

FOCUS ON WINE



RAY & ELEANOR HEALD

Rhone wines perfect for summer

According to recent figures from Inter Rhone, a French wine market score keeper, sales of Rhone wines in the U.S. were up 17 percent in terms of volume and 28 percent in value. Southern Rhone wines are especially perfect for summer and exceptionally well priced.

When you know the translation of an imported wine brand, it frequently enhances perception of the wine. That's the case with Domaine des Girasols, located in the picturesque Rasteau area of the southern Rhone Valley of France. Francoise Larum-Joyet is proprietor and winemaker at the domaine.

Francoise explained that in French, girasols means opals. This name fits because pebbles in the vineyard soils reflect sunlight and look like opals. In Italian, girasols are sunflowers. Also fitting. The southern Rhone, an extended part of the Provence region, has many sunflower fields.

The Joyet family hails from Lyon. In the late 1970s, Francoise's father, who had been a vegetable farmer, purchased a 34-acre old-vine vineyard, planted to the five main red grape varieties grenache, cinsault, syrah, mourvedre and carignan, typical of southern Rhone. The first wine was made in 1979.

Rasteau wines are powerful and structured. This is especially true of Domaine des Girasols' hillside and terraced vineyards where new vines, planted in 1999, mingle with 90-year-old gnarled ones. The wines are more elegant than those from the neighboring village of Cairanne, which are more rustic.

Tasting Domaine des Girasols wines

Even though their origin is Rasteau, Domaine des Girasols, except the Rasteau Village wine, carries the familiar Cotes du Rhone moniker. Three percent of southern Rhone wine is rose and two percent is white. This is red wine heaven at 95 percent.

When well chilled, the attractive floral aromas of cherry blossom in 2000 Domaine des Girasols Rose \$12 jump from the glass. Cherry flavors are evident in the taste. This dry wine sings "summer" and is a great accompaniment to Chinese and Mexican dishes or any spicy foods.

1999 Domaine des Girasols Cuvée du Cote \$10 is a light, fruity red with mellow tannins. It's a drink-me-now red wine that, again, is perfect for summer's lighter foods such as a chilled pasta salad with fresh tomatoes, grilled chicken breast and fish, or with a mixture of skewered fruits as an appetizer or dessert. What is gone? It translates as "kids" in the dialect spoken in Lyon, France.

1997 Domaine des Girasols Cuvée Tombaronne \$13 is a blend of grenache and cinsault made from old vines. By law in the Rasteau area, syrah, grenache and mourvedre are allowed in the blend, only as the majority percentage.

From other than old, grandfathered vines, such as those used to

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Wine Picks

Chill any of these chardonnays for your Fourth of July holiday celebrations:

Awesome: 2000 Alexander Valley Vineyards, Wetzel Family Estate Reserve \$25

Excellent: 2000 Beringer Napa Valley \$16 and 2000 Chateau Souverain Russian

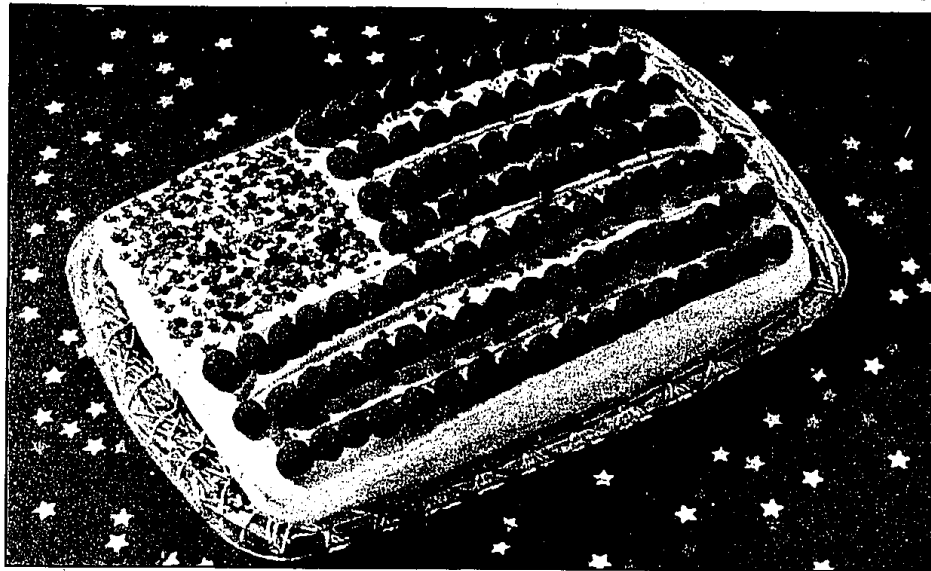
River Valley Reserve \$25

Very good: 2000 Hess Collection Napa Valley \$19; 2000 White Oak Russian River

Valley \$17; 2001 Penfolds Thomas Hyland \$14; and 2000 Beringer Founders' Estate \$12

Best buy: 2001 Penfolds Rawson's Retreat \$9

Three cheers for the



Red, White & ooooooh

BY LANA MINI
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Pavlina Dimovski wouldn't dream of letting a Independence Day pass without creating a dessert to honor it.

