

Side dish

Kids Can Cook

Here are some tips from the Cherry Marketing Institute for kids who like to cook:

- Read the recipe before you begin
- Wash your hands with soap and water
- Prepare and measure ingredients, then start cooking
- Ask mom or dad for kitchen permission
- Clean-up when you're done
- Don't use the stove alone
- Try cherry cream cones

- 1 (10 ounces) jar maraschino cherries
- 3 cups whipped topping
- 1 (4 serving size) packet of any instant flavor pudding - chocolate is good
- 1-3/4 cups cold milk
- 6 flat bottom ice cream cones
- Colored sprinkles, optional

Put a strainer in a bowl. Pour cherries into the strainer and drain juice into bowl. You don't need the juice for this recipe - save it to add to some orange juice or to flavor your glasses of drinking water!

Put cherries on a cutting board. With a sharp knife cut each cherry in half. (Make sure an adult supervises). Prepare pudding according to directions on package using the 1-3/4 cups cold milk. Refrigerate pudding for 10 minutes.

Put cherries in a large bowl. With a rubber spatula, scoop whipped topping into the bowl and stir gently until the cherries are mixed with the cream.

Fill each cone with 1/4 cup pudding. Top each with 1/2 cup cherry mixture. Decorate with colored sprinkles, if desired. Serve instantly and eat with a spoon. Serves 6.

For more recipes and tips, visit www.cherrymkt.org

Frozen custard

Ritter's Frozen Custard, a nationwide franchise, has created a special custard for the Muscular Dystrophy Association Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon. The new flavor is Jerry's Kids Krunch and is available through Sept. 2 at all 38 Ritter's locations. The flavor features a mix of vanilla

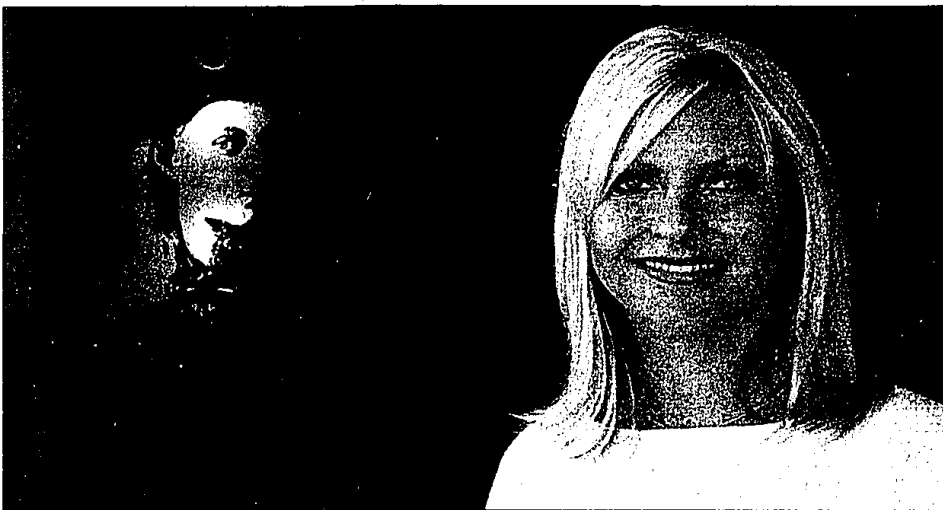


frozen custard faced with Oreos cookie chunks, M&M pieces and multi-colored sprinkles. It can be purchased in scoops, pints, and quarts. Ten percent of the profits go to the MDA.

"We are delighted to work with the MDA for our first ever system-wide charitable promotion. With the help of our loyal customers and their healthy appetites for Ritter's ice cream, we are really making a difference," said John Ritter of the Indianapolis-based company.

You'll find Ritter's locally at 31227 Eight Mile Road in Livonia and 5962 Meridian in Brighton.

Quality and respect



JAN JAGGELD/OBSERVER

Toni Wisne Sabina, president of Epoch Events, stands outside her eclectic restaurant Too Chez. She's the honorary chair this year at the Schoolcraft Culinary Extravaganza in Livonia.

Epoch Restaurant leader is generous when it comes to crediting success

BY LANA MINI
STAFF WRITER

Great food, an innovative staff, and a fun atmosphere are key ingredients of restaurant success, and practiced to perfection at the Epoch Restaurant Group directed by Toni Wisne Sabina.

An employee greets Sabina with a kiss on the cheek as she enters Too Chez Bistro in Novi, one of her five restaurants.

Before she sits down at a table overlooking a cheery atrium area, another employee touches her shoulder in friendship and asks if she'd like an drink. Sabina keeps it simple and asks for an ice tea. All around her, the staff is busy preparing for the eclectic Friday night crowd of business folks, families, and couples who come to Too Chez to kick off their weekend.

"The success is great," Sabina, 36, of Northville. "But the restaurants are only successful because I have a staff of people who truly care about food, and who really like and respect each other."

