



INTRODUCING
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JAY R. BROOKS
BROOKS ON BEER

On tap at Trappist: Zwanze

There are plenty of festivals and special occasions in the craft beer world, but some days are especially significant. This Saturday is Zwanze Day, when one of the world's most unusual Belgian beers will be available at just 36 locations around the globe. Sixteen of those venues are in the United States, and California is host to two. At noon that day, a keg of Cantillon Zwanze — a rhu-barb lambic — will be tapped at The Trappist in downtown Oakland. At exactly the same time, these special kegs will be opened for a simultaneous global toast in 34 other locations — everywhere except Japan, where it will be 5 a.m.



COURTESY BRASSERIE CANTILLON

Brasserie Cantillon's special Zwanze beer was inspired by the Flemish word for a playful prank.

Zwanze Day Venues

Find a complete listing of Zwanze Day venues online at www.mercurynews.com/libations.

The museum brewer

Brasserie Cantillon is more than just a Belgian brewery. It's also a working museum — the Brussels Gueuze Museum — where traditional beer has been brewed the same way since the brewery was founded in Brussels in 1900 by Paul Cantillon. They make an ancient type of beer known as lambic beer, that includes Gueuze, Kriek and Faro, and which is made with wild yeast that spontaneously ferments beer made with raw wheat, malted barley and old hops. Because the very air in the brewery contains the wild yeast, the building is never cleaned for fear of disturbing the microclimate, which would destroy the yeast that has been feeding on the beer there for more than 100 years.

The first time I visited the brewery in Brussels, they explained that we were quite literally stepping back in time,

See **BEER**, Page 5

Gifts for gourmets

By Jackie Burrell and Jessica Yadegaran >> Staff writers

Sure, you could always go the snowflake-dish towel route or bestow a bottle of bubbly with a sprig of mistletoe. Yawn.

If you really want to please your favorite gourmet, you'll opt for one of these cool gift ideas instead, because there's something here for everyone, from cookbook devotee to toque-topped toddler.

Cookbooks for Bay Area foodies

Don't let the cover of "Bouchon Bakery" (Artisan Books, \$50, 400 pages) fool you with its nostalgic cookie propped against a glass of milk, complete with striped straw. This collection of 150 recipes by

Thomas Keller and Sebastien Rouxel is so heavy, you could bench-press it. That's probably a good thing, because you'll need serious exercise after noshing your way through its 400 oversized, photo-filled pages of ethereal macarons,

See **TREATS**, Page 2

MORE GIFTS FOR GOURMETS

Find details on all 20 tempting gourmet gift ideas in a slideshow at www.mercurynews.com/food-wine.



MARK DUFRENE/STAFF



Author perfects art of gluten-free fare

New cookbook shares 60 traditional treats

By **Gina Gotsill**
Correspondent

Growing up, Jeanne Sauvage did what any child would do — she got into the refrigerator and the kitchen cupboards. Soon, she was assembling more than just cheese and crackers. She was whipping up cookies,

cakes and breads and nurturing a delicious lifetime hobby.

But 12 years ago, she discovered the source of what she called her "funny tummy." Sauvage was gluten-intolerant, and the diagnosis brought her weekly baking projects to a screeching halt. Temporarily, anyway.

Slowly but surely, Sauvage developed her own gluten-free flour mix, resumed her favorite

pastime and began turning out tender, jam-filled rugelach and crunchy cheddar-cheese straws — and writing about her discoveries on her blog, Art of Gluten-Free Baking.

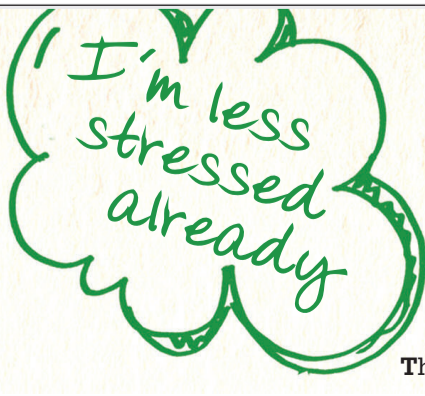
Now you can follow in her wheat-free floured footsteps, thanks to her new cookbook, "Gluten-Free Baking for the Holidays: 60 Recipes for Traditional

See **GLUTEN**, Page 3

MEET THE AUTHOR

Meet Jeanne Sauvage, author of "Gluten-Free Holiday Baking" at a book signing at 7 p.m. Monday at Palo Alto's Books Inc., 855 El Camino Real #74, www.booksinc.net; and at 4 p.m. Friday at San Carlos' Zest Gluten-Free Bakery, 1224 Arroyo Ave., www.zestbakery.com.

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF CLARE BARBOZA

These gluten-free spritz cookies from Jeanne Sauvage's cookbook, "Gluten-Free Baking for the Holidays," make elegant little sandwich cookies with a filling of melted chocolate.

Spritz Cookies

Makes 8 dozen

Note: Slather melted chocolate between these pressed butter cookies to make 4 dozen elegant sandwich cookies.

