

THE VINTAGE Advantage

STANDING OUT IN A CROWD

Some of the most exciting wines on the market these days are coming out of California's legendary Monterey County. Standing out, even from this daunting crowd, is the Blackstone 2002 Monterey County Chardonnay.

The Blackstone Winery, which exploded onto the market in the early nineties with its wildly popular Merlot, has since developed a wide range of consistently high-quality varietals. The success of this effort is due largely to the winery's ability to bring together some of the most talented wine makers in the world to create their wines.

The man responsible for the Monterey County Chardonnay is Chief Winemaker Dennis Hill, who, even after twenty-five years in the business, still finds the promise of each new season thrilling. The 2002 season was to be no different. The season had been cool and long, and Hill was convinced it would produce yet another delicious, full, consumer-friendly Chardonnay for Blackstone.

BLACKSTONE WINERY

To ensure its natural vibrancy, 80 percent of the blend was cold-tank fermented. The remaining 20 percent was fermented in barrels to give the Chardonnay a creamy complexity. The final blend was then aged an additional six months in oak casks, a choice Hill made in order to guarantee his Chardonnay would have the distinctive, toasty finish he desired.

When all was said and done, Hill had done exactly what he had set out to do. He had produced a balanced, food-friendly wine full of fruit and subtle oak flavors—a Chardonnay as enjoyable with aged cheese as it is with a meal of spicy Thai.

Frankly, the success of the Blackstone 2002 Monterey County Chardonnay is unsurprising. A full selection of award winning wines—Zinfandel, Syrah, Pinot Noir, Cabernet and more—are coming out of Blackstone's wineries in Monterey County and Sonoma Valley every year.

Setting yourself apart in a region like Monterey is far from easy, but the wine makers of the Blackstone Winery have the talent and determination it takes to do just that. Thanks to the dedication and artistry of world-class vintners like Dennis Hill, Blackstone can be relied on to produce great wines for years to come.

For more information visit www.blackstonewinery.com.





The Taste of Hawaii

Mark Twain once called Hawaii "the loveliest fleet of islands that lies anchored in any ocean." More than one hundred years later, the tropical bounty of Hawaii is still everywhere evident. Traditional sugar plantations thrive in the rich volcanic soil of Maui, creating ideal conditions for the growth and manufacture of Hawaii's Sugar In The Raw®.

Made from premium Hawaiian Turbinado sugar, Sugar In The Raw® is 100 percent pure Hawaiian cane. A time-tested processing technique that calls for an initial pressing of the cane allows the natural molasses to remain in the sugar crystals. The result is rich and sweet flavor that tastes every bit as good as its rich amber color promises.

Sugar In The Raw® can be used anywhere ordinary refined sugar can, and adds a hearty natural flavor that's as sweet as Hawaiian sunshine. Use it to sweeten morning cereal, enhance a bowl of fresh fruit or complement a cup of coffee. Sugar In The Raw® also makes an ideal cooking and baking companion in the kitchen.

Plantains in Sherry

Serves 8

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- 5 plantains, semi-ripe, peeled, sliced about 1/4–1/2 inch thick each
- 3 tablespoons Sugar In The Raw®
- 3/4 cup sweet sherry
- Ground cinnamon

Melt butter in a deep sided skillet. Heat plantains in butter until brown, about 10 minutes. Gently turn over plantains. In a separate small skillet, heat sugar until it caramelizes. Immediately pour sugar over plantains and toss quickly so sugar mixture doesn't harden. Add sherry and dust with cinnamon. Cover and allow to simmer for about 15 minutes. Serve immediately as a side dish with chicken or other poultry or pork entrée.

Sugar In The Raw® is available at your local grocer in two-pound bulk, 100-count box and the new 25-count box.

For more information on Sugar In The Raw®, visit sugarintheraw.com.



The REAL TASTE of the HOLIDAYS

The warmest gift this holiday season may be a simple box of homemade cookies. They may be sentimental favorites, dripping with icing and sprinkles, or more sophisticated recipes passed down through generations. But whatever the cookie, a festive tin of freshly baked treats makes a deliciously thoughtful present, in keeping with the truest spirit of the season.