Sabina speaks about her success humbly just minutes before flying off

SCHOOLCRAFT COLLEGE CULINARY EXTRAVAGANZA FOOD AND WINE EVENT

What: A delectable fund-raiser for student scholarships
Where: The Waterman Campus Center, Schoolcraft College, 18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia
When: 2-5 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 22
Cost: \$50 per person. To reserve tickets, call (734) 462-4670

to her Bay Harbor restaurants for the weekend. She's the owner and president of the prestigious Epoch Group that owns five well-known restaurants including: The big, eclectic Too Chez Bistro on Sheraton Road in Novi; the five-star Tribute restaurant on 12

Mile Road in Farmington Hills; the bustling urban style Forte restaurant on Old Woodward Avenue in downtown Birmingham; the upscale but laid-back Knot Just a Bar in Bay Harbor, and its sister restaurant LeTonde, across the street from Knot.

Epoch also owns a 12,000-square-foot kitchen and bakery facility in Novi for off-site catering services. Plus, Epoch will provide food served in suites and high-end concession areas during the football season at the new Ford Field in downtown Detroit, home of the Detroit Lions. It will also supply bread and rolls for the entire stadium — a big deal for the group, Sabina said.

Sabina is a private person who appears relaxed about her success. She takes a keen interest in the entire business. It's her job to know what diners want, and something she's been studying since she was 15 and began working at the Sheraton Hotel in Novi.

The Wisne family of Bloomfield Hills was involved in the development of the Epoch business, but Sabina runs the company. The family gained

PLEASE SEE EPOCH, B2

Culinary Extravaganza showcases area chefs

BY LANA MINI
STAFF WRITER

Local chefs know and cherish Schoolcraft College's Culinary Arts Department in Livonia. Inquire at any fine restaurant in town and chances are there's a Schoolcraft culinary student or graduate employed there.

Seasoned chefs from throughout metro Detroit are participating in the college's annual Culinary Extravaganza on Sunday, Sept. 22 to raise money for student scholarships, which helps develop new talent. The public is invited to the sampling of dishes from some of the area's finest restaurants.

Carver's Steaks & Chops in Farmington Hills will be serving prime rib, slow roasted for seven hours and encrusted with rosemary, pepper and thyme.

PLEASE SEE SHOWCASE, B2

Mt. Veeder pioneer achieves top reputation

In the 1980s, before the very first grape was crushed at the renowned Hess Collection Winery in Napa, Calif., Robert Craig had already spent years developing over 300 acres of vineyards on Mt. Veeder. These plantings established Hess' reputation for premium-quality. During his tenure as President and General Manager of Hess until 1990, he spearheaded the campaign that resulted in Mt. Veeder being designated as a special appellation district within the Napa Valley.

Mountain grapegrowing pioneer Robert Craig founded his eponymous winery in 1992. We first tasted his wines in 1995 and have been fans ever since.

You may not have heard of Robert Craig Wine Cellars because the wines became available in Michigan only recently.



WINE PICKS

Ray and Eleanor Heald

UNIQUE WINE PROGRAM

Craig's long-range program was implemented in 1993. The great regions of the Napa Valley are the basis of the Robert Craig wines, based on the concept of "Two Mountains and a Valley," showcasing three cabernet sauvignon-based wines, produced from exceptional vineyards.

The aim of the program is to stylistically convey the unique personality of cabernets grown on Mt. Veeder and Howell Mountain. The third wine, Affinity, is a Bordeaux-style varietal blend of cabernet

sauvignon, merlot and cabernet franc, made from grapes sourced from top viticultural areas on the Napa Valley floor.

Wines with concentrated varietal character are the hallmark of Robert Craig. They are highly approachable upon release, but have structure for extended aging.

Because of the all-too-often tannic nature of Mount Veeder cabernet sauvignon, some producers and consumers have suggested that these wines are designed for collectors. Robert Craig disagrees. "Collectors also want balanced wines without aggressive tannins," he said. "They've learned that a tannic young wine ends up to be a tannic old wine with dried-out fruit. Producers should make the style of wine they want. Yet, if I have a wine that I can't drink for 10 years, I think I'm missing elements only enjoyed in youth. I call

this the pretty baby theory of wine."

THEORY IN PRACTICE

As they say, the proof is in the pudding and we believe Craig's words and wines do not have a hollow ring. And if you're still of the opinion that 1998 was a below-par vintage across the board in Napa Valley, the 1998s below will change your mind.

■ 1998 Robert Craig Mt. Veeder Cabernet Sauvignon \$44 sports intense black fruit with hints of toasty, roasted coffee, mocha and chocolate. Blackberry, black cherry and hints of cranberry are dominant flavors spiced with vanilla, spice cabinet and coffee. Supple tannins support a multi-dimensional wine with both power and finesse.

■ 1998 Robert Craig Howell

PLEASE SEE HEADLDS, B2

WINE PICKS

If you're going to grill beef during Labor Day weekend, these winners of our recent cabernet and Bordeaux varietal blends tasting will make handsome matches.

■ Awesome: 2000 Babcock Fathom, Santa Barbara County \$40.

■ Exceptional: 1998 Wolf Blass Black Label, Barossa \$50; 1999 Robert Mondavi Cabernet Sauvignon, Stags Leap District \$50; 2000 Millsreep Elspeth One NZ \$35; and 1998 Wynns Coonawarra Estate John Riddoch Cabernet Sauvignon \$35.

■ Best buy: 2000 Rosemount Hill of Gold Cabernet Sauvignon \$19.



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