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# THE TOMATO

food & drink



*Wines from your  
Rich Uncle & Cash-  
strapped Friend  
Cheese & Chocolate  
for the holidays*



THE TOMATO

Top

100

best things  
to

**Eat** in

**Edmonton.\***

***What's the  
best thing  
you ate  
last year?***

***It could be:***

- a restaurant dish
- a farmers' market specialty
- a product from your favourite local farmer
- a snack food
- a condiment



***Whatever makes  
your mouth hum!***

**Enter January 6 - January 31**

**Tell us about your favourite thing to eat or drink**

We'll add it to our list of the 100 best things to eat in Edmonton

**Enter January 6 – January 31. Here's how:**

- Visit [thetomato.ca](http://thetomato.ca) and click on *100 best things to eat*
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- Email us: [hello@thetomato.ca](mailto:hello@thetomato.ca)
- Mail us a letter: **9833 84 Avenue, Edmonton, T6E 2G1**

The **top 100 best things to eat and drink** will be featured in the March April issue of The Tomato food & drink.

*\*For the purposes of this competition, Edmonton includes Sherwood Park, St. Albert and surrounding communities — we'll drive for food!*

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*Alberta*  
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CELEBRATING

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YEARS

SERVING ALBERTANS



**Eat. Drink.**

**Be Merry. Repeat.**

Whether you're a seasoned pro at holiday entertaining or hosting your first festive gathering, we have a bounty of fresh and imported ingredients and recipes to inspire. Pressed for time? Bring your own board and our deli team can put together the perfect cheese or charcuterie platter.

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CALGARY Willow Park



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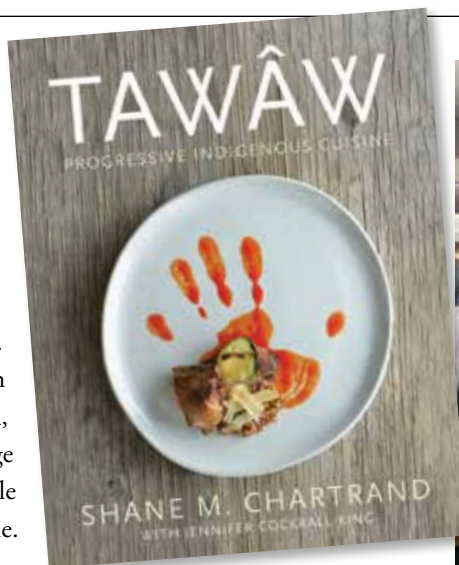
Fox Tower • 10228-104 Street • bundokyeg.com • @bundokyeg

Modern Canadian Cuisine



**venison, moose and partridge, not your standard sunday roast**

In his first cookbook, *Tawâw*, Edmonton-based chef Shane Chartrand explores his journey, both as a chef and as an indigenous man. This is a stunningly beautiful book. The recipes, arranged by season, range from dead simple to somewhat more complicated, yet well within the abilities of the average home cook. Shane's approachable style makes them doable.

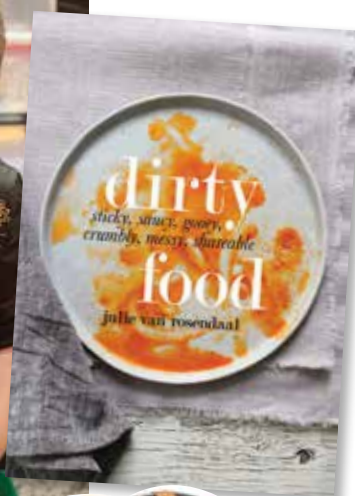


What is just as interesting is what's between the recipes—stories, letters and essays by Shane and other thoughtful people—on being indigenous, inspiration, creativity, pow wows, tattoos, cooking. It's an intensely personal book and it sounds just like Shane. Brava to co-writer Jennifer Cockrall-King for that achievement. I read cookbooks to learn about what's going on in the head of the chef—the why—as much as for the recipes but, make no mistake, the recipes for Canadian foods like bison, salmon, sablefish, beets and potatoes will draw you into this book time and again. *Tawâw, progressive indigenous cuisine* by Shane Chartrand with Jennifer Cockrall-King, House of Anansi Press, \$35.



