

# Gourmets Dine In Style In Plymouth 'Chaine'

By STATON LORENZ

Sunday, March 24th was the date for the first quarterly dinner of the *Confrerie de la Chaine des Rotisseurs*, Michigan Chapter, in 1968 held at the Mayflower Meeting House in Plymouth.

Members of this ancient in-traditional gourmet wine and food society, founded in 1248 and established in Michigan in 1950, comprises the heart of the region's food and wine connoisseurs.

Many of these people are professional restaurant operators or hoteliers, with wine and food enthusiasts, from all occupations, making up the balance of the membership.

The formal dinners of the "Chaine" are held in a member's restaurant somewhere in Michigan. There are several other state chapters throughout America.

The purpose of the founding fathers was to, "promote the proper care and handling of meat to be cooked on a spit whenever possible, never to allow meat to spoil and to use the finest wines available." In the interest of advancing culinary knowledge.

Smoking of cigarettes and cigars is prohibited until after the coffee is served, no salt and pepper is permitted at the table, bread and butter is never served, liquor is taboo before and after the meal and a fresh glass is used for each wine.

Each dinner, including the champagne and hors d'oeuvres hour, takes five hours and consists of seven complete courses.

All good rules have a purpose, however, and it is fair to explain why they exist. Smoking is not everyone's habit and the wine is noticeably affected when clouds of smoke are being exhaled at the same moment the bouquet of a wine is inhaled.

Salt and pepper and other table seasonings are left to the discretion of the chef whose reputation is at stake. Liquor, you may know, tends to dull the taste buds and has no place prior to the consumption of up to ten different and delicate wines, and usually is not needed after such consumption.

Fresh, cleaned and correct wine glasses are placed on the table in front of each diner. Six glasses were on the table Sunday as six still wines were served with dinner requiring over five hundred glasses for the entire event.

Bread may be served with the cheese course only and butter is not needed, generally speaking. Neither appear at the dinners.

Appearance of each formal member is enhanced, to some degree, by the ceremonial ribbon or Chaine and the medals.

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## Here's How The Experts Rate Wines Of World

Opinion is found everywhere and because most people have an opinion and because taste is purely a matter of opinion perhaps you would like to hear what guests who attended the Chaine Dinner had to say, briefly.

First lets take the opinion of one of the new inductees, Eugene Power. I asked Mr. Power what three wines he liked the best, and, without hesitation, the Chateau Montrose won out. Next was Rully St. Julien, "every good for its youth," and thirdly the Barsac, Chateau Coulet.

A world traveler, Mr. Power feels that the best wines are found where they are grown.

"Something happens when they are shipped to this country that detracts from their original beauty," he said.

California, on the other hand, has some good values but seldom do you find a red wine that will improve sufficiently with age, such as the 1955 Montrose," added Mr. Power.

"I injected that phrase that's just as well for most American wines are consumed the day they are purchased and seldom stored for improvement's sake due to the fact that they are more agreeable, when young, than their imported counterparts.

"IN MY HOTEL, the Park Place, we have French wines dated 1957, 1959 and right up through 1964 aging and selling well," he countered, "and I price the wine to reflect overhead, storage and investment costs rather than simple straight percentages of original cost, that's why we sell large amounts of older wines and people are really pleased to find carefully aged wines of merit.

"We buy American wines as we need them locally, rather than storing them in large quantity," he concluded.

Dr. Henry O. Barbour, Dean of the Michigan State Hotel and Restaurant school has an opinion to offer too. First let me interject, we are both graduates of Cornell's hotel school and occasionally he may be reminded of his alma mater, "far above Cayuga's waters," lest he forget while he directs state's fine school.

Dr. Barbour also preferred the Michigan State Hotel and Restaurant school has an opinion to offer too. First let me interject, we are both graduates of Cornell's hotel school and occasionally he may be reminded of his alma mater, "far above Cayuga's waters," lest he forget while he directs state's fine school.

Dr. Barbour also preferred the Montrose and he mentioned the Chateau Coulet as being "pleasant." A man of few words, he took a few to praise the cheese tasting and expressed an interest in doing the same with wines for a future dinner.

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