



Taste

WINE RECIPES SPECIALTIES

Side dish

Treating mom
Do you treat your mother to breakfast in bed or a nice dinner at home on Mother's Day? Do you fix her a



favorite dish of hers (or of yours) to enjoy?

If you are a husband, son or daughter, we'd like to hear about what dishes you prepare for Mother's Day for a story for the Taste section. Simply send a note summarizing what you prepare, and any recipe you'd like to share with our readers. Should we use your recipe, we'll give you a free cookbook. Please send a note to Ken Abramczyk, Taste editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009 or e-mail kabramczyk@ec.homecomm.net.

Expanding

General Mills has introduced new varieties across a range of its product lines. New fruit snacks, microwave popcorn and grain snacks are available under the Betty Crocker, Pop Secret and Nature Valley brand. New on the fruit snack shelf is a collaboration between Sesame Street and Betty Crocker. Sesame Street Elmo Fruit Snacks is the first fruit snack appearance for the children's program. Pop Secret is adding two new flavors - honey butter and toffee butter. Described as slightly sweet, these are for snacking or for alternatives to more indulgent treats. Meanwhile, Nature Valley is adding a blueberry yogurt coating to its Chewy Granola bars.

Pork dishes feled

The Consumer's Choice Pork Awards were awarded recently to honor supermarket products that were scored by consumers for taste, product appeal, fit to lifestyle trends, and likelihood of purchase. This year, the National Pork Board received more than 80 entries from consumers, industry experts, manufacturers and retailers during the call for nominations. A panel of industry experts narrowed the entry pool to 10 products, and a jury of everyday American consumers judged the finalists. Among all the Consumer's Choice Pork Awards nominations, five products received the award of excellence. The winning products included: Pork Roast Au Jus (Hormel Foods), Heat & Serve Brats (Johnsville Sausage), Quick 'n' Easy Gourmet Entrees Pork Roast in Bourbon Sauce (BHW Foods), Jimmy Dean Fresh Taste, Fast! Black Pepper Premium Precooked Bacon Slices (Sara Lee Foods), and Maple and Brown Sugar Glazed Ham (Tyson Foods). Manufacturers of the winning products were awarded a Consumer's Choice Pork Awards golden fork trophy and granted free, exclusive use of an official award seal for merchandising efforts.

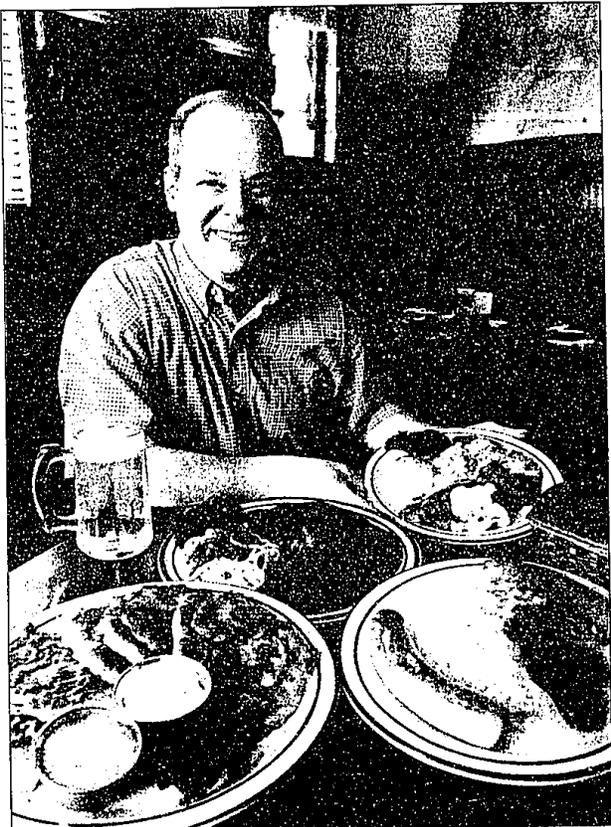
Maifest celebrated

German dishes have a loyal following in metro Detroit

STORY BY LANA MINI ■ STAFF WRITER



The Dakota's German chocolate cake.



PHOTOS BY JIM JACQUEL | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Karl Kurz displays several of the Dakota Inn's favorites. Pictured in the left foreground, then clockwise, is Kartoffelpuffer (German-style potato pancakes) served with applesauce and sour cream; sauerbraten with spaetzle and red kraut; Jager schnitzel, a pork cutlet breaded and sauteed and served with mushroom sauce, mashed potatoes and mixed vegetables; and bratwurst and knockwurst with hot German potato salad and sauerkraut.

Karl Kurz admits that German food isn't a leading cuisine with the masses. It's heavy, it's hearty and its preparation and cooking process is long.

But it has loyal lovers and those lovers have kept the Kurz family in business at the Dakota Inn restaurant, 17234 John R at the corner of Dakota Road in Detroit for 70 years. The restaurant will have many anniversary celebrations throughout the year.

