



By Gary and Sue Grant Frog's Tooth Vineyards

Season's Greetings, everyone! Unbelievably, another year is ending. As one ages, time seems to zip along faster and 2009 flew by like Lance Armstrong's legs on the home stretch kicking into overdrive. (*Egads,, man, if aging makes time go by faster and you're expounding rhetorical comparisons between the last 365 days and Lance's lower extremities you must be getting really old...oops, just kidding! Revise that, editor, to "You're like fine wine; you get better with age." Phew, that was close.*) Just remember, dear, you're only a year younger.

We like to spend this time of year with friends and family huddling around fireplaces, drinking hot buttered rum (*hot chocolate for the kiddies*), sipping eggnog, spiced or mulled wine, and, of course, delighting in champagne or sparkling wine. We want to celebrate the season with you by sharing some of our favorite holiday drink recipes and talking a little about champagne/sparkling wine.

Without getting into too much detail, (*thank goodness, we don't want to fill the whole column with the chemistry of sparkling wines. It's more fun just to pop the cork and fill our champagne flutes*) sparkling wines, including champagnes, start off as still wines in which carbon dioxide has been dissolved or trapped. Beer and soft drinks also contain carbon dioxide but there is a difference in the way the carbon dioxide gets into the liquid.

Soft drinks are injected with carbon dioxide from gas cylinders. Carbon dioxide, however, is a by-product of fermentation in beer and sparkling wine. Beer differs from sparkling wine in that it is fermented one time. Sparkling wine is fermented twice. The first fermentation produces the "still wine" that we drink every day. This is just a wine without all the bubbles.

A second fermentation is created by adding a little yeast and sugar and then transferring this mixture to a sealed container or bottle. As the still wine goes through the second fermentation the yeast and sugar interact and give off carbon dioxide that is confined in the container. Of course, the process is a bit more complex; for example, the dead yeast or lees (*the man loves talking about yeast*) have to be removed from the bottle without releasing all the carbon dioxide.

This is known as riddling and disgorgement (*Hmm, disgorgement, eh? That's a mental picture I could have skipped.*) The process of making champagne or sparkling wine is called méthode champenoise. The amount of sugar that is added to the second fermentation determines the sweetness level of the champagne/sparkling wine.

- Brut Natural or Brut Zéro (<3 grams of sugar per liter)
- Extra Brut (< 6 grams of sugar per liter)
- Brut (<15 grams of sugar per liter)
- Extra Sec or Extra Dry (12 to 20 grams of sugar per liter)
- Sec (17 to 35 grams of sugar per liter)
- Demi-sec (33 to 50 grams of sugar per liter)
- Doux (> than 50 grams of sugar per liter)

I'm actually making a field trip to a sparkling wine winery next month. Sounds like good fodder for an upcoming article. Here are a few recipes:

Hot-Buttered Rum

Ingredients:

1 small slice soft butter
1 tsp brown sugar
Optional spices: ground cinnamon, ground nutmeg
Vanilla extract
2 oz dark rum
Boiling water

Preparation:

Place the butter, sugar and spices at the bottom of an Irish coffee glass or mug. Mix well or muddle. Pour in the rum and boiling water. Stir.

Eggnog Grog

Ingredients:

6 eggs
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 quart milk
1 teaspoon vanilla
3/4 cup bourbon
1/3 cup dark rum

Preparation:

In a large saucepan, beat together eggs, sugar and salt. Now stir in just two cups of milk. Cook this over low heat, stirring constantly, making sure to get in the corners of the pan or the eggs might curdle when they get hot.

When the mixture reaches 160 degrees or is thick enough to coat a spoon with a thin film, remove it from the heat. Mix together the bourbon and dark rum but the alcohol is optional. Next stir in the remaining 2 cups milk and the vanilla. Then cover it with plastic wrap and refrigerate until it's thoroughly chilled.

Hot Spiced Wine

Yield: Makes 9 cups

Ingredients:

2 (750-milliliter) bottles red wine
2 cups apple juice
1 cup sugar
6 tablespoons mulling spice

Preparation:

Bring all ingredients to a boil

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Rogers Family

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...the past five years, the RFC will participate in Operation Gratitude's Holiday Drive and also supported its partnership with "The American Veterans Traveling Tribute" which included a replica (80% scale) of the Vietnam Memorial Wall and "Cost of Freedom" display. www.opgratitude.com

During last year's holiday season, the Rogers Family Company launched a "Letters to Our Troops" contest in which heartfelt letters of thanks were enclosed with care packages to troops serving in Afghanistan and Iraq. "The Rogers Family Company is committed to recognizing the sacrifices of our service members throughout the world," said Rogers Family Company President Jon B. Rogers. "The free shipping program underscores our appreciation for the hardships the troops endure every day."

