

FOCUS ON WINE



RAY AND ELEANOR HEALD

Keep a wine eye on public TV

Wine 101, a six-part series of half-hour episodes narrated by David Hyde Pierce, who plays Niles Crane on the hit sitcom "Frasier," premieres 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 14, on public TV station Channel 56.

Shot on location in California, Portugal, Italy, France and Germany, the series takes its audience on a tour of renowned wine regions with picturesque vineyards. Enter into the mind of a winemaker to learn more about wine - now the world's most talked about beverage.

There have been other "wine" programs on public TV. In the main, they have been either too theoretical, too historical or too stuffy. "Wine 101" demystifies wine through a mix of humor, education and informal conversation with food and wine experts.

First episode

The first episode "First Taste," acts as a primer introducing viewers to the language of wine and helping them determine what kind of wine they may prefer.

Succeeding Saturdays explore California's North Coast, California's Central Coast, France, Northern France and Germany, then Port and Chianti from Portugal and Italy, in that order. The series may be interrupted in March by special fund-raising programming, so consult your local TV guide so you won't miss a segment.

"Wine 101" was made possible in part by underwriting grants from the Wine Institute in California, and premier importers Schiefel & Sommer and Kobrand Corp., both based in New York City.

Whisky

If wine is the current world's most talked about beverage, single-malt Scotch whisky is the most-touted and popular spirit. Whether a tasting is held in conjunction with a Southfield Morton's Steakhouse Cigar Club function or elsewhere, the house is packed. It was, in fact, at Morton's that we met Jeremy Bell, whisky presenter for Seagram Americas who is also known as The Glenlivet Piper and the official Hasty Pudding Piper.

He explained that in every single more than 400 flavor compounds have been isolated. Most of these compounds are also aromatic.

"Nuances of a single malt are picked up by the nose when a few drops of natural spring water has been added," Bell noted. "About 200 of the flavors are only perceived with a water addition."

"The water and whisky have a chemical reaction that showcases a sherry-like character and gentle peat smokiness. A peat smoke quality is quite pronounced after water is added to The Glenlivet (\$32 for the 12-year-old). Aromatic hydrocarbons are

Please see WINE, B2

SURPRISE YOUR SWEET WITH A

BY KEELY WYONIK
STAFF WRITER

Most of us are in the mood for "Something Chocolate" on Valentine's Day.

If you enjoy baking, "Chocolate for Breakfast and Tea," by Laura Zahn (Down To Earth Publications, St. Paul, Minn., \$21.95) offers 67 practical recipes from Bed-and-Breakfast inns across the nation including Bernadette Van Lenten who operates the Willow Brook Inn Bed & Breakfast in Canton with her husband, Michael.

If you can't get away for a romantic stay at a B&B or inn, at least you can fix a chocolate breakfast-in-bed for your valentine, suggests Zahn.

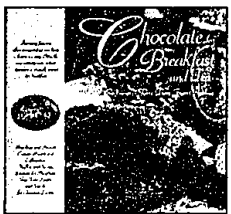
Chocolate Lover's Muffins and Van Lenten's Toasted Walnut Fudge Bread, which Bernadette says is "like indulging in a warm brownie for breakfast," are delicious ways to start Valentine's Day.

Baking is not your only option. You could special order beautiful heart shaped pastries from Bonnie Fishman, who owns Bonnie's Patisserie in Southfield or call Andy Sheridan and his mother, Kathleen of Troy, for "Something Chocolate," a 6-inch one-of-a-kind torte.

"I was 7 years old and remember my mother making this torte for her sewing club," said Kathleen. "It was extra special. After I got married I asked her for the recipe so I could make it for my first dinner party. She never wrote the recipe down. We put our heads together and tried to connect it. I wrote everything down."

The torte - a velvety rich blend of dark Belgium chocolate, two kinds of cocoa powder, with a butter almond crunch crust, topped with fresh whipped cream and ring of ruby red raspberries, was a hit. Everyone loved it.

When people asked for the recipe, Sheridan politely refused. In 1978 she turned making tortes into a business.



What a treat: "Something Chocolate," a 6-inch torte made with velvety chocolate and a butter almond crunch crust, is a sweet way to surprise your Valentine.

"I remember when I was 3 making the cookie crunch bottom and stirring the chocolate," said Andy, 21, a second year culinary arts student at Schoolcraft College in Livonia, and graduate of Birmingham Seaholm High School. "I liked working with my hands. It might have been the preview to me studying culinary arts. It was my grandma's recipe and meant to be."

As her children grew, Sheridan drifted away from the business. "It just got to be too much. It's so labor intensive. This is an old-fashioned ice box torte and takes two days to make. About three years ago Andy said, 'I'd like to go into the torte business,'" she recalled. "He was instrumental in getting an approved kitchen."

Their business has been growing. This Christmas they hand-delivered over 150 tortes.

"I wouldn't make this up, everyone says this is the best torte they've ever had," said Andy. "The taste of the product is second to none, and my mom and dad are the best employees."

"Something Chocolate Inc." is a family business. Andy's father, Jim, a CPA, takes care of the books and also makes the cookie crunch crusts.

Kathleen takes orders, and helps assemble and package tortes. Andy's older brothers, Kevin and

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Sweet business: Kathleen Sheridan and her son Andy offer customers "Something Chocolate," a one-of-a-kind chocolate torte.

Sweet Somethings



STAFF PHOTO BY JIM JACOBOWITZ

Sweet endings: Bonnie Fishman offers some sweet suggestions for pampering your Valentine. Her Special Valentine's Day Menu at Bonnie's Patisserie in Southfield features a variety of heart-shaped pastries including dried cherry scones, white or dark chocolate mousse tarts, cookies, and poppyseed torte.

