

# K's Kitchen: Mom's Rice Soup



By Kathryn Reed

So many recipes are seasonal either because of the ingredients or the weather outside. With winter being at least a six-month long season in Lake Tahoe, soup is always a good choice.

Many soups are relatively easy to make and don't involve going up and down every aisle of the grocery store. One I like in particular is from my mom.

On the recipe she hand wrote for me years ago it says, "Mom's Rice Soup, since 1955".

That was the year she and dad got married so I thought there might be a fun story behind the recipe. Mom doesn't recall where the recipe came from – so no fun story for now. With it being "Mom's" recipe, she certainly has taken ownership of it. And I'm OK with that.

Neither mom nor dad had the soup as children, so it hasn't been in the family many generations.

"It's perfect for when you don't feel good," mom said. I remember her fixing it for me as a kid when I was sick. That's probably why I consider it one of my comfort foods.

We both like that we usually have all the ingredients in the house – no matter the season. It's fast and easy to make, too.

**Mom's Rice Soup – serves 3-4**

4 C water

2-4 tsp or cubes bouillon

1 medium to large carrot, grated

1 small to medium onion, chopped fine

1 stalk celery, chopped fine

1/3 to 1/2 C uncooked rice

Bring all ingredients to a boil and continue boiling very gently for 30 minutes.

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## **Wine is for drinking; grapes are for stomping**

**Publisher's note:** *Thank you everyone for your fun stories about wine. Janine Green of Carson City was picked by Lake Tahoe News to win the tickets to the Passport Weekend. Her story is below.*

**By Janine Green**

I remember my first sip, as if it were yesterday. The broad rimmed glass touched my lips as the flavors of the dark red wine swirled in my mouth. For me this love affair with wine started at a very young age. Growing up in an Italian household, wine was considered just another welcome member of the family. As I have matured, so has my relationship with wine.



Janine Green is on her way to Passport Weekend at the El Dorado County wineries this month.

Photo/Provided

My palate now more enriched, I have learned that the true beauty of wine is not only its taste; wine is much more complex than that ... its nose, legs, color and clarity, "Ahhhhhh!" Each varietal of wine, with its individual personality and unique characteristics, has added flavor to my life.

Last September, while wine tasting in El Dorado Hills at Miraflores Winery, I took my love of wine to the next, more intimate level. Entering into the tasting room you could feel the energy and excitement surrounding the activities. I sat and slowly removed my shoes and then took my place behind the other participants. The anticipation I encountered was similar to how I feel while I wait in line for an amusement park ride. As I approached the vats filled with grapes, I reflected back to my childhood, watching Lucy grape stomping in my favorite episode of "I Love Lucy". How much would my stomping dance compare with this character of my past? Would I be graceful or clumsy? Not a moment more to analyze the situation, it was now my turn. I was directed to a foot bath and then assisted up the stair.

As I stepped down, I giggled with fear and excitement, feeling grapes explode between my toes. While I moved from vat to vat, I was intrigued by the texture and consistency of the fruity substance that surrounded me. Knowing that one wrong step would leave me bathed in this sweet watery pulp. Suddenly, an awareness and appreciation of the love and labor it once took to produce a barrel of wine overcame me. Had my ancestors once stomped grapes too?

While I stomped, sipping a glass of Merlot, I envisioned the final product that someday I would have the opportunity to taste. The simple delight of this moment enveloped me. Stepping out of the vats with pink stained feet, I knew my love affair with wine had deepened. I have now seen and experienced the raw and unrefined side of wine. It brings a smile to my face even at this moment, glass in hand, longing for my next encounter.

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## **Eating local key to saving farming land**

By Helen Thompson, Sacramento Bee

Why is agriculture vital to the Sacramento region?

To start, our region's farms help feed the world. Roughly half of the nation's specialty crops come from California, while more than 28 percent of the state's production is shipped overseas. Agriculture also is one of the few regional bright spots in this recession, increasing about \$300 million in value – a 22 percent jump since 2006.

**Read the whole story**

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# Do you want free wine?

*Lake Tahoe News* and the El Dorado Winery Association are teaming up to offer LTN readers two free tickets (value \$150) to Passport Weekend. Twenty-six wineries will be participating, with lots of deals and food at each one.

The annual event is the weekends of April 10-11 and April 17-18. It's your choice which weekend you go.



Of course you have to do a little work to get them. Three judges are going to determine who describes their favorite wine experience the best. And if we really like what you write, it will be published on *Lake Tahoe News*. Even if you don't win, we might publish what you write.