A 70-year-old restaurant is a rarity in metro Detroit, and the fact that the Dakota serves German cuisine makes it even rarer. Right now, Kurz is getting ready for one of the busiest times of year: Maifest - when the spring season is celebrated with German potato pancakes, German schnitzels, German potato salad, and of course German beer.

The restaurant was founded by Kurz's grandfather, Karl Kurz, in 1933. Then it was passed on to his son and then to the current Kurz owner. The recipes of pork, marinated beef, potatoes and kraut have been passed down to each generation. German food is marinated, boiled and spiced.

Kurz travels to Germany a few times each year for inspiration to tweak his menu, but mostly it remains the same: sauerkraut, hickory smoked pork chops, seasoned boneless chicken with mushrooms and Swiss cheese; red kraut; Ruben soup, schnitzels and of course, beer.

The decor has remained the same, too. It is filled with German beer steins; polished darkwood furniture and wall paneling; hand-painted German scenes and servers decked out in traditional German style clothing.

"It is truly an authentic German restaurant and the potato pancakes are one of the most popular items, it's something that everyone is familiar with," Kurz said.

The pancakes are more common than foods like sauerbraten where the meat is marinated for up to 14 days. Bavarian-style potato salad, unlike "traditional" picnic fare, is served hot and is flavored with chunks of bacon. Even that requires a morning's preparation time: peeling potatoes, boiling and slicing them and cooking the bacon and tossing it all with vinegar, oil, salt and pepper.

Perhaps it's the time-consuming cooking methods that makes the Dakota Inn so popular. German cuisine is something that some would rather order than cook - at least for those who aren't German, said Kurz.

EVENTS AT THE DAKOTA INN

Special spring beers:

Reissdorf Koelsch is now on tap, flown in from Cologne, Germany - the only city that brews Koelsch.

Maifest 2003

Reservations are being accepted for the popular May spring festival celebration. Admission is \$3 per person. Tables go fast. Call (313) 867-9722.

Einbecker Mai-Ur-Bock (Einbecker, Germany) & Spaten Premium Bock (Munich, Germany) beers will be available on tap.

PLEASE SEE GERMAN, B2

Vintage 2001 highly touted for German wines

If you're an aficionado of German wines, then you've probably purchased some wines from the 2001 vintage, the greatest since 1976. If you didn't know this, get on board and purchase some before they're gone. We've got a few recommendations for you. In Germany, October and November are critical months for harvesting classic late-ripening riesling grapes. "Vintage 2001 was exceptional in the Mosel and Saar," said Stefan Bollig of Bollig-Lehner in Trarheim. "September rains that harmed the 2001 vintage in other parts of Europe, were followed by six weeks of sunshine in Germany. Quantity was down so gains were in quality. "In 2002, grapes were even riper in early October than they



Focus on Wine
Ray & Eleanor Heald

were in 2001 but intermittent rains for the next six weeks did not produce the same results as 2001. Yet, vintage 2001 was not great throughout Germany. Near Trier, for example, it was only good."

From Bollig-Lehner, we recommend: 2001 Trarheimer Apotheke Riesling Kabinett (\$11); 2001 Piesporter Goldtropfchen Riesling Auslese (\$19); 2002 Piesporter Goldtropfchen Riesling Spaetlese (\$13) and 2001

Trarheimer Altnaechen Riesling Eiswein (\$32/375mL).

VINTAGE 2002 PRAISED

"In our region of the Saar," said Karin Fischer of Dr. Fischer, "vintage 2002 was better than 2001 because there is more expressive fruit. We have more Spaetlese in 2002 and outstanding ice wine made at the end of December.

"Every year is very different in each of the 13 wine regions of Germany. Much depends on personal preference. I suggest that consumers not be too taken by vintages and an early reading of them. Mosel and Saar wines take time to develop to their full potential."

Recommended from Dr. Fischer: 2001 Bocksteinhof

Riesling Kabinett (\$10); 2001 Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Kabinett (\$12); and 2002 Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Spaetlese (\$15).

"The Dr. H. Thanlach estate in Berncastel has a major holding in the most famous German vineyard, Berncasteler Doctor. Wine produced in the Thanlach family goes back more than 360 years so those in the know have gobbled up the 2001s but in a recent tasting, we found both the 2002 Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Kabinett \$28 and 2002 Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spaetlese (\$17) truly excellent.

A RHINE CLASSIC

Fitz-Ritter in Bad Duerkheim, in the Palatinate forest foothills

of the Pfalz region, has a warmer microclimate, favoring it with the chance to fully ripen grapes, even in lesser years. In top years, the wines are not only aromatic, but full-bodied and rich.

Recommended from Fitz-Ritter are: 2001 Duerkheimer Abfronthof Riesling Spaetlese (\$12); 2001 Ungsteiner Herrenberg Riesling Spaetlese (\$12) and 2001 Ungsteiner Herrenberg Riesling Auslese (\$20).

LEARN MORE

Attending the German Wine Academy is an enjoyable way to tour some of the world's most picturesque wine regions and

PLEASE SEE WINE, B3

If it's important to you,
it's important to us.



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