

FOCUS ON WINE



RAY & ELEANOR HEALD

Gallo of Sonoma wines good as ads say they are

BY ELEANOR & RAY HEALD
SPECIAL WRITERS

If you read magazines, you've run into colorful Gallo of Sonoma ads featuring Gina Gallo, sometimes with her brother Matt. These ads are believable, so are the wines and here's why.

The first generation of E. & J. Gallo Winery, the founders Ernest and the late Julio Gallo, sought privacy. The second generation, specifically Julio's son Bob, was quiet about an emerging project with Sonoma County grapes.

It is Julio's grandchildren, the third generation, who are visible family ambassadors for the wines. At 36 years old, Matt Gallo (Bob's son) is vineyard manager for Gallo's Sonoma Estates. His sister Gina, 32, is winemaker working in cooperation with Gallo veteran Marcello Monticelli, director of Gallo of Sonoma winemaking.

Stewardship

That Matt assumed vineyard stewardship for Gallo's more than 2,300 farmed acres in Sonoma County is not unusual. In the Gallo vineyard empire, he is following his father's footsteps through the vine rows. Gina, however, is the first woman to assume winemaking responsibility for

this very traditional Italian family.

Gina is open, competent, friendly and unpretentious. She's comfortable being interviewed at her workplace, Frii Ranch in Sonoma County's Dry Creek Valley. Clad in

jeans, well-worn boots and a plaid flannel shirt, she is a buttoned-down professional. It is obvious that her grandfather Julio was an enormous influence in her life. Her references to "grampa" regularly punctuate sentences. With a degree in business and psychology, she entered the family workplace as part of the marketing department, but upon encouragement from "grampa" took her first winemaking course.

"That was it," she said. "I told my

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Wine Picks

- Pick of the pack: 1997 St. Francis Old Vines Zinfandel \$25. This is a powerful wine, best suited for richer meats than you prepare in summer. But if you want to buy it until it's cooler, it will be sold out!
- Cool wines to take the alibi out of summer: Sauvignon Blanc is the coolest of cool whites. We recommend: 1998 Montevina Fume Blanc \$7 with Asian cuisine; 1998 Preston Vineyards Sauvignon Blanc \$12; and 1998 Morgan Darrel Fermented Sauvignon Blanc \$12. The following chardonnays are crisp and clean. On this list, as the price escalates, so does the flavor: 1998 Fleur du Cap, South Africa \$9; 1998 Evans, Australia \$11.50; 1997 J&J FOS Reserve Chardonnay, Monterey \$21; 1997 Marimar Torres Estate Chardonnay \$25; and 1996 Byron Estate Chardonnay \$32.
- Zinfandel is the best red wine for barbecues. Preston Vineyards owner Lou Preston suggests transforming ordinary barbecued chicken into a Middle Eastern feast with a marinade and taste of tabbouleh, paprika, garlic and ginger. Try it with 1997 Preston Vineyards Dry Creek Valley Old Vines Zinfandel \$16. We used the 1996 Charles Krug Zinfandel \$13 with a salad tossed with raspberry vinaigrette. Other zins getting high marks are: Beringer North Coast Zinfandel \$12; 1997 Kunde Zinfandel \$12; and 1997 Quivira Zinfandel \$17.50. Serve the 1996 Denvig Zinfandel \$18 with fajitas.



Irresistible: Hairnets in place, Joey Perpich, 11, (left), Christopher McGuire, 11, and Kathryn Kinville, 13, get a taste of freshly made ice cream at Guernsey Farm Dairy.

HERE'S THE SCOOP

The cold facts on ice cream

STORIES BY RENÉE SKOGLUND

Past, here's the scoop: According to the International Ice Cream Association, ice cream lovers across the globe rate vanilla No. 1.

Vanilla? Wake up and taste the ice cream, guys. The world is full of black cherry, Caramel Caribou, Apple Pie and Rowdy Reindeer. So many flavors and so little time!

Fred Inman, Jr. and Tom Bagazinski, the flavor-inventing owners of Vicki's Ice Cream Factory on Six Mile Road in Redford Township, describe themselves as ice cream crafters. They buy a basic ice cream mix (not exactly heart healthy at 15 percent butterfat!) from a Monroe dairy and add ingredients, churning up one delicious batch at a time.

"Our flavors are endless, at least 70," said Inman, who admitted to having never made ice cream before he and Bagazinski bought the business in December 1997.

Inman invented the rich-tasting White-Chocolate Chocolate-Chip Cheesecake, which he's dubbed "the flavor of the millennium," and the tangy but creamy Lemon Custard. If yellow had a taste, it would be lemon custard.

Bagazinski, who calls himself "the ice cream man," came up with "Elvis," half banana and half peanut butter, and "Crazy Insomniac," half blue moon and

half coffee. Blue moon and coffee?

"It turns out the two flavors have an affinity for each other," he said.

Still, there are the purists.

Ninety-year-old John McGuire, founder of Guernsey Farm Dairy in Northville, loves vanilla. "I like the aroma. I like the flavor," he said without a hint of defensiveness.

McGuire and his wife, Pat, opened Guernsey in downtown Northville in 1940. All 14 of their children (seven boys and seven girls) plus numerous grandchildren were initiated into the ice cream business at an early age.

"My dad counted one day and there were 22 McGuires working here," said Marty McGuire, president of the company. Today, seven McGuires retain an active role in the business, which ships milk products and ice cream within a 50-mile radius.

Guernsey is a true dairy, pasteurizing milk along with making ice cream. It gets raw milk no more than a day old direct from the farm and stores it in a 6,000-gallon tank.

