

FOOD STUFF



FESTIVE DESSERT DRINK

Blending black tea, chai spices, aged rum and dutch cream, Voyant Chai Cream is one of the tastiest specialty liquors available for the holiday season. A healthy dollop in your evening tea or espresso (or alone over ice) is a festive, dessert drink. It costs \$24 a bottle.

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JUICE FOR LIFE

Move over pomegranates, could 2005's life-saving juice of choice be blueberry? The superfood berry has been reported to stave off Alzheimer's, lower cholesterol and fight cancer. Wyman's Wild Blueberry juice is now newly available through major grocery stores.

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COOKIE MONSTERS



KARRY BAROLO, owner of The Kennel Club Dog Bakery in Traverse City, Mich., decorates and packages holiday gourmet dog treats for discriminating pet owners.

Got goat's milk?

Moo juice alternative enters mass market

MILK WILL take center stage in millions of homes this Friday when the traditional snack is left out for Santa Claus on Christmas Eve. But maybe you're thinking jolly old St. Nick needs to watch his health. Serve him up a tall, cold glass of goat's milk, which is lower in cholesterol and easier to digest than the moo juice.

Goat's milk is poised to have a comeback as a healthful dairy alternative to cow's milk. It has been used for years as an alternative for babies who can't tolerate cow's milk, but now it's entering the mass market with items such as goat milk butter.

For more than 70 years the California-based brand

Meyenberg has been producing goat's milk products and just recently launched their European-style goat milk butter made using the slow-churning process.

One of the main benefits



contains more of the essential fatty acids than cow milk, which may make it more readily digested. Peo-

ple who can't tolerate cow's milk, can usually tolerate this kind of milk. Another benefit is that Meyenberg goat milk is free of the controversial growth hormone BGH or antibiotics, which is often found in cow's milk.

For butter nuts, the goat's milk butter has the smoothness to compete with any of the high-end products on the market. It's lightly salted making it an ideal spreading butter (try it with blueberry jam). At \$8 for a silver-foil wrapped package, it's a tad more expensive than cow's milk butter. But hey, it's like chocolate — if you're going to indulge, make sure you use the good stuff.

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DRINK WELL

Columbia Crest Grand Estates Merlot 2001



For about \$12 a bottle it's hard to beat this fine effort from one of America's best value wineries. Columbia Crest Winery seems to have the Midas touch when it comes to producing top quality wines at very reasonable prices. The blend on the Grand Estates Merlot bottling is 85 percent Merlot, 10 percent Cabernet Franc and 5 percent Cabernet Sauvignon. Cherry, cassis and black raspberries, blended with the soft textures from both French and American oak, give this wine a smooth and flavorful finish.

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