

from **Seed**
to **Flour**

*Napa Valley business
mills a culinary hit:*
GRAPE SEED FLOUR

**Food
for
You**



Photos by Art & Clarity



by KARI RUEL

You've probably heard about Salute Santé's award-winning grapeseed cooking oil (see sidebar page 17), but a whole other product is coming out of the oil-making process that has bakers in the Napa Valley abuzz: grapeseed flour.

It's high in ORAC levels and high in fiber, and Valentin and Nanette Humer feel the flour is an answer to our nutrient-empty food sources by adding valuable nutrients back into food.

The Humers' company, Food & Vine, which makes the grapeseed product Salute Santé, continues to forge new territory by taking vineyard waste (pomace) and creating foods that taste great, are healthy and are locally produced. Being socially responsible, Salute Santé is certified green, verified non-genetically modified, and has the standard high for antioxidants, and low in saturated fat. Valentin found a missing link between the best European-trained chefs and their secret ingredient, grapeseed oil, but it wasn't available in the United States. In 1990, Valentin decided to turn trash into gold by creating a new industry adjacent to the existing wine industry. Since then he has worked hard to educate consumers and the wine industry about the health and environmental benefits of this miracle by-product of wine making.

According to the American College of Cardiology and the *Journal of Urology*, studies have shown a unique ability that grapeseed oil may significantly raise HDL cholesterol (the "good" cholesterol), lower LDL cholesterol (the "bad" cholesterol), and triglycerides. Regular use of grapeseed oil will contribute to a

healthy lifestyle and may lower your risk of cardiovascular disease and impotency, something that no other food product has been known to do.

After the grapeseed is cold pressed, Valentin is left with spiral log-like cakes, which he now mills and converts it into nutritious flour. Depending on the varietal of the grapeseed, e.g. merlot or chardonnay, the flour will take on unique characteristics just like that in wine.

"The grapeseed flour is packed with rich antioxidants, calcium, potassium, and it's high in dietary fiber," said Valentin. Nanette bakes with the grapeseed flour to create delicious sweet or savory baking delights—from fruit breads, muffins, bars and granola to grain breads, focaccia, pizza and homemade pasta.

"The grapeseed flour will add a nuttiness and crisp texture to your favorite baking recipes," added Nanette.

Embraced by chefs, bakers and individuals alike, the flour is gluten-free and non-GMO as well. Baker Eli Colvin is baking four heart wholegrain breads at Model Bakery at the Oxbow Public Market—Napa Whole Grain, a focaccia, a baguette and a Loaf of Merlot—all made with Chardonnay or Merlot grapeseed flour.

For the past six months Colvin has been experimenting with the grapeseed flour; he feels he has found a winning combination to offer Model Bakery customers a healthier choice in bread.

"It's wonderful to have a new product line and ingredient profile

to work with as a baker, “ said Colvin, who is moving Model Bakery towards a GMO-free bakery. “The grapeseed flour offers a different texture, flavor and crumb, and it’s extremely nutritious and high in antioxidants. I also like the fact that they (Salute Santé) have taken a waste product and turned it into a food product that is healthy. That is a big bonus.”

Baker Eli said he has a bunch of ideas for future products using the grapeseed flour and he believes there are unlimited uses for it. “We are concerned about our customers’ health. GMOs are unhealthy for people, the environment and corporations,” he said. “We are doing our part to support local food purveyors and small farms who offer healthy alternative ingredients. And we are pushing back against huge agriculture that doesn’t meet that objective.”

Another benefit of the grapeseed flour, according to Eli is bread that doesn’t have to be “evil” to those who have gluten allergies. Bread made with grapeseed flour creates a super hydration level, which makes it easier to digest. Model Bakery also uses less salt and uses macerated fruit, not sugar, for sweetness. Their four bread choices made with grapeseed flour are made fresh Thursday, Friday and Saturday at the downtown Napa location.

Chef Victor Scargle of Lucy’s Restaurant makes a lavosh cracker with Chardonnay grapeseed flour to serve with his tuna



Nanette and Valentin Humer

Photo by Art & Clarity

tartare; caterer Elaine Bell jumped to use this ingredient in her vineyard menu as shortbread cookies and crackers.

“This is such an opportunity to see artists at work as the chefs devise totally new creations with our ingredients,” said Nanette. “There isn’t a lot that is new as far as food goes, so this is really something special.”

“We believe in sustainability and we think Nanette and Valentin exemplify this. In the old days you used all that you had. First you made the wine, then you made the grappa, and now we make the oil—everything is used. They are even making flour from the oil press cake! That

is what the Castello is all about—being sustainable!” said Georg Salzner, President of Castello di Amorosa.

What’s next for the Humers?

“We are getting ready to start all over again with Harvest 2013! The only thing missing is a place we could do everything,” said Valentin, referring to starting the pomace-to-seed-to-oil dance he performs every harvest. “This is the missing link for our business. It’s taken this long to get the attention of our wonderful winery neighbors, and now I need to be able to deliver.”