Whether the cookie recipe is a foolproof favorite or requires an expert's efforts, the best tasting ingredient for crumbly, melt-in-your-mouth holiday cookies will always be all-natural and pure butter. Smooth and creamy, butter delivers a rich flavor and flakiness that enhance every other ingredient in a cookie recipe. For more delicious holiday recipes and tips for cooking and baking with Real Butter, visit www.ButterIsBest.com.

Latin Lace Florentines

The lacy texture of this traditional Florentine results from its thin, buttery batter giving the cookie a festive holiday look and feel. A surprising hint of chili powder nicely balances the Florentine's crisp texture and slight sweetness.

Makes 4 dozen cookies

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup quick-cooking oats
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 3/4 tsp. chili powder
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 1/2 cups sliced almonds
- 10 Tbsp. (1 1/4 sticks) unsalted butter, melted
- 1/4 cup half-and-half or whole milk
- 1/4 cup light corn syrup
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 4 oz. fine-quality bittersweet chocolate, chopped (see shopping note)

Shopping note:

For the best chocolate flavor, look for bittersweet chocolate with a minimum of 60 percent cocoa solids.



1. Preheat the oven to 350°F with oven rack in the middle. Line baking sheet with a silicone baking mat or heavy-duty aluminum foil buttered generously.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the oats, flour, sugar, cinnamon, chili powder, baking soda and salt. Stir in almonds.
3. Add butter, half-and-half (or milk), corn syrup and vanilla. Stir to combine.
4. Scoop heaping teaspoons of batter onto the prepared sheet at least 3 inches apart, six cookies per sheet. Bake one sheet at a time until the cookies are flat and browned around the edges, 7 to 9 min. Cool cookies on the sheet several minutes, until firm enough to transfer to a cooling rack.
5. When all cookies are baked, melt the chocolate in a metal bowl set over a pan of simmering water. Using a very small tipped pastry bag or the tines of a fork, drizzle the chocolate in a zigzag pattern over the tops of the cookies.

NO MATTER WHAT THE OCCASION, **American lamb** turns any meal into a special event. Its mild flavor pairs well with a variety of spices and sauces, and inspires culinary invention. Any time of the year, this native delicacy can turn any dish, from hearty stews to light pastas, into something remarkable.

American lamb also pairs quite well with a wide variety of wines. While there are no steadfast rules when it comes to wine, certain tastes do tend to complement one another. Just as there are many wonderful ways to prepare **American lamb**, there are several delicious wines to accompany it.

For example, when serving classic and simple dishes, like an elegant roasted rack of lamb seasoned with rosemary and garlic, Cabernet Sauvignon makes an excellent match. Then again, the mellow flavors of Merlot pair nicely with grilled **American lamb** dishes, such as chops marinated in lemon juice and olive oil, with oregano and garlic. When it comes to the spicier **American lamb** dishes, such as shank seasoned with coriander, cumin and chili powder, Chardonnay is the perfect foil. And finally, there is Pinot Blanc, a crispy wine with notes of citrus that always complements any **American lamb** dish prepared with rosemary, garlic and olive oil.

For recipes and more, visit www.lambinfo.com.

Lemon Lamb Roast with Fennel

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: Approx. 60 minutes

Servings: 6

Ingredients:

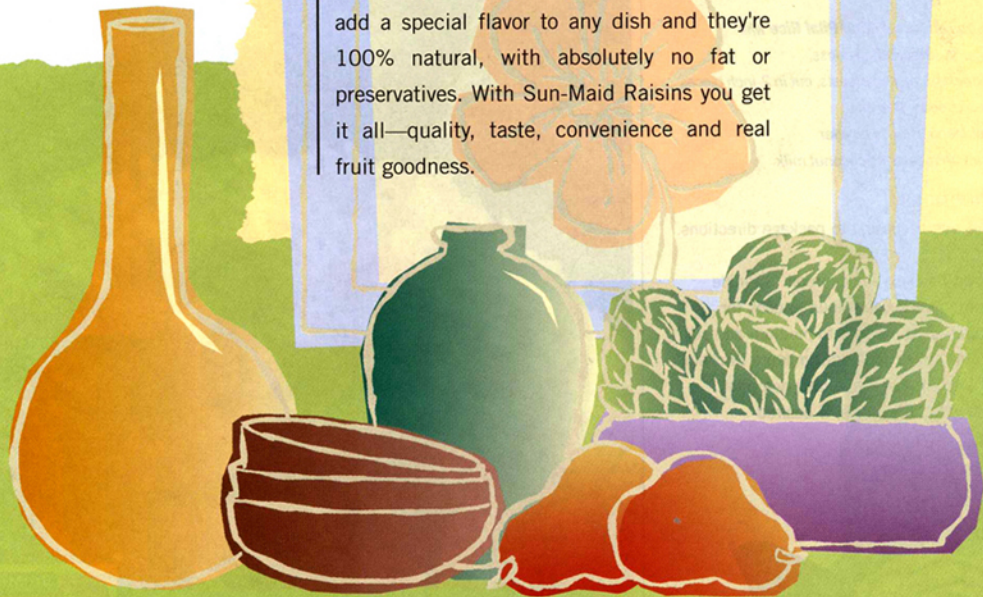
- 1 4-5-lb. **American Lamb** leg, bone-in
- 1 Tbs. fennel seeds
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 2 tsp. finely shredded lemon peel
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper

Directions: Crush/finely chop fennel seeds. In small bowl combine fennel, garlic, lemon peel, salt/pepper; mix well. Rub mixture into roast and place in roasting pan. Roast in 325° oven for 1 1/4-1 1/2 hours or internal temp reaches 145-150° (medium rare). Remove from oven; cover loosely with foil. Let stand for 10 minutes. Slice to serve.



Swing into Spring

SUN-MAID RAISINS HAVE BEEN A PART OF AMERICA'S CULINARY SCENE FOR GENERATIONS. Adding raisins to your daily diet is a simple way to get your 5-A-Day servings of fruits and vegetables. For a quick burst of energy, snack on them right out of the box. Or use them to jazz up a wide range of recipes, from crispy salads to delectable main courses, savory appetizers to sumptuous desserts. They add a special flavor to any dish and they're 100% natural, with absolutely no fat or preservatives. With Sun-Maid Raisins you get it all—quality, taste, convenience and real fruit goodness.



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Swing into Spring

Rice has been feeding most of the world since the birth of agriculture, and it remains at the heart of many international diets. In this country, the fascination with this very versatile food is simply growing by the grain.

Consider rice pilaf. According to culinary historians, the Persians originally coined the term pilaf during the first centuries. The name still sticks in South Carolina, where in the late 17th Century, African slaves brought this rice dish to America. But rice pilaf by any other name would still taste as good. Call it *pollo* in Farsi or when in India ask for *pullao*. While the Spanish call it *paella*, the Russian Georgians know it as *plavi* and in Central Asia and the Middle East people call it *pilov* or simply *plov*—it's a delicious and healthful dish the world over. The following recipes will get you started on your "Pilaf Tour of the World."

"Mushroom Rice Pilaf" may be made completely vegetarian by substituting water for chicken broth. The recipe for "Caribbean Chicken Curry Pilaf" uses the "Success Pilaf Rice Mix" which combines the rice and seasonings for you for added convenience. More recipes may be found on our websites: www.mahatmarice.com, www.carolinarice.com and www.successrice.com.





The **spring** of things

Come spring time, the crocuses bloom, the sun shines a little brighter and the candy of choice is the Jelly Belly bean. Right now it's peak season for these little jelly beans with the great big flavor. Jelly Belly beans are invited to the best spring occasions, delighting young and old alike.

When Jelly Belly redefined jelly beans in 1976, these little candies surprised everyone with shockingly original flavors. This spring, with 75 flavors to choose from (including 10 sugar-free flavors low in net carbs), there's a perfect Jelly Belly bean for every occasion. Mix-and-match Pina Colada, Coconut and Cotton Candy to make a sweet spring medley. Fill fun glass containers with single flavors, each one the color of an April flower—yellow, pink, lavender, green and white—and then invite friends and family to play candy shop. Decorate a dessert with some Jelly Belly whimsy, by using a small dab of frosting to line the jelly beans around the plate.

For more fresh ideas on enjoying Jelly Belly during its peak season, visit their website at www.jellybelly.com.