■ **Bonnie's Patisserie - 29229** Northwestern Highway, (north of Franklin Plaza, north of 12 Mile Road) Southfield, (248) 357-4540. Open 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Friday; 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday.

Owner Bonnie Fishman offers a variety of popular cooking classes 7-9 p.m. at Bonnie's Patisserie. Upcoming classes include "Good Food Fast VI," Wednesday, Feb. 25, Low-fat Cooking VII Monday, March 2 or Wednesday, March 4 and Veggies and Grains III Monday, March 9. The cost is \$30 per class, call the number listed for reservations and information about other classes.

■ **Something Chocolate Inc. - Call** (248) 644-8190 to order your one-of-a-kind torte. The cost is \$37.50 for a beautifully gift wrapped 6-inch chocolate torte, which is hand delivered in the metro Detroit area.

■ **For information about The Willow Brook Inn Bed & Breakfast,** 44255 Warren Road, Canton, one of the inns featured in "Chocolate for Breakfast and Tea," by Laura Zahn, call (734) 454-0019. The inn is already booked for Valentine's Day, but Bernadette Van Lenten who owns the inn with her husband Michael says "any week-end is good for romance," and welcomes your call.

Arm yourself with natural alternatives to combat heart disease

LIVING BETTER SENSIBLY



BEVERLY PRICE

heart disease. If you have a family history of heart disease and stroke, it's a good idea to consider estrogen.

The most reported benefits of estrogen are slowing the loss of bone for the first five years of menopause and preventing the drop in HDL (the "good cholesterol").

Some studies have shown that estrogen does not rebuild lost bone, and after five years, the scientific community only hopes that it will slow down bone loss, but this has not yet been determined.

"Many individuals are still looking for a pill - even a 'natural' pill to find relief," said Sharon Meyer, a registered dietitian. "Those who are truly committed to a lifestyle change will try incorpo-

rating new and healthy foods into their diet."

While it is never advisable to begin a health plan without the advice of your doctor, there are some natural alternatives, which offer women a preventative benefit against heart disease, and relief from the discomfort associated with menopause and premenstrual syndrome.

Since February is heart month, let's explore some of these options. For instance, soy products contain substances called phytoestrogens, which can work like estrogens in the body to help slow the loss of bone for the first five years of menopause as well as prevent the drop in HDL.

It is thought that soy can regulate estrogen levels in both pre- and post-menopausal women. Japanese women, who consume a good quantity and variety of soybean products, report fewer hot flashes and other menopausal discomforts than women in North America.

Soy products, such as tofu, tempeh, soy milk, and textured protein found in commercial meat substitutes, can also

help lower your cholesterol.

Vitamin E, primrose oil, borage oil and black currant oil, which are available in natural food stores, contain gamma-linoleic acid, which can help prevent a substance called "platelets" in your blood from sticking together, which can contribute to blocked arteries. In addition, primrose oil can help relieve hot flashes and may reduce heavy menstrual bleeding.

Although estrogen is generally linked with prevention of hot flashes and combating skin and vaginal dryness, flax oil can offer the same benefit.

Lignans found in flax oil or flax seeds act like "pseudo-estrogens," which bind to estrogen receptors. In this way, lignans can regulate your body's estrogen production in a way similar to isoflavones in soy products.

Try flax oil mixed with balsamic vinegar on your salads, or grind flax seeds into "meal" in a coffee grinder and sprinkle on your cereal in the morning. Flax oil has a high content of omega 3 fatty acids which help prevent heart disease. Bioflavonoids can help regulate estrogen

and curb hot flashes. Carrots and citrus fruits are good sources. Magnesium is also recommended as it keeps arteries and blood vessels relaxed allowing for more efficient blood flow to all areas of the body.

Magnesium, along with boron, helps transport calcium to the bones in order to aid in the prevention of osteoporosis.

If you take a calcium supplement, calcium citrate is the most absorbable form of calcium. This form of calcium creates an acid environment in the digestive tract to more efficiently absorb calcium.

Yoga, meditation and other stress management techniques can also help prevent heart disease, and ease the transition to menopause.

Beverly Price is a registered dietitian and exercise physiologist. She operates Living Better Sensibly, a private nutrition practice in Farmington Hills that offers programs for individuals and corporations. She is the co-author of "Nutrition Secrets for Optimal Health," (Tall Tree Publishing Co.) Visit her website at www.nutritionsecrets.com and look for her column on the first Sunday of each month in Taste.

See recipes inside

WINE SELECTIONS

- **Pick of the pack:** 1997 Canyon Road Chardonnay \$9. Without a doubt this is the best chardonnay under \$30 we've tested in many years!
- **Zin's in -** Some standards are getting too pricey. The following are very good values: 1995 Hidden Cellars \$14 and 1995 Hidden Cellars Old Vines \$19; 1996 Beauclieu Vineyard \$14; 1995 Van Asperen \$10; and 1995 Balmonte \$19.
- **Pinot Noir ecstasies:** 1995 Morimor Torres \$25 and 1995 Morgan Reserve \$30.
- **Alternatives beyond chardonnay:** 1998 Murphy-Goodie Pinot Blanc \$15 and 1998 King Estate Pinot Gris \$13.
- **Luscious, big, rich chardonnays:** 1995 Kunde Willowood \$20; 1995 Morgan Reserve \$26; and 1996 Deringer Private Reserve \$32.
- **Best buy:** 1995 Richmond Merlot Reserve \$7.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- 2 Unique
- Main Dish Miracle