**moules et frites**

Brasserie Bardot is now open in the Manor location in the High Street. Executive chef Shariq Naujeer, who has extensive experience with classic French cuisine, together with corporate chef Tim Schorno have developed a French bistro-inspired menu with three fondue, delicious *moule et frites* (unlimited frites by the way) along with steaks, burgers and salads. There is a fun cocktail list, though the wine and beer lists needs a bit of work. Jason and Jessica Pechet and Adrian Solomon of Stagewest Hospitality own it, as well as Violino next door. The space has a fresh new look with seating for 80 on two levels with private rooms and that lovely patio. Brasserie Bardot, 10925 125 Street, 780-757-8702, brasseriebardot.com.



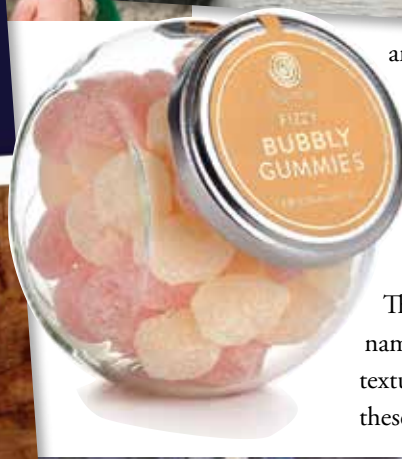
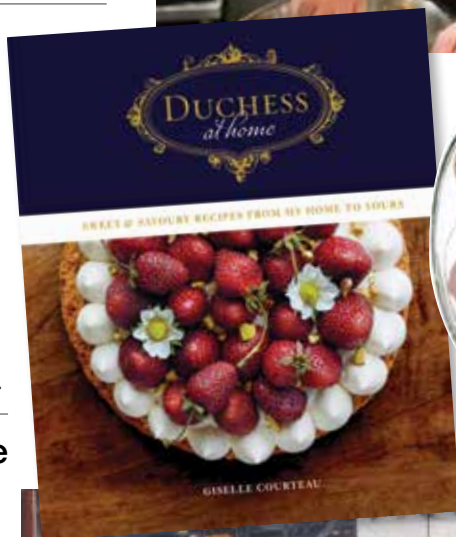
**dirty food, yes!**

Julie Van Rosendaal has struck back at the clean eating dogma with a cookbook that celebrates all that is crumbly, gooey, sticky and saucy. In *Dirty Food*, Julie wants us to think twice about the idea that some foods are off limits and somehow purer than others. Instead she wants us to think about, and make, the wide variety of dishes that are about pleasure and celebrate the ability of food to bring us together.

Things like dirty rice, sloppy joes, Eton mess. Giddy up. *Dirty Food* by Julie Van Rosendaal, Dinner with Julie, \$20.

**french food in strathcona**

Lyon is now open in the old Packrat Louie in Strathcona. The lemon pizza is back, though it's now called a flatbread. The large menu hews to French bistro—duck liver paté, niçoise salad, Lyonnaise potatoes. Yum. The exec chef is Jan Trittenbach, coming home in a sense; Jan was the chef at Packrat for several years. Check it out! Lyon, 10335 83 Avenue, 780-433-0123, lyonrestaurant.ca.



**prosecco gummies are back!**

The hit candy for bubbles lovers is back with a new name: fizzy bubbly gummies. Same great taste and texture. In the bag or desk-top sized container, you want these in your stocking this Christmas.

