

plots. On Tuesday, Ann Malhotra on the food services division d on her gardening gloves yanked weeds from small res of land that weren't even wnl.

Corporate strategies had two s last year, but they were al- s traveling, so we just kind of over," she said.

Aveda, which offers on-site sage and organic cafeteria at its headquarters near neapolis, the garden is a neapolis for its 700 employees to a break from their desks and home fresh produce. Work- pay \$10 for the season and in trn, they get a share of the nty. Picking up a hoe is op- al, but encouraged. It does seem like work, but it's ferent kind of work from our aler workday," said Peggy

## No raise this year, but all the zucchini you can grow.

men, an employee who shed to have the garden in- vled. Employees sometimes ad to be cajoled to take their n at the weeds. This year, to p on schedule, Ms. Skinner s devised a chore calendar and gists twice-weekly gardening sions. Reminder e-mail mes- ges will be sent.

For some employees, bean- es quickly become just an- her part of the office scenery. a visit last fall, the special self- tering "earth box" container rden on the Google campus in untain View, Calif., was filled h fewer actual gardeners than th workers hurrying through

terera trays filled with free d balanced on their laptops. Nevertheless, the editors of human Resource Executive

magazine were so taken with the tporate-garden concept that st month they named the gar- n run by the employees of Ha- man, a Minneapolis-based ublic-relations firm, one of the p five benefits ideas of the year. tne, some of the 24 workers at e firm still enjoy an afternoon octa, but they also reach for e brussels sprouts and cucum- rs packed into the company re- gator. Even a scant crop of as was passed around the con- vance room table as a snack.

Kim McMartin, who lives in a ndo in downtown Minneapolis, d never planted a thing until e stuck some green bean seeds to the ground at the Haberman

ters in Richfield, Minn., to help improve the food it serves to 4,600 employees.

"I really looked at it as what difference does a little bit less shrubbery make to my employ- ees? Not much," said Ian Ellis, di- rector of corporate facilities. "But having fresh herbs and fresh to- matoes would make a big differ- ence."

A small plot or a few contain- ers can cost a company less than \$1,000 to install. At the higher end, Chesapeake Energy, a pow- er company, is finishing a \$500,000 garden this week that fills a city block just east of its main campus in Oklahoma City with container beds, gardening sheets and water sources. And there are ongoing expenses, like paying someone to tend the crops when employees can't.

Cafeteria cooks may be de- lighted to get fresh herbs and vegetables, but managers can have other concerns, said Kent Buell, a resident district manager with Bon Appetit, the food serv- ice company that has installed kitchen gardens for 12 of its 80 corporate clients, including Best Buy, Intel and Target.

"A C.E.O. of a Fortune 500 com- pany loses some control when they have a garden on the prem- ises," he said. "They worry about supply chain. They have the health and safety committee weighing in. They worry about what it brings to the brand."

Finding arable dirt can be a challenge. Many corporate head- quarters are surrounded by acres of empty land, but the soil is often mixed with fill from building con- struction. And all that sod in the corporate business park has been kept green with chemicals.

Then there are more mundane worries, like how to dress for a day that includes both garden work and a budget meeting with the boss.

Harvard Pilgrim, a nonprofit health care company with 1,150 employees in New England, planted gardens at its campuses in Wellesley and Quincy, Mass., last year. Some of the neophyte farmers change into their gar- dening clothes at the end of the day. Others get down in the dirt every morning and then use the company showers.

Tammy Binette, 40, arrives at the Quincy branch 15 minutes be- fore her 7 a.m. receptionist shift so she can water the crops. She harvests at lunch and sometimes drives extra produce to the local food bank.

Since all the beds are raised and the paths between them well tended, Ms. Binette just goes out in her dressy work shoes, taking them off and walking barefoot in the grass on nice days.

"I even went out there in stilettos to heels a couple times," she said.

Cavas, often blessed with notes of citrus and spry blossoms, are genial sparkling wines, all the more so because of their modest prices. They can be called on for many occasions, and are the ideal finishing touch for sangria, either red or white. The white sangria is unusual and strong, though white wine in place of manzanilla sherry will moderate the alcohol. The red is clearly classic. Both are more re- freshing than sweet.

FLORENCE FABRICANT

## WHITE SANGRIA

Adapted from *Ken Auld, Tinto Fino, Manzanilla*  
Time: 20 minutes,  
plus at least 4 hours refrigeration

- 2 apples, cored and coarsely diced
- 2 pears, cored and coarsely diced
- 2 juice oranges, peeled, seeded and diced
- 1 cup gin
- 1/2 cup triple sec
- 3 bottles (500 milliliters each) manzanilla sherry or 2 bottles (750 milliliters each) dry white wine
- 1/2 bottle cava (1 1/2 cups), chilled.

