

FOCUS ON WINE

RAY & ELEANOR HEALD

Add spirit to your holidays

A fine bottle of spirits adds distinct "spirit" to the holidays. Several new products top our list as the best this year.

Glennmorangie has been the creative leader in finishing the aging of its single malts in a variety of different casks from Oloroso and Fino Sherries to Portuguese Ruby Port Pipes, First Growth Claret wood, and Malmsey Madeira drums. Recently introduced is Glennmorangie Cote de Nuits Fintish, \$300, a single malt aged in Grand Cru Burgundy barrels.

For 25 years, this single malt was matured in American Mountain Oak casks, including a finishing period in air-seasoned French Tronçais oak barrels, which were previously filled, once only, with the rarest Cote de Nuits Grand Cru Burgundy. The Burgundy barrels add, in addition to a distinctly woody note, a unique sweetness of dried apricots and peaches. An appealing beewax aroma uplifts wine-like flavors with hints of chocolate.

An amazing pour for the connoisseur of single malts who is also a lover of great Burgundy wine.

Peerless single malt

The Macallan 25 Year-Old Anniversary Malt, \$225, is peerless, refined, and elegant. The Macallan signature sherry character (from 100 percent sherry cask aging) is enhanced by dried citrus peel and slightly peaty, smoky wood notes. The Macallan has a cult following. Yet, the very picky tasters at the Beverage Testing Institute gave The Macallan 25 Year-Old a score of 100 out of a possible 100 points, the highest score the BTI ever awarded a whisky.

Armagnac

From the Gascony region in southwest France, armagnac is the oldest French spirit. While cognac, often compared to armagnac, is better known, Americans are slowly discovering continuously distilled armagnac. In fact, the U.S. is the fourth largest of 130 armagnac markets worldwide.

The round and well-balanced Samalens Reserve Imperiale XO, \$85, will delight both a brandy connoisseur and provide a smooth and elegant introduction to a fine Bas-Armagnac for a novice.

We dislike descriptors that read like wild dreams, but truly, this Samalens XO smells like caramelizing sugar atop a Creme Brulee as it's being torched. This aromatic sensation enhances the smooth, creamy character of the spirit, which is delicious with any chocolate dessert. Serve it in a brandy glass, warmed only with the heat of your hands, never with a candle warmer apparatus or in a microwave. These latter methods destroy pleasurable aromas.

Cognac

New from Remy Martin is XO Excellence Fine Champagne Cognac, \$120. For the holidays, it comes in special packaging with two "proper" glasses in which it can be served neat. The new product differs from the traditional Remy XO in that it contains a higher, at 85 percent, Grand Champagne grape component as well as an older cognac of 37 years.

Very floral aromas lead to candied orange peel and a melange of sweet brown spices, such as cinnamon. Although Americans tend to drink cognac after a meal, it can be enjoyed on the rocks before dinner and to accompany Asian-influenced foods. It is especially good with steamed dumplings and a plum sauce.

On the fruitier side

Creme Bouldard \$19 is a new apple-cream liqueur. It's a blend of Calvados, the renowned apple brandy from Normandy, France and a rich, smooth cream. Some Irish shams come from that farms their boso. Creme Bouldard is smooth with an elegant finish and the refined, pleasant taste of ripe apples.

Orange is in, not only in flavored vodkas, but now in rum. "Bacardi O"

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Papa Joe's Gourmet Market

New food emporium bests the competition

 BY ELEANOR HEALD
SPECIAL WRITER

Impressive food emporiums. Dean and DeLuca with locations in Manhattan's Soho and trendy Napa Valley. Then there's Harrod's in London. Add Papa Joe's Gourmet Market that opened in Birmingham on Friday, Dec. 14 to the list. At the top!

Even lovers of the upscale Papa Joe's market in Rochester Hills (2025 Rochester Road) will be surprised. No, actually, amazed. The new Birmingham location is a gourmand's paradise, aimed at injecting a new spark to the area's dining and entertaining style.

Owners Tony and Joe Curtis say they've had their eye on the Birmingham area for a long time. To create the right feel, they hired Ron Rea of Ron & Roman Designer and Potosky. Rea is the renowned interior designer of many of the area's trendiest restaurants.

"My concept," said Rea, "was to take the building's simple shell and have it showcase all the wonderful

products that are offered. It's unpretentious with earthen color walls. Yellow represents the sun. The blue shirts worn by employees symbolize water. Green celebrates global flora."

Hundreds of strategically placed mini-spotlights create a WOW effect yet retain the true and natural coloration of all the products. Rea's 21st Century design also includes 22,000 square feet of inlaid quarry tile, brushed stainless steel walls, topped with black and white photographic wall art of

hands, holding various products sold in designated areas. The world's top food emporiums all have a great look, but often do not represent "real people" food and

are not always shopper-oriented. Not so at Papa Joe's Gourmet Market. It's very customer-oriented. So much so that a community feel is generated. You may bump elbows and develop a whole new set of food friends here!

Gourmet to go

Upon entering the market, you'll first notice the huge stainless steel cooking island, where a chef's team is headed by Executive Chef William Hall. He's a Schoolcraft College culinary grad who has apprenticed with a French chef and was the original owner of Andiamo Italia Ristorante in Warren.

Michael Gott, a student of Epoch Restaurant Group's corporate Executive Chef Peter Loran, is Chef de Cuisine. Sous chef Paul Mason, also a Schoolcraft College grad, has 20 years of experience in area restaurants.