Some rules: no more than 500 words, must use your first and last names (which will be published), home town (you don't have to live in El Dorado County), phone number (so we can verify you wrote it, but it won't be published), photo of yourself-wine-something (optional, but will be worth extra points), deadline is April 5 (winner will be announced on LTN April 6).

The writing: wine is the subject matter; it can be about the health benefits, the perfect bottle for that perfect occasion, a favorite winery, a bad experience, cooking with wine – anything about wine. Extra points will be given to people writing about El Dorado County wines.

Send story and photos to [info@LakeTahoeNews.net](mailto:info@LakeTahoeNews.net).

For those who don't win the tickets for the 19th annual

Passport Weekend, you can still buy them. A limited number exist. Tickets are \$75 each, which is good for one full weekend. Designated drivers pay \$25 per person for food and non-alcoholic refreshments.

During Passport Weekend, El Dorado's foothill wineries feature gourmet food and wine pairings, library and barrel tastings, and special wine sales. Many of the wineries showcase the work of local artists and offer musical entertainment.

For tickets, event details and a map of participating foothill wineries, [click here](#) or call 800.306.3956.

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## **K's Kitchen: Schussing in search of French fries**



**By Kathryn Reed**

We all have food issues. You know, trigger foods. Foods to make us happy. Cravings. Compulsions. Something where one isn't enough.

French fries. They are my problem. I think an order can qualify as a meal. When I've been alone in a drive-through I have ordered two helpings of fries – for myself.

People who ski with me know my lunch on the slopes is usually a beer and fries. Lecture me all you want about how unhealthy

this is. It will fall on deaf ears. I'm not saying this is good nutrition. I'm just saying I really like my fries when I ski.

This season I have skied at five resorts and had fries at all but Squaw. That was only because it was early season and the on-mountain restaurant that serves French fries was not open.

Those skiing with me this season were subjected to rating the fries. (I was sharing those days.) This is so unscientific and not all the tasters were at each resort. And like all food, it is fairly subjective.

Nonetheless, the favorite of others and mine are the sweet potato fries at Sierra-at-Tahoe. They are a must have at the top of Grandview. And they are only \$2.95 for a decent portion.

"They taste healthy," Sue said.

I'll vouch for that sentiment, but not how factual her belief is.

(Get the \$2.95 onion petals, too, to ensure you hit your grease quotient for the month.)



Sierra's  
Mountain of  
Fries

The Mountain of Fries (\$5.95) at the Sierra Pub and Deli are an excellent value. I'm not a big fan of crinkled fries, but Sue is OK with them. These fries suffice and are worth

ordering, but they aren't the "oh my gosh I want seconds" like Sierra's sweet potato fries are.

The least favorite were the overcooked spuds at the California Lodge at Heavenly Mountain Resort. Save your \$4 for something else.

"They are nasty. They are cooked in old fried grease," Brenda said. "Being an ex-fast food worker I can tell when grease is old."

At Northstar-at-Tahoe the chili fries really did seem like a sufficient meal. At \$7.75 they are super filling. The chili comes with meat or vegetarian. They are messy. A fork is definitely needed.

With something like this, it's really more about the chili than the fries. The veggie chili was great. The portion was so generous I couldn't find a plain fry to sample.

The other French fry experience this season was at Whistler. The sweet potato fries were \$4.95 and regular ones were \$3.95. And the Canadian and U.S. dollars are one-to-one, so no deal this year.

At the on-mountain lodge they interchanged the words sweet potato and yam. But the vegetables aren't the same even though people in the States and Canada think they are. So, I don't really know which I had when I was in Canada.

The sweet potato was the best of these two, but it wasn't anything compared to the ones Sierra serves. But Whistler did have the best dipping sauce. A spicy dip came with the sweet/yam taters.

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# **Reno's DISH Cafe part of Food Network show**

**By Jonathan Wright, Reno Gazette-Journal**

There is the regular way to make a recipe, proceeding by ingredient and method, and then there is the television way. Nancy and Joe Horn, the owners of DISH Café, learned that in January when a Food Network crew occupied their restaurant.

The crew was shooting an episode of "Diners, Drive-ins and Dives," the popular show in which host Guy Fieri visits homegrown restaurants across the country. The episode in which DISH appears is scheduled to air beginning Monday.

**Read the whole story**

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# **El Dorado wineries find receptive drinkers in The City**

El Dorado County's wineries recently brought their version of gold from the Sierra Foothills to San Francisco and returned with valuable sales leads and exposure to a new, appreciative audience.

Approximately 300 trade members and consumers enjoyed medal-winning Zinfandel, Bordeaux, Rhone and Burgundian varietals poured by 24 wineries in the posh surroundings of Postrio Restaurant near Union Square.