1. Place all fruit in a bowl with gin and triple sec. Cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours, or overnight.
2. Transfer to a large pitcher and add manzanilla or white wine. Stir. Divide liquid and fruit into wine glasses, over ice if desired, until about 2/3 full. Top each with cava.

1. Combine wine, citrus juices, brandy, triple sec, sliced fruit and cinnamon in a 2-quart pitcher. Cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours, or overnight.
2. Add 2 cups ice and the cava. Pour into wine glasses with some fruit.

Yield: 4 to 6 servings.

## RED SANGRIA

Adapted from *Rafael Mateo, Pata Negra, Manhattan*  
Time: 1/2 hour, plus 4 hours refrigeration

- 1 bottle red wine, preferably garnacha
- Juice of 1 1/2 oranges
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1/2 cup Spanish brandy
- 1/4 cup triple sec
- 1 apple, cored and sliced
- 1 pear, cored and sliced
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1/2 bottle cava (1 1/2 cups), chilled.

1. Combine wine, citrus juices, brandy, triple sec, sliced fruit and cinnamon in a 2-quart pitcher. Cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours, or overnight.
2. Add 2 cups ice and the cava. Pour into wine glasses with some fruit.

Yield: 4 to 6 servings.



DAN NEVILLE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

## Tasting Report: Simple and Direct, With a Pop

<b>Gramona Gran Reserva Brut Nature III Lustrós 2001</b>	\$60	***	Vega Barcelona Brut Reserva NV	\$17	**
Rich yet gentle with lovely, elegant flavors that develop with age. (European Celler/Eric Solomon Selections, Charlotte, N.C.)			Light and bright with fruity, nutlike flavors. (The Well Oiled Wine Company, Leesburg, Va.)		
<b>Navarra Dama 2006</b>	\$23	***	<b>Gramona Gran Cuvée 2006</b>	\$16	**
Dry and rich with bracing, racy herbal and fruit flavors. (Olé Imports, New Rochelle, N.Y.)			Rich, toasty and well balanced. (European Celler/Eric Solomon Selections)		
<b>BEST VALUE</b>			<b>Llopert Leopardi Gran Reserva Brut Nature 2002</b>	\$26	**
<b>Gonzalez Byass Vilarnau Brut NV</b>	\$16	**1/2	Fresh and elegant with lingering herbal flavors. (Tempranillo)		
Light, fresh, frothy, balanced and bright. (San Francisco Wine Exchange, San Francisco)			<b>Segura Viudas Reserva Heredad NV</b>	\$23	**
<b>Raventós Blanc L'Heren Brut Reserva 2006</b>	\$17	**1/2	Pleasant and straightforward with floral and citrus flavors. (Freixenet U.S.A., Sonoma, Calif.)		
Light and delicate with lingering herbal and fruit flavors. (Michael Skurnik Wines, St. Louis, N.Y.)					
<b>Castelló de Brut NV</b>	\$15	**			
Dry, light, balanced and apple fresh. (C & P Wines, New York)					
<b>El Cep Marqués de Galdá</b>	\$23	**			
<b>Brut Reserva Ecológico 2006</b>					
Fresh and refreshing with floral and herbal flavors. (Tempranillo, New Rochelle)					

### WHAT THE STARS MEAN:

Rankings, from zero to four stars, reflect the panel's reaction to the wines. Ratings were based on blind tastings. The wines represented a selection generally available in good retail shops and restaurants and on the Internet. Prices are those paid in shops in the New York region.

Tasting coordinator: Bernard Kirsch

best value was the \$16 Vilarnau Brut from Gonzalez Byass, a non-vintage bottle that was unmatched in its light, bright frothiness. Indeed, it was what Rafael called a "happy" wine.

While most people habitually use "cava" generically to refer to Spanish sparkling wines, the way spitumane can refer to most Italian ones, the name is in fact an official designation. Unusually, though, it comes with no geographical requirement. By law, it can be produced pretty much all over Spain, though for all practical purposes most of it comes from the Catalonia region of Penedès, just west of Barcelona.

Three other inexpensive cavas worth noting for their pleasant, refreshing qualities include the 2006 Raventós Blanc L'Heren brut reserva, the Castelló brut and the Vega Barcelona brut reserva, all \$15 to \$17. Among those that did not make our cut was my old friend Freixenet Cordon Negro, which seemed unimpressive compared with our favorites.

While inconsistency remains a problem for cava, the inexpensive bottles that we liked would be ideal for large summer parties and brunches, by themselves or as ingredients in punches or sangrias. They are best served cold. As for me, I feel as if I had my eyes opened. I'm more aware now of the potential pleasures of cava, and I would most enjoy sipping sometime soon over a contemplative bottle of the III Lustrós. Come to think of it, I may be due for reassessing self, as well.