



For fun, pickers are given the opportunity to stomp grapes after a morning of picking.

Cheers to Harvest '91!

Grape pickers return to Messina Hof Vineyards to snip, stomp and savor this year's crop

With its weeping willows casting over the lake and its cool grass being gently warmed by the sun, Messina Hof Wine Cellars sits exquisitely hidden from the summertime heat of Bryan-College Station.

Not many people know about this wonderful escape spot - perfect for a romantic picnic or just a leisurely day spent sitting on the terrace sipping some of the Brazos Valley's most crisp, lively wines.

And while the summer heat withers and dries the greenery around us, the vineyards at Messina Hof are basking in the sun, cultivating berries rich in flavor and aroma - just waiting to be harvested.

With good timing, these delicious fruits are not having to wait a minute more. Harvest time at the winery began Friday. And the Messina Hof Pickers Club is converging upon the vineyards to bring in the harvest.

Comprised of more than 450 volunteers, the Pickers Club begin every year from mid-July through August 4 to experience grape harvesting. Hand pickers come in from surrounding areas; they are of all ages and may have little or no experience with the art of grape picking.

For husband and wife duo Raisin and Jim Schwerdfeger of Beaver Creek, this season is their first time to pick grapes.

"We've picked peaches and tomatoes before," says Raisin, "but never grapes. The berries are absolutely beautiful and much sweeter than I thought."

Paul Bonarrigo, owner and winemaker, says the grapes ripen in July.

"The perfect green grape starts to raisin and turns an almost honey color," says Bonarrigo. "We're not looking for a perfectly round grape. It is the shriveled grape that provides a concentration of juice."

"And that is what gives the wine a classic taste."

The classic tastes of Messina Hof are not only due to the "perfect" grape; the winery has also maintained its old style tradition - hand picking the bunches of grapes off each and every vine.

Bonarrigo's wife, Merrill, says picking the grapes by hand eliminates the stems and leaves, which cause a bitter flavor.



Norman Watson, a volunteer picker from Cedar Park, slices off a bunch of grapes at Messina Hof's harvest.

"A lot of vineyards have gone to machine picking," says Merrill. "And although the mashing process gets most of the extra stuff out, hand picking makes for a much finer wine."

Merrill says many of the pickers return in November to taste "their" wine - Chenin Blanc, a fresh and effervescent tasting wine.

"They (pickers) really feel like this is their wine afterwards," Merrill says.

Returning for his second year, Lester Kinkade of Wharton says it's the fellowship that keeps him coming back.

"I like the fresh air, meeting new people and just being a part of things," Kinkade said.

But for the Schwerdfegers, it's the fringe benefits that make the work worthwhile.

"The pay isn't good," says Jim. "We do it for the



Pickers must remove any leaves or stems when cutting grapes off the vine.

wine."

Spaces are still available for anyone interested in the harvest. Pickers should come prepared to do a little grape stomping and wine tasting.

Messina Hof also conducts daily tours of the winery. Tours are free. For more information call (409) 778-WINE.

Story by
Yvonne Salce

Photos by
Söndra N. Robbins

JOCK ITCH AND RINGWORM STUDY
Individuals 12 years of age and older with "jock itch" or "ringworm" are being recruited for a research study of an antifungal medication. \$125.00 will be paid to volunteers who complete this study.

CALL
VOLUNTEERS IN PHARMACEUTICAL
RESEARCH, INC.®
776-1417

DEPRESSION STUDY
Individuals are being recruited for a research study on depression. If you have been diagnosed with depression or would like to find out more about this study, call VIP Research. \$125.00 will be paid to qualified volunteers who enroll and complete this study.

CALL
VOLUNTEERS IN PHARMACEUTICAL
RESEARCH, INC.®
776-1417

INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE
If you have proctitis, colitis, or left sided inflammatory bowel disease, VIP Research is seeking volunteers for a one month research study. Participants can qualify either on or off of medication. \$400.00 will be paid to those individuals who enroll and complete this study.

CALL
VOLUNTEERS IN PHARMACEUTICAL
RESEARCH, INC.®
776-1417

Enjoy Summer Sports! Don't let an injury hold you back!

CarePlus
MEDICAL CENTER

Provides

- Physical Exams to ensure your healthy start
- Prompt care for minor emergencies.
- Family health care & follow up

Quality Care Plus Convenience
Open till 8 p.m.
Seven days a week
1712 Southwest Parkway
696-0683

No Appointment needed • 10% Discount with A&M ID

SALE • SALE • SALE • SALE • SALE • SALE • SALE • SALE • SALE

SAME DAY DELIVERY ON MOST LENSES

CONTACT LENSES
ONLY QUALITY NAME BRANDS
(Bausch & Lomb, Ciba, Barnes-Hydrocurve)

\$69.00* Pair

For Standard Clear or Tinted FLEXIBLE WEAR Soft Contact Lenses
(Can be worn as daily or extended wear)
*Eye exam not included

Call 696-3754 for Appointment
SALE ENDS JUNE 28, 1991
SALE EXTENDED TO JULY 26, 1991

Charles C. Schroepel, O.D., P.C.
Doctor of Optometry

707 S. Texas Ave.-Suite 101D
1 Blk. South of Texas Ave.
& University Dr. Intersection
College Station, Texas 77840

SALE • SALE • SALE • SALE • SALE • SALE • SALE • SALE • SALE