In the spring, the Rogers Family Company donated 45,000 coffee packets to Operation Gratitude's Patriotic Drive for service members. In total, the company has shipped approximately 300,000 bags (some 600,000 pounds) of coffee to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan and on ships at sea since 2005 when it launched its association with Operation Gratitude.

The "Support Our Troops" program is among various social and environmental projects of the Rogers Family Company which is celebrating 30 years of doing business and making a difference in California and in communities thousands of miles away. For example, earlier this year the company launched a '100-year tree planting program' to fight global warming and other programs have already made it 'carbon-negative.' Under the program, the company will plant a native tree at one of its organic coffee farms on behalf of cus-

tambien

A taqueria (taco shop) offering fresh mexican cuisine; it's simple, tasteful, fast food! Open Tuesdays in December, 11 am to 3 pm.; Wed-Sat, 11-8pm. At 250 French Bar Road, Jackson, CA. 209.257.1122. Try their roasted tomato soup, delicious! A great place to meet friends anytime!

tomers who join its online coffee clubs. The family-owned company also produces a premium shade-grown coffee line under license from the National Audubon Society and certified by the Rainforest Alliance.

In cooperation with farmers and help from partners and customers, the company's "Community Aid" program has completed hundreds of social and environmental projects. A few sample projects include building dozens of schools, hundreds of modern houses as well as medical facilities, schools and day care centers for thousands of workers.

The Rogers Family Company was founded in 1979 by Princeton University graduate and ex-Revlon executive Jon B. Rogers and his wife Barbara Rogers. The company is one of the nation's leading importers and roasters of "Fairly Traded" branded gourmet coffee and tea. All four of their adult children play a key role in the company that supplies its "Responsibly Grown/Fairly Traded" coffee and tea to customers worldwide.

The company's divisions and brands include the Organic Coffee Company, San Francisco Bay Premium Gourmet Coffee, Pleasant Hill Farms, Café Jerusalem, Audubon Shade-Grown Coffee, East India Coffee & Tea, the Organic Tea Co. and Black Mountain Gold.

It also sponsors coffee clubs: Java Perks on the Rogers Gourmet Coffee & Tea Market (www.gourmet-coffee.com) or Audubon Premium Shade-Grown Coffee online stores. (www.auduboncoffeeclub.com)

With 150 employees, the company makes approximately 3,500 individual coffee and tea products. The company's headquarters and roasting plant is in Lincoln, California.

The RFC's regional sales office is in San Leandro, California where it was headquartered for many years.

Listen to Grandma!

Those suffering from common or severe colds should take one tablespoon lukewarm honey with 1/4 spoon cinnamon powder daily for three days. This process will cure most chronic cough, cold, and clear the sinuses.



California Wild Rice Industry Sponsors Recipe Rumble

Culinary pros in California and Nevada are invited to compete for cash

FAIR OAKS, CA — Chefs, chefs-in-training, caterers and other culinary professionals are invited to compete for a total of \$5,000 cash and prizes in the "California Wild Rice Rocks My World Recipe Rumble". The California Wild Rice Advisory Board (www.cawildrice.com) is sponsoring the contest.

The goal of the "California Wild Rice Rocks My World Recipe Rumble" is to tap into the creativity of California and Nevada chefs and other culinary professionals by challenging them to craft compelling new ways of using and serving wild rice in restaurants, within catering operations and in other food service settings.

The "California Wild Rice Rocks My World Recipe Rumble" contest closes Feb 28. Winners will be notified no later than March 31, 2010. In addition to cash awards for the best recipes, photography enthusiasts will have an opportunity to submit photos of their recipe entries for a chance to win cash and prizes.

Contestants must enter their images through the social photography site Flickr in the "California Wild Rice Rocks My World Recipe Rumble" group. Recipe and photo winners will also receive an array of wild rice products.

Contest entry forms, rules and frequently-asked questions may be found online at www.cawildrice.com



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