2 1/4 cups Jeanne's Gluten-Free All-Purpose Flour (see recipe)
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1 extra-large egg, plus 1

egg yolk, at room temperature
3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
Colored sugar for sprinkling, optional
1 cup semisweet chocolate chips, optional

- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. In a small bowl, mix together the flour and salt.
- Using an electric stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter on medium speed until light, 1 minute. Add sugar; beat for 1 minute. Add egg and extra yolk; beat for 1 minute. Add vanilla and beat until combined. Reduce speed to low, add the flour mixture, and beat until combined.
- Prepare your cookie press by placing the plunger on the tube part; turn to lock. Lift the plunger to the top, then fill the tube with dough from the bottom opening. Fit the disk of your choice into the bottom ring and screw on tightly. Press the handle until you see dough just pushing against the disk at the bottom.
- Place the end of the press firmly and evenly against an ungreased cookie sheet and press once on the gun. Lift the press to release a nice cookie shape on the sheet. If dough came out but did not stick, or if the shape is wonky, pick up the dough and put it back into the bowl. Press out enough cookies to cover the cookie sheets, spacing them about 1 inch apart. Lightly sprinkle with colored sugar (if using).
- Bake until cookies are light brown on the bottom, 13 to 15 minutes. Remove to wire racks to cool completely. Let cookie sheets cool completely, then repeat process with remaining dough. If the dough becomes too squishy to make defined shapes, refrigerate it for a few minutes.
- Melt the chocolate chips in a small saucepan over extremely low heat until just barely melted. Remove from heat; whisk until smooth. Line a cookie sheet with wax paper. Spread melted chocolate on cookie bottoms and press the cookies, chocolate-side down, on the wax paper until set. Or, use chocolate to sandwich pairs of cookies. Or, drizzle melted chocolate over the cookies.
- Store in an airtight container, with wax paper between layers, at room temperature for up to a week.

— *Jeanne Sauvage, "Gluten-Free Baking for the Holidays" (Chronicle, \$24.95, 168 pages)*

Gluten

Continued from Page 1

Festive Treats" (Chronicle Books, \$24.95, 168 pages). With recipes for everything from spritz cookies to bûche de Noël, Sauvage's book shatters the assumption that if you can't eat wheat, you can't eat well during the holidays.

We caught up with Sauvage recently to find out how she went from baking gluten-full to mastering gluten-free.

Q When you learned you were gluten intolerant, did you think you would have to give up your favorite hobby altogether?

A It was so confusing at the beginning. I was relieved because now I knew why I was having a problem. But as time went on, I realized that baking was not an option, and that was really hard. It's a hobby — not something I did professionally — but it's almost like breathing. If I can't bake, I don't feel settled. After several months, I came out of my gloom, and I decided I was going to figure it out.

Q What did you make first? And was it any good?

A It was probably a cookie, because those are easy. I remember using white rice flour, but no xanthan gum. It was very crumbly and gritty, because white rice flour alone is a little bit gritty. That was before I figured out that you needed a flour mix.

Q What sparked the holiday cookbook?

A Chronicle Books liked the series on Thanksgiving and holiday recipes I had on my blog. Sharing food is so central to the holidays, and so many foods we love are baked. I wanted to help people enjoy the season, and I wanted them to be included. And holiday baking is fun. It's the time to go bananas in the kitchen.

Q You mimic wheat flour by combining four flours and xanthan gum. How long did it take you to perfect the combination?

A I worked on it for several years. I started with a mix I found in a book that included cornstarch and potato starch. Then I started baking for people — and that's how I figured it out. I had a friend who was allergic to corn, so I removed the cornstarch. Then I baked for my friend's daughter, who was allergic to foods from the nightshade (potato) family, so I removed the potato starch. I tried arrowroot starch but found it could be bitter sometimes.

With some of the mixes, the end result tasted OK, but the batter was disgusting, so eating a bit of cookie dough was out. It was trial and error.

Q You've shared the recipe for that flour mixture. Can bakers substitute it for wheat flour in all their favorite recipes?

A I think for the most part, you can swap in my gluten-free flour mix, especially for cookies. Yeasted recipes are their own bird, though, because of the leaveners. You can't just swap in gluten-free flour, because gluten-free

Cheese Crackers and Straws

Makes 60 or more

1 1/2 cups Jeanne's Gluten-Free All-Purpose Flour (see recipe)
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon cayenne, optional
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme, rosemary or cumin, optional
6 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, in pieces
2 1/2 cups grated cheddar
1 cup grated Parmesan
1 extra-large egg
1/4 cup milk



Gluten-free cheese straws and crackers add style to any party spread.

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
- In a food processor, combine flour, salt, cayenne and herbs; pulse a few times to mix. Add butter and cheeses and pulse until evenly mixed, about 1 minute. It should look like wet sand with pebbles. Add egg; pulse to incorporate. With motor running, pour in milk; blend until dough forms a ball. (Or mix the dough by hand, using a pastry cutter.) Divide dough into two equal portions.
- For crackers, roll dough between sheets of wax paper to 1/8-inch thickness. Use a cookie cutter to cut 2-inch rounds; transfer to baking sheet, spacing at least 1/2 inch apart. Repeat until all the dough is used.
- For cheese straws, pinch off a marble-sized piece of dough. Roll into a smooth cylinder about 5 1/2-inches long. Place on a prepared baking sheet, spacing them at least 1/2 inch apart.
- Bake until crackers begin to brown around the edges, 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool in pan for a few minutes, then transfer them to a wire rack. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 5 days.

