

MONDAY, MAY 15, 1995

TASTE

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TASTE BUDDS



CHEF LARRY JANES

Today's lean pork cooks in less time

Succulent pork chops, breaded and baked in a covered casserole until they nearly fall off the bone, are momma's specialty.

Momma can also whip up a pretty mean pork roast replete with all the trimmings for a James Gang family dinner.

When I was growing up, there were always requests for seconds when she baked her fabbed ribs generously doused with a tawny orange color that mysteriously came from a Kraft bottle.

Those were the days when pork had the reputation of being a hearty, fatty meat. Everyone believed that pork should always be cooked well done, or in momma's words "very well done." But a look at pork's nutritional profile today demonstrates that its fat content has been lowered significantly.

Lean meat

An average piece of lean, trimmed pork is no less than seven percent fat. A loin chop trimmed of its fat, contains just three percent fat, about the same as a skinless chicken breast. And if pork producers have their way, the fat percentage will fall even further. Welcome as this trend may be to those trying to limit their fat intake, it has caused problems for those who want to enjoy the luscious, moist meat they remember from the past.

New cooking guidelines

Do you know why momma's pork roast was always so juicy and tender, even when cooked well done? It was the fat. Numbers don't lie. In 1955, a 237-pound hog yielded almost 35 pounds of lard; today, a hog that is 10 pounds heavier produces a little more than 10 pounds of lard. Without fat's protective layer, tough and dry meat frequently result when cooking is too long or too intense.

Even Momma, who rarely asks me anything about cooking, wanted to know how to keep her pork roast from drying out. It's a simple fact, folks, both flavor and tenderness are destroyed by overcooking.

Nowadays, pork should be cooked "a little on the pink side," said Ken Prusa, associate professor of food nutrition at Iowa State University. This, according to my momma who surely thinks that I am going to die of salmonella poisoning because I happen to favor pink, is totally illogical, and almost unheard of.

"Cook it until it registers 185 degrees F. on the meat thermometer," said momma shaking her wooden spoon while extolling the wrath of God at the thought of undercooking pork. Even the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which once insisted that pork be cooked to 185 degrees F. to kill trichinella, now says 160 degrees F. is sufficient. But is trichinosis a culinary concern? Although it still exists, the disease has all but been eliminated by laws prohibiting the feeding of raw garbage to swine.

Personally, I have found that when I cook a pork roast to 145 degrees F., after removing it from the oven and allowing it to sit for 15-20 minutes before carving (as you should with all roasts) the internal temperature rose to 160 degrees F. Further testing on this in the Janes Gang kitchen proved that for optimum results, a pork roast should be removed from the oven at 135 degrees F. and allowed to stand for 10-15 minutes. The temperature rose to 150 degrees F. This made, by far, the best, juiciest, most tender roast. The roast cooked to 160 degrees F. and allowed to stand to 175 degrees F. was dry and tasted like sawdust.

As with the raw egg in the Caesar salad controversy, the decision to cook a pork roast to any temperature must be a personal one. For the record, momma stated she will continue to cook her pork as she always has. Not that I still can't appreciate the taste of a great baked pork chop, but lately the Janes Gang has been enjoying pork grilled shish kebabs style.

Favorites are center cut pork loins sliced thin and pounded almost paper thin with a meat mallet, lightly dusted in seasoned flour and quickly pan fried and doused with a little dry white or sweet red (Marzala) wine.

See Larry Janes' family-tested recipes inside. Chef Larry is a free-lance writer for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. To leave a voice mail message for him dial (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number 1886.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Meet Schoolcraft College's all-star team of five Certified Master Chefs.
- Eleanor Froelich of Rochester won first prize for her breakfast cake in a national contest.

Marvelous muffins

Gutsy gals batter up

BY LESLIE SALOMAN  
SPECIAL WRITER

They're gutsy. They're confident. They're successful. Pam Salba and Marilyn Rice are the co-owners and operators of SunShine Treats, a company that manufactures frozen muffin batter, and freshly baked muffins. These two women proudly state: They have never let each other down or disappointed a customer.

SunShine Treats (their plant/store) is in Farmington Hills on 12 Milo Road across from Harrison High School.

Pam, 49, a resident of Farmington Hills, started the business in her home. Then she worked in the back of someone else's muffin shop making batter. Soon she put an ad in the paper for someone to help her.

Marilyn Rice, 46, answered the ad. The day she applied for the job, she found Pam with a bowl in her hand creating a muffin recipe. Pam recalls, "I had batter all over me. Everywhere."

Marilyn took the bowl out of Pam's hand, washed it and said to her, "I don't want your \$6.00 an hour. But if you trust me, I'll have you in your own plant in six months."

Pam did trust her. That same day Marilyn applied for the job, they became instant partners, and co-owners. And the husbands voiced understandable doubts about this instant partnership. Pam recalls some of their husbands' comments: "You don't know anything about this person. How can you form a partnership?"

"It's done (the partnership)," said Marilyn later, just like Marilyn said, they were in their own plant.

And with their own plant, they each have special jobs, although they do a little of everything. Pam cleans up muffin recipes for customers; Marilyn enjoys sell-



Muffin makers: Pam Salba (left) and Marilyn Rice are co-owners and operators of SunShine Treats in Farmington Hills.

ing and being out in the field with the companies.