Surrounding the gourmet kitchen are specially designed cases, containing specialty food items from A, asparagus, both white and green, to ziti or zucchini boats and everything imaginable in between; rival-

ing even the best from the area's finest restaurants.

If you don't see something you want, displayed in the attractive white bowls and platters, talk to one of the chefs who will create it for you. Personal chefs are in the culinary thing. You, too, can have one at Papa Joe's Gourmet Market.

"We anticipate that shoppers will stop here on their way home from work," Tony Curtis remarked. "Once at home, they can heat and serve the freshly-prepared gourmet food purchases. Or they can also come here and order lunch."

"To eliminate the cashier line, customers have the option of purchasing a debit card. Upcoming will be the convenience of a hot line directly from their office or car. When it's ready, we'll even walk it out to you in the parking lot. People don't even need to come into the store." But you'll want to!

Foodie hang out

If you're a foodie, Papa Joe's

Please see JOE'S, D2



Gourmet to go: From left, Executive Chef Bill Hall, Chef de Cuisine Michael Gott, and Executive Sous Chef Paul Maisonville in the kitchen of the new Papa Joe's Gourmet Market in Birmingham.

New Year's Eve Hors d'oeuvres add zest to celebration

Celebrating the New Year is not something new. In the early days, the ancient Romans would trade gifts of tree branches they believed to be sacred. Years later the trend was to trade gold covered coins and nuts with pictures of Janus.

January came from the name Janus, the god with two faces that could see forward and backward at the same time. Before the New Year day was the first day of January it was the first day of March and before that the first day of the new harvest.

Religious beliefs or cultural background are the dominating factors for which day you celebrate New Year's day. The Jewish New Year called Rosh Hashanah is observed in September or early October. The Muslim calendar has 364 days as opposed to the 365 days of the American calendar, or the Gregorian calendar. This is the calendar most of the world uses. In Japan, the New Year celebration is a four-day one. The final day people dress as dragons to scare and entertain the children. In the United States New Year's Eve is celebrated by making noise, gathering, eating and drinking with friends and family. New Year's Day is usually spent in church, with family, watching

football or going to parades.

What ever your favorite past time this holiday, I have put together a few easy and delicious hors d'oeuvres for you to whip up and share with your guests. (Robert J. Myer, *New Year's Day*, World Book Online America Edition)

Wild Mushroom Turnovers (a hot hors d'oeuvre)

- 16 ounces wild mushroom, minced
- 2 large shallots, minced
- 1 shot (1 1/2 ounces) sherry
- 1/4 cup cream cheese
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley
- 1/8 - 1/4 cup all purpose flour
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 16 sheets phyllo dough
- 1 lb. clarified butter
- 1/2 cup bread crumbs

Place mushrooms, shallots and sherry in a stainless pan, uncovered over medium heat until most of the liquid has reduced from the mushroom. Stir in the flour and mix well. Cook an additional 2-3 minutes. Pull from heat and add cream cheese, parsley, salt and pepper. Let cool completely. Once cool, spread out phyllo. Sprinkle a thin layer of breadcrumbs on top. Place the next piece of dough on top and repeat until the dough is used. Cut into twelve equal strips. Place 1 tablespoon mushroom mixture on each piece. Fold like a flag, seam on the bottom. Brush with butter. Bake at 400 degrees until golden brown. Serve immediately.

Smoked Salmon Wrapped Marinated Asparagus

- 1 sliced smoked salmon, cut in 1/2 cross lengthwise
- 3 pieces pencil asparagus 3- inches long
- 1/2 cup basil shallots oil salt and pepper
- (Marinate the asparagus in oil overnight)
- 2 julienne strips red onion
- Basil shallots oil
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 6 large basil leaves chopped fine
- 1 shallot minced salt and pepper
- Marinate asparagus overnight in basil oil. Wrap salmon around asparagus pieces. Cross red onion on top of salmon.

Tomato Cognac and Corn Salad in Phyllo cups

- 2 tomatoes peeled, seeded and diced
- 1/2 shot cognac
- 1/4 cup cooked black beans
- 1/2 cup fresh corn off the cob; blanched and cooked
- 1 teaspoon cup chopped cilantro
- 1/4 cups sour cream
- 1 lime juice
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 2 splashes Tabasco salt and pepper to taste
- 24 min: phyllo cups pre-baked
- 24 piece cilantro leaves

Mix all ingredients together, except cilantro leaves and phyllo cups. Put

mixture into phyllo cups. Garnish with cilantro leaves.

Marinated Shrimp in Tomato Tortilla

- 8 oz rock shrimp cooked, cooled and small diced
- 1/4 rod pepper roasted, peeled, seeded and small diced
- 2 teaspoon thick pesto to marinate shrimp
- 1/2 cup cream cheese
- 1 lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons peeled, minced celery
- 1 splash Tabasco
- 1 splash Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon chopped garlic salt and pepper to taste

Marinate shrimp in pesto over night. Soften cream cheese in robot coupe with lemon juice, salt and pepper. Do not over whip. Put shrimp with marinade in large stainless bowl, and add all ingredients. Mix with rubber spatula by folding gently. Once combined spread mixture onto tortilla shell and roll tightly. Chill for 1 hour before slicing. Slice 1/4 inch thick.

Chef Randy Emer is the executive chef at Southfield's Golden Mushroom. The Clarkson resident was a Michigan Culinary Team captain, and is a certified Chef de Cuisine. The Golden Mushroom is one of Michigan's oldest restaurants, and has earned more culinary awards and critical acclaim than any other Michigan restaurant.