses cultured yeast to inoculate for fermentation. Since the harvest of 1993, he relies on the yeast present on the grapes

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