

From A Potpourri of Memories, Doreen's first cookbook

For our twentieth wedding anniversary I wanted a particular present: no pearls, diamonds or fridge, nothing that had to be guarded, dusted or cared for. I wanted a bottle of wine that cost \$200. In 1984 that was an awful lot of money for a bottle of wine, but I thought that \$10 a year for 20 years was not unreasonable.

On a trip to Paris Dad walked into a wine shop. He confessed to the elegantly dressed salesperson that he knew nothing about wines but had to buy an expensive bottle of wine. "Do you want an expensive label or an expensive wine?" she asked. He told her the story of my anniversary wish, adding that he thought I wanted an expensive wine. "Well then, I will not give you Rothschild wines" and she passed the famous names of Margaux, Lafite and La Tour and walked to a small cupboard, and with a flourish pulled out a dusty bottle. "This," she announced, "is the best kept secret in wines. I keep it for special customers. Because I like the romance of your story, I will sell it to you." Dad looked doubtfully at the rather ordinary yellow and red label of Petrus Pomerol, but decided to buy it. He never fails to remind me that it cost only \$100, but would have cost \$200 in a restaurant. As he was about to leave the shop, the woman made him promise that when he flew back to Israel he would not put it in a suitcase, but carry it with him. In addition he had to promise to let the wine rest on its side for 3 months before he opened it. Because our anniversary was in a few weeks, Dad then bought a Chateaux Palmer to open on the day of our anniversary.

For months Dad agonized over the wine. Hans Reizjer, who knew wines, hadn't heard of it; it wasn't even mentioned in any wine guides. Dad was sure he had been had.

Four months later on a warm night we packed our crystal wine glasses, a hamper of cheeses and snacks, a tape with classical music, a blanket and Peles. Dad carefully carried the bottle of Petrus Pomerol (still on its side, as instructed) and we drove to the Coral World beach. It was a divine wine, so rich it felt smooth and thick; so full of flavor that we repeatedly smacked our tongues against our palates to squeeze out the last drop of taste. It was the perfect present and together with the Palmer, the start of our wine label collection.

We originally collected the labels to learn about wines, writing our impressions of the wine on the back. So that the labels began to commemorate the little moments in our lives when we have enjoyed friendship and food. It is the abundance of such moments that have made our lives so full.