What he means by this is to take the grapeseeds from each winery after the wine is pressed. Up until now they have managed to secure seeds from a handful of growers who were able to separate seeds one way or another. “Now we are ready to really start this process—officially!”

Herein lies the challenge and the opportunity—for Valentin as well as any interested parties who would like to participate in this historic step, a food grade facility to turn pomace into oil. “We always seem to be forging new territory. I guess this is our next step!”

Salute Santé! To your health!

Go to www.grapeseedoil.com for information about the grapeseed oil, flour, and recipes, and to purchase the flour.

GLUTEN-FREE CHARDONNAY BREAKFAST SCONES

- 2/3 cup oat flour
- 2/3 cup almond flour
- 2/3 cup Salute Santé Chardonnay Grapeseed Flour
- 1 Tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/4 cup turbinado sugar
- 1/4 cup Salute Santé Chardonnay Grapeseed Oil
- 1 egg
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 1/4 cup dates
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/4 cup oatmeal flakes

Yields: 12 scones

Preheat oven to 425° F. Combine flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Slowly add Salute Santé! Chardonnay Grapeseed Oil while mixing on low speed until crumbly. Add raisins, dates, nuts and oatmeal. In a measuring cup, beat the egg and milk. Slowly add to dough while mixing on slow speed until thick. Form 2-inch balls or scoops and place on ungreased baking sheet. Bake for 10-15 minutes or until lightly golden brown. Serve plain or with butter, jam or lemon curd.

GRAPESEED OIL gets recognition from specialty food association

Chosen as a finalist for the Specialty Food Association's soft Award for Outstanding Oil at the New York Fancy Food Show last month, Salute Santé! is getting a large dose of much-deserved attention! The Oscars of the gourmet food world, the soft Awards are a big deal for any food purveyor, so Nanette and Valentin Humer are ready for the gold! The winner was announced July 1, too late to make this issue.

"We are thrilled at receiving the nomination!" said Nanette. "This honor is such validation for all Valentin and I have been doing to make this oil possible." And all that they do is no small feat—on any given day they are busy sorting seeds, pressing grapeseed oil, bottling, selling and educating chefs, stores and consumers that this is the world's healthiest oil.

"The best artisanal food product I've seen in twenty-five years in the Napa Valley," said star chef Michael Chiarello. Chiarello's Napa Style in Yountville has been a customer for two years, showcasing the oils and featuring them in their catalogs. Bottega Restaurant has been using the Syrah Grapeseed oil since Chiarello first tasted the oils. Valentin is proud to have chefs of this caliber creating unique new dishes with his oils up and down the Valley.

A few of their local restaurant customers are Fish Story, Morimoto, ZuZu Restaurant, Cole's Chop House, Hog Island Oysters, C Casa, Ca' Momi, Grace's Table, étoile Restaurant at Domaine Chandon, Lucy's at Bardessono and Bottega Restaurant. Chef Malcolm from Silverado Cooking School teaches how to incorporate grapeseed oil into daily menus for his classes. He loves the local and sustainable aspect of these oils.

Beginning with Napa as home base, they have spread out to cover the Bay Area, selling to San Francisco chefs like Ron Siegel at Michael Mina Restaurant, Mark Dommen at One Market Restaurant, and Chris Cosentino from Incanto as well as Michael Chiarello's new hot spot, Coqueta Restaurant in San Francisco. Health guru Andrew Weil's new restaurants, True Food Kitchens, have converted all their kitchens to Salute Santé!

Whole Foods Markets have recently added three Salute Santé! varietal grapeseed oils—Chardonnay, Merlot and Syrah—to their oil sections in all 36 Northern California stores. Castello di Amorosa has added a tasting room, La Fattoria, to highlight eight different varietal cold-pressed grapeseed oils.

"We love offering all the wineries different varietal grapeseed oils to match the different varietal wines they are making. This allows everyone to customize the oils their own way," said Valentin. "Now I am just waiting to create the private reserves to match any of Napa's great wines."



NVL's Hot Tips to a Better LIFE

How to get a Squeaky Clean Wineglass

Nobody likes to serve an elegant or everyday wine in a spotted wine glass. Hurley's Restaurant bartender Dean Schoeps offers this tip for a sparkling presentation. After washing a glass either by hand or in a dishwasher, fill a thick glass or mug with steaming hot water. Hold the wine glass upside down over it and let the moisture and steam rising from the hot water eliminate and loosen the extra debris off the wineglass. Wipe with a buff cloth. No more spots. Schoeps cautions not to use a very thin-sided glass for the steamed water or the glass might crack.

Go to nvlmag.com for more helpful tips to make your life easier in WineCountry.

Do you have a tip for our NVL readers? Send them along to kari@napavalleylifemagazine.com.