Dimovski, who with her husband owns Leckery Bako Shop, 844 N Wayne Road in Westland, said she feels especially patriotic this year and anticipates others may feel the same. To celebrate July 4th,

Flag themed foods give desserts an American flair

After all part of holiday enjoyment is, of course, the food.

"We will also have (patriotic) cupcakes and other desserts," Pavlina said. Like most local bakeries, Leckery is closed July 4th, but is open on July 3.

The Old-Fashion Bake Shoppe in Garden City

creates patriotic cakes of any style if pre-ordered.

At home, there's simple ways to bake your own.

For her family, Lois Hagel blends the spirit of the holidays into her actual food; making celebratory desserts at Christmas, Halloween and Independence Day.

The Royal Oak woman will take a simple pound cake and layer it with red and blue fruits such as strawberries, raspberries and blueberries. Then she'll top it with whip cream.

It's an easy and elegant way to represent the stars and stripes.

Both Hagel's cake idea and the bakery treats mesh with America's sweet tooth. The average household spends \$80 to \$100 per year on cakes alone. And every holiday, it seems, has a cake to accompany it. Birthday cakes date back to the Middle Ages and wedding cakes were used well before the fall of the Roman Empire.

"I always make themed desserts at the holidays for family dinners," Hagel said.

She finds her recipes everywhere — in coupon books, magazines or traded with friends.

Her co-worker Lisa Sawyer also brings joy to her family with food. The Southfield insurance worker often exchanges ideas with Hagel. Both women are making Jell-O in a flag shaped mold, but the fun part is the decorating.

"Blueberries represent the stars," Sawyer said.

"Strawberries are the stripes," said Hagel.

Hagel creatively uses individual strawberry,

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STARS & STRIPES FLAG CAKE (SHOWN ABOVE)

- 1 pkg. Pillsbury Stars & Stripes Funfetti Cake mix
- 1 1/4 cups water
- 1/4 cup oil
- 2 eggs
- 1 can Pillsbury Stars and Stripes Funfetti Vanilla Frosting
- 2 cups fresh raspberries or sliced strawberries

Heat oven to 350 F. Grease and flour 13x9-inch pan. In large bowl, combine cake mix, water, oil and eggs and beat at low speed until moistened. Beat 2 minutes at medium speed. Stir in candy bits with spoon. Pour batter into greased and floured pan.

Bake at 350 F for 35 to 45 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 15 minutes. If desired, invert cake onto wire or cutting board or leave in pan. Cool completely.

Frost cake. Mark the 'stars' section on upper left corner of cake, in the same place where the stars on the flag are located. Make it 4 inches high and 4 inches wide. Sprinkle 2 teaspoons of candy bits that come with the cake over the stars section. Make stripes by placing seven rows of raspberries across cake. Sprinkle remaining candy bits over stripes section.

Makes 12 servings.

More recipes, Page B3

Cherry Festival reaching full bloom

BY ALEX LUNDBERG
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The cherries are here. For the 76th year, thousands of fruit enthusiasts from lower Michigan will descend upon Traverse City for the National Cherry Festival, a seven-day celebration of all things small, red and sweet.

The traditional festival, that runs July 6 through 13, will feature live music, children's fishing, a hole-in-one competition, a fun run, three parades, a classic car show, an appearance by the National Cherry Queen, arts and crafts, Native American dance, an air show by the Navy's Blue Angels and — naturally — more cherries than one could hope to eat in a lifetime.

Traverse City Police Chief Ralph Soffredino said attendance at the festival usually floats somewhere between 150,000 and 300,000, depending on the weather. Weather notwithstanding, almost everyone in town is involved with the festival.

"It has an incredible impact on the community," he said.

The event has vendors that show the endless number of meals that can be made with cherries. Cherry salsa, cherry stuffed mushrooms, cherry jams and muffins, cherry ribs, cherry



Perfect: This season's crops were difficult to maintain with such varying spring and summer temperatures. Still, cherry season ended up being a healthy one

crabs and more.

The actual running of the event is left to the National Cherry Festival,

but community members take care of implementation and do the review of

Please see CHERRY, B3

What's Good on Your Grill?

What's the most unusual food ever put on your grill?

What's your grilled meal on a hot summer day?

From burgers to peaches to, yes, even desserts, grilling options are endless.

We're looking for your favorite

grilling recipe or an unusual grilling recipe. Please share it and we'll publish it in an upcoming issue.

Please include your name, the city where you reside and a telephone number in case we need to contact you.

Happy Summer!

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