The two are a perfect blend, just like their products. Their main product is a frozen muffin batter that they sell in 16-pound pails. Retail businesses and institutions buy it, thaw it, scoop it, and bake it to make their own muffins or cakes or cookies. One customer who owns a deli is even using the batter to make pancakes.

Pam, with lots of pride in her voice, says, "We don't put anything in our products that you wouldn't put on your table at home. We make everything from scratch."

They also pride themselves that it has the "homemade touch." In addition, their muffin batter comes in regular, reduced fat and 99 percent fat free. Pam also says that 90 percent of their products are cholesterol free.

Even though their main product is the frozen muffin batter,

they also sell freshly baked muffins at their store as a convenience to their customers, who have been with them since they opened. One such loyal customer is Phillip Clervi. He said not only are the muffins a treat, but "the people (staff) are just as delightful."

Their 12 employees play an important part in SunShine Treat's success. Marilyn says, "We have excellent help. We have had the same help for six years." Even with a great staff, there still must be a lot of stress running the business. How do they handle the stress? What do they do with their leisure time?

Marilyn says, "This is our leisure time." Pam interrupts, "We escape to here (the store)." Marilyn adds with little delighted giggles, "If we could have a little apartment in the back, it would probably be ideal." Pam agrees, "People don't understand that this is our

relaxation." But they eventually admit there is stress with their jobs, but they agree it is "good stress." Marilyn says they have had a lot of disasters. But she wisely says, "Disasters are growing experiences. For every disaster, we learn 10 things from it."

Their great attitudes, products, staff and partnership have paid off in success. Co-owner Marilyn said, "we have had tremendous growth in six years." Pam adds they also have an excellent reputation and following.

So with those excellent credentials in business, what advice would they give to women who want to start their own business? Pam says, "You have to love what you're doing because it has to be fun."

Leslie Saloman is a food writer who lives in Southfield. See recipes inside.

Add 1993 vintage Burgundies to your cellar

Predictions offered a few months ago by some U.S. wine critics proclaimed 1993 French Burgundy wines less than stellar. Our recent tastings have shown these premature assessments to be incorrect.

Two weeks ago, we had the opportunity to taste a number of 1993 Merlot, Louis Jadot white and red Burgundies. While the whites are more acidic and slightly thinner than the 1992s, they are quite good and well priced. The reds, however, are very good, certainly not as wonderfully opulent as the 1990s, the vintage of a century, but then most of us may never again see red Burgundy wines this good in our lifetimes.

If you're a neophyte at the Burgundy game or a connoisseur wishing to add to a cellar collection, don't miss purchasing some Burgundies from the 1993 vintage. You will not be disappointed. If you're just beginning to understand French wines, the following is a general guide: white Burgundies are 100 percent chardonnay and red Burgundies are 100 percent pinot noir.

We have always found the wines of Louis Jadot to be superior buys. When purchasing Burgundies, it's not so much the vintage as the producer that counts. Jadot ranks high in this respect. The firm is not an ordinary negotiant, buying wines from small producers and then selling them to make some reasonable bottling. Jadot is different. The house buys grapes from vineyards managed by the firm to supplement its own growing number of estates. Having visited a significant number of these



properties, we feel confident in saying that they are among the best managed in the region. Jadot has been in the Burgundy business since 1859 and is not likely to jeopardize its reputation with inferior wines.

If we've captured your interest, here are the 1993 Louis Jadot white Burgundies with brief tasting notes we recommend:

- Santeny Clos de Malis Blanc (\$15) - balanced flavors mirror aromas.
- Auxey-Dureness Blanc, Domaine du Duc de Megenat (\$18.50) - good balance of fruit and oak. Racy acidity makes it an ideal complement to seafood.
- Puligny-Montrachet (\$25) - floral, delicate, successful.
- Beaune-Grèves Blanc Premier Cru (\$32.50) - toasty oak and spice highlight fruit with high-toned acidity.
- Among the red Burgundies, we pick:
  - Santeny Clos de Malis (\$15) - attractive wine with cherries, spice and hints of oak.
  - Savigny-les-Beaune (\$16.75) - brighter fruit flavors and greater complexity than the previous wine. Good value.
  - Beaune Premier Cru (\$20) - dark cherry aromas with hints of rose petals, balanced flavors and smooth finish.
  - Beaune Clos du Coucheroaux (\$22.50) - stylish, complex with bright flavors and lively finish.
  - Gevrey-Chambertin, Clos Saint-Jacques (\$48.50).
  - Corton Pougets Grand Cru (\$41.50) - big wine.



MAISON LOUIS JADOT

Checking wine: Jacques Lardiere, winemaker at Maison Louis Jadot, checks wine at the source - A French Burgundy vineyard.

Buy for extended cellaring.

- Beaune Premier Cru Vignes Franches, Clos des Urules Monopole (\$31.50) - because of its reputation, we buy this wine without tasting in every good vintage. A monopole is a vineyard with a single owner, very rare in Burgundy. In this case, the owner is Jadot, and we are certain you will be delighted.

Prices quoted are from the Merchant of Vines, but you may wish to check with your favorite wine shop. At the Merchant, you may order these wines through the month of May and pay when wines are delivered in November 1995. The 1993 white Burgundies will drink best in 1997. Reds should be cellared at least until 1997 and will drink optimally early in the new millennium.

To leave a message on the Heald's voice mail dial 953-2047, mailbox 1884. See wine selections inside.