— *Jeanne Sauvage, "Gluten-Free Baking for the Holidays" (Chronicle, \$24.95, 168 pages)*

Rugelach

Makes 24

Note: Use one or both fillings.

2 cups Jeanne's Gluten-Free All-Purpose Flour (see recipe)
Pinch of salt
8 ounces cream cheese, cool but not cold, cut in 1-inch cubes
1 cup unsalted butter, cool but not cold, cut in 1-inch cubes
2 tablespoons sugar
Tapioca flour for dusting
Egg wash: 1 extra-large egg beaten with 1 table-

spoon water, optional

Jam filling:

1/2 cup smooth jam
1/2 cup mini-semisweet chocolate chips

Currant-nut filling:

1/4 cup packed brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 cup dried currants
1/2 cup chopped pecans, walnuts or hazelnuts

- Mix the flour and salt.
- Using an electric stand mixer with the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese on medium speed until fluffy, 2 minutes. Add butter; beat until light and fluffy, 2 minutes. Blend in sugar. Add flour mixture; beat until dough comes together in a lump.
- Use your hands to gather dough into a smooth mass. Divide in half and shape into disks. Use now, or wrap in plastic wrap and chill up to 3 days or freeze up to 6 months. If using right away, refrigerate one disk while you work with the other.
- Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper.
- Sprinkle your work surface, rolling pin and dough with a little tapioca flour. Roll dough into a 12-inch circle by giving the dough a roll, turning it a quarter turn and rolling again, lifting and turning until it is 1/8-inch thick.
- For jam filling, spread 1/4 cup jam over dough, leaving a 1-inch jam-free border around the edge. Cut the dough into 12 equal wedges; sprinkle with 1/4 cup chocolate chips, again leaving a 1-inch border.
- For the currant-nut filling, combine brown sugar, cinnamon, currants and nuts in a small bowl. Cut dough into wedge; sprinkle with half the filling, leaving a 1-inch border. Use the rolling pin to gently press the filling in.
- Starting from the wide end, carefully roll each dough wedge, croissant-style. If the dough cracks, just smooth it over and keep going. Arrange the rugelach with the dough end — the point — down on the prepared cookie sheet, spacing them an inch apart. Lightly brush with egg wash.
- Bake until golden brown, 25 to 30 minutes. Immediately remove to wire racks to cool. Repeat process with remaining dough after the baking sheet has cooled completely. Store at room temperature in an airtight container up to 3 days.

— *Adapted from Jeanne Sauvage, "Gluten-Free Baking for the Holidays" (Chronicle, \$24.95, 168 pages)*

Jeanne's Gluten-Free All-Purpose Flour

Makes 4 1/2 cups

1 1/4 cups brown rice flour
1 1/4 cups white rice flour
1 cup sweet rice flour
1 cup tapioca flour
Scant 2 teaspoons xanthan gum

In a large bowl, whisk together the brown and white rice flours, sweet rice flour, tapioca flour and xanthan gum thoroughly. Transfer the mix to an airtight container. Store in a cool, dark place for up to 6 weeks or in the refrigerator for up to 4 months.

— *Jeanne Sauvage, "Gluten-Free Baking for the Holidays" (Chronicle, \$24.95, 168 pages)*

needs more yeast and more liquid.

Q Your instructions are very precise. What's behind some of the tips, like letting the cookie sheet cool completely before spooning a new batch?

A That's a universal baking tip. If you put dough on a hot sheet you are precooking it, so the consistency and cooking times might be off. I wanted this book to be as user friendly as possible. Gluten-free baking is held to a much higher standard than

regular baking, because the assumption is it's going to be gross. I knew that if people had problems using the book, they would blame it on the fact that it's gluten free. I wanted this book to be a good representation of how delicious and fun gluten free can be.

Nutritional information

This is peak party season — and the reason all those New Year's resolutions end up involving diets of some sort. If you're tracking calories, carbs or fat content, these websites can help you parse those grams, even if you do considerable recipe tweaking at home.

■ NutritionData: This colorful, user-friendly, Conde Nast-powered website offers not only easy-to-

use recipe analysis tools — just type in your recipe — but tips for specific health issues, too. Find it at www.nutritiondata.com.

■ LiveStrong iPhone App: Eating out is no excuse for porking out when you've got a calorie tracker on your phone. Among the possibilities, the LiveStrong iPhone App from the Lance Armstrong Foundation (www.livestrong.com).

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Contact us:

Food Editor
 Jackie Burrell • 925-977-8568
jburrell@bayareanewsgroup.com

Assistant Features Editor
 Linda Zavoral
 Contact for South Bay Food News
lzavoral@mercurynews.com

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