The cream is separated and churned in tanks holding 200, 500 and 800 gallons. Milk is added along with dry ingredients — powdered cocoa, sugar, milk powder and stabilizers. The mixture is then piped through a freezer machine, which transforms it into a soft ice cream with a 12 percent butterfat content.

Workers in hair nets were making butter pecan the day I toured the dairy. A machine fed mounds of the expensive nuts into the soft ice cream before it was packed. Pecan pieces overflowed onto the floor.

Marty McGuire stopped production so I could have a sample. He filled a cup with a scoop of butter pecan the consistency of thickly whipped cream and handed it to me. My cholesterol count elevated on the spot.

John McGuire prefers the classic flavors — strawberry, chocolate, butter pecan — and recalls the days when he bought boxes of fresh raspberries from the nearby "berry lady," crushed and swirled them into his beloved vanilla.

"That's the way we made ice cream back then," he said.

Today, Guernsey features at least 70 flavors; however, John McGuire believes subtlety is best. "You need to be reaching for the flavor. You want it to be

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Packing it in: (Above) half-gallon containers of Guernsey's "Chocolate Marshmallow" make their way down the production line. (Above center) Guernsey founder John McGuire makes sure all hairs are kept on heads and not in the ice cream.

In his book, "The Ultimate Ice Cream Book" (William Morrow and Co. Inc., New York, 1999, \$16) author and New York-based food consultant Bruce Weinstein writes about two basic styles of ice cream, custard-style (made with eggs), and Philadelphia-style (made without eggs). His preference is for the richer-tasting custard-style ice, so most recipes call for eggs.

From the classic butter pecan and vanilla to the sophisticated Burnt Sugar and the exotic Tropicana Mango, Weinstein packs his book with both the familiar and the unusual. And for the ordinary (as if any ice cream is ordinary), pizzazz is

just a chopped candy bar or cup of toasted coconut away.

Weinstein also includes lots of recipes for the lighter sorbets and granitas, made with water, sugar, fruit juices and sometimes egg whites. Key lime sorbet or pink Russian granita will tickle your fancy.

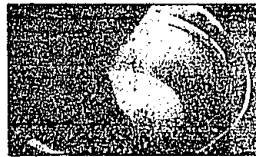
However, don't even torture yourself reading Weinstein's book unless you intend to purchase an ice cream machine. As the author says, "no one wants to sit in a walk-in freezer,



stirring a bowl of cream and fruit."

When it comes to ice cream machines, Weinstein prefers models with built-in compressors that churn and freeze at the touch of a button. While these machines incorporate the least amount of air into the mixture, thereby producing a denser, premium ice cream, they're expensive, retailing between \$300 and \$600.

Ice cream makers with canisters you chill in the freezer before using come in one- to two-quart sizes and



Big mixing bowl: A batch of Guernsey's finest is mixed in one of the dairy's huge vats. Who's got a spoon?

Ice cream personalities

When it comes to ice cream flavors, we like what we eat, according to research conducted for Edy's Grand Ice Cream by Dr. Alan R. Hirsch, neurological director of the Smell & Taste Treatment and Research Foundation in Chicago.

■ **Vanilla:** Colorful, impulsive, risk takers who set high goals and have high expectations of themselves. Vanilla lovers enjoy close family relationships.

■ **Double chocolate chunk:** Lively, creative, dramatic, charming, enthusiastic, and the life of the party. Chocolate fans enjoy being at the center of attention and can become bored with the usual routine.

■ **Butter pecan:** Orderly, perfectionist, careful, detail-oriented, conscientious, ethical, and fiscally conservative; also, competitive, aggressive in sports, and the "take charge" type of personality.

■ **Banana cream pie:** Very easy going, well-adjusted, generous, honest and empathic.

■ **Strawberries and cream:** Shy yet emotionally robust, skeptical, detail-oriented, opinionated, introverted and self-critical.

■ **Chocolate chip:** Generous, competitive and accomplished; charming in social situations, ambitious and competent.

A scoop of ice cream trivia

■ Nearly a quarter of all males consider a typical serving of ice cream to be four or more scoops. To top that off, 40 percent of males often go back for seconds. In contrast, 50 percent of females help themselves to just two scoops, and 61 percent never take seconds.

■ Men love their ice cream so much that 13 percent lick the bowl. Just eight percent of women admit to this unorthodox dishwashing technique.

■ Over 40 percent of women admit to digging out the pieces of cookie dough, nuts or cookies from an ice cream carton. Men are not into mining.

■ Two-thirds of all males will polish off the last few scoops in a carton. Women are more likely to leave the last few bites behind.

Source: Survey conducted by Opinion Research Corporation for Edy's Grand Ice Cream.

Come zones

- Cook's Dairy - 2950 Seymour Lake Road, Orionville, (248) 627-3329
- Guernsey Farm Dairy - 21300 Novi Road (between Eight and Nine Mile Roads), Northville, (248) 349-1466
- Ray's Ice Cream - 4233 Coolidge, Royal Oak, (248) 549-5256
- Sweet Dreams Pastry & Ice Cream - 6558 Telegraph, Bloomfield Hills, (248) 737-8900
- Vicki's Ice Cream Factory - 26145 Six Mile Road (four blocks west of Beech Daly), Redford, (313) 531-7777



Ready to taste: Fred Inman, Jr. takes a sampling of one of Vicki's Ice Cream Factory's creative ice cream flavors before filling a three-gallon container.

Author churns secrets of making ice cream

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LOOKING AHEAD

- What to watch for in Taste next week:
- Cheers for Beer
- Cooking Conquests