Diane Stading,  
owner of  
Auriga Cellars  
in El Dorado  
County, talks  
with a member  
of the wine  
trade in San  
Francisco.  
Photo/Provided

It was the first San Francisco trade/consumer tasting conducted by the El Dorado Winery Association. Winery representatives picked up several sales leads and enjoyed introducing people to El Dorado -- a region gaining recognition for its diversity of award-winning wines.

Beth Jones, owner of Lava Cap Winery in Placerville and president of the El Dorado Winery Association, was pleased to receive inquiries from several restaurants on pricing and availability of Lava Cap wines including Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Zinfandel. She also was able to visit with travel and trade media during the tasting.

“The event opened up several new sales avenues, not only for Lava Cap, but for all of our association’s wineries,” Jones said.

Miraflores Winery winemaker Marco Capelli poured alongside manager Matricia Haigood.

“It was a perfect event for getting in touch with the San

Francisco marketplace, and great exposure to consumers who were not familiar with El Dorado,” Haigood said. “We came away with several restaurant leads that our local distributor can use to expand our sales interests in the Bay Area.”

EDWA plans to conduct similar tastings in other cities the future.

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## **4th-grader’s salsa a hot topic**

**By Chris Macias, Sacramento Bee**

Diego Bartolome just wanted to start a salsa business to help his mom after she lost her job. What the El Dorado County fourth-grader didn’t expect was a crash course in red tape.

The 10-year-old co-founded a hot little salsa company, grossing \$1,000 from his Diego’s Awesome Salsa by December and landing accounts at grocery stores. The salsa boy also got a taste of the media spotlight, with a profile in The Bee and an appearance on Channel 31’s “Good Day Sacramento.”

**Read the whole story**

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## **LT Airport restaurant to have**

# new owner, name and menu

**By Kathryn Reed**

Paperwork is expected to be signed today to change the ownership, name and look of Chase's Restaurant at Lake Tahoe Airport.

The matter is before the South Lake Tahoe City Council, which meets starting at 9am at the airport.

Sam Sonki Ahn has been operating the eatery for about five years. He has reached an agreement with Diane and Tom Miller for them to buy the restaurant. The city and the Millers have reached an agreement for a five-year lease.

The Millers, who Monday declined to be interviewed, plan to rename the restaurant Flight Deck. Views from the bar, as it is laid out today, look out to the runway and tarmac.

If everything is signed today, the lease would take affect April 1, with improvements set to be completed so the first plate of food could be served on or before July 1. What all will be changed is not known.

The Millers are not new to the restaurant industry. They operated Steamers from 1996-2002.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner will be served seven days a week. The deal says the establishment must be open 10 hours a day. The idea is the Millers will market the facility to city workers, locals, tourists and service clubs for the latter to have their regular lunches there instead of at the Stateline casinos.

The proposed menu uses cutesy names like Runway Chicken and Tarmac Turkey for sandwiches. Lunch fare is pretty standard – burgers, sandwiches, soups and salads. Ribs, steak, chicken and fish of the day are listed on the dinner menu.

One thing the city wants out of the deal is to make more money. Ahn had been paying \$552/month in rent, plus 5 percent of gross sales. According to city documents, gross sales have ranged from \$1,500 to \$3,000 month.

The Millers will pay \$600/month, 5 percent of gross sales up to \$15,000 per month, and topping out at 7 percent for sales of more than \$30,000 month, plus a percentage of the entire building's utilities.

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## **Taste El Dorado County wines in SF**

Taste medal-winning wines from 24 El Dorado wineries March 20 in San Francisco.

In addition to the 100 or so wines available for sampling, there will be live jazz and appetizers including Moroccan braised short ribs, prosciutto-wrapped squab and Hamachi crudo, prepared by local chef Jordan Grosser.

Participating El Dorado Wineries: Auriga, Boeger, Busby, Cedarville, Chateau Rodin, Colibri Ridge, Crystal Basin, David Girard, Fenton Herriott, Fitzpatrick, Gold Hill, Granite Springs, Holly's Hill, Latcham, Lava Cap, MadroÃ±a, Miraflores, Mount Aukum, Narrow Gate, Perry Creek, Sierra Oaks, Sierra Vista, Single Leaf, and Windwalker.

What: El Dorado County Winemakers Tasting

When: March 20

Where: Postrio Restaurant in the Prescott Hotel, 545 Post St., San Francisco

Time: 2-5pm Public Tasting

noon-2pm Trade Tasting (invitation only)

Tickets: \$38 per person for the Public Tasting, available [here](#).

Lodging discount: The Prescott Hotel is offering a special rate for our guests. Use code REY.