**the duchess at home**

Giselle Courteau is back with her second cookbook, *Duchess at Home, sweet and savoury recipes from my home to yours*. Giselle, co-founder of the wildly popular and successful Duchess Bake Shop says she is happiest baking at home for her family. "My French-Albertan heritage, my passion for France, the traditions passed down in my family and the things I grow in my garden all influence what I like to bake at home." The book is divided by occasion, which is the way many people cook, including breakfast, treasured family recipes (*je me souviens*) and an entire chapter on Christmas.

There are a lot of good things here to help you create your own treasured family recipes. *Duchess at Home*, Appetite, \$35.



From top: Shane Chartrand's cookbook; Shariq and Tim in the Brasserie Bardot kitchen; Jan making steak tartare; Julie Rosendaal's Dirty Food; the new Duchess cookbook; bubbly fizzy gummies in the industrial size and Toti's original painting of the Hardware Grill.

**so long hardware grill**

We lost the Hardware Grill this fall. The 23-year old restaurant introduced Edmontonians to so many firsts—cedar planked salmon, gourmet pyrohy, a fine dining restaurant on the edge of a sketchy neighbourhood. (So urban!) Its lasting impact is in the legions of people whose formative experiences in the restaurant business were at the Hardware Grill. People like Andrew Fung, XIX; Nigel

Webber, NAIT culinary instructor and Cam Dobranski, chef/owner of several Calgary restos. Raise a glass to Melinda and Larry Stewart and wish them well. They gave us so much. 🍷



# W · I · N · E · S

## FROM THE RICH UNCLE & THE CASH-STRAPPED FRIEND, 2019 EDITION

Every year we ask people who make their living in wine—restaurateurs, chefs, importers, wine reps, agents, wine store owners and other wine professionals this question:

What would you love to see under the tree from your pal with no cash and from your rich relation?

Both have great palates, but very different budgets. The cash-strapped friend's budget is under \$25; the rich uncle travels the world looking for the rare and wonderful, with price being no object. Wouldn't we all love to have that generous relation?

Their answers range from new world to old including deserve-to-be-known-better wines from Austria and Bulgaria. Because we all know there are great wines, spirits and beers in every price range.



**Rich Uncle**  
**Krug Clos du Mesnil**  
**(Champagne, France) \$950**  
 Champagne of course! This is the iconic wine from Krug—a single vineyard Blanc de Blanc of legendary proportion.



**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2017 Francesco Cirelli**  
**Montepulciano (Abruzzo, Italy) \$20**

This Montepulciano is meaty and spicy with loads of fresh red fruit and is a great value, interesting and versatile on the table, particularly with slow-roasted lamb on Christmas Day. Francesco Cirelli is a young, passionate rising star in Italian wine who strives to capture the flavours of his land. While many wineries

around the world are turning back the clock and making wines according to pre-industrial methods, Cirelli is going one step further and is looking to ancient Roman and Greek vinification for inspiration.

**Rich Uncle**  
**2017 Feudo Montoni**  
**Nero d'Avola Vrucara**  
**(Agrigento, Sicily) \$90**

I have so much respect for this producer and absolutely love their wines. It's from a pre-phyloxera cru (single



**Rich Uncle**  
**2012 Henri Billiot**  
**Grand Cru Reserve**  
**Brut (Ambonnay, Champagne, France) \$110**

Bottom line, a magnum of Champagne between friends is a great start. Primarily Pinot Noir comingled with Chardonnay, this bottle oozes richness. Serve with a bag of your favorite kettle chips, a match made in heaven.

vineyard) called Vrucara; intense and persistent on the nose with aromas of forest floor, notes of cherry and dried rose petal. I first met Fabio Sireci and Melissa Muller (who also wrote a fantastic Sicilian cookbook) at Vin Italy a couple of years ago and really connected with their philosophy of listening to the voice of mother nature. I love all the wines they make, but this is the bottle you would want your rich uncle to bring over. Sip with late night salumi and aged cheeses.

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2018 Meinklang 'Prosa' Frizzante**  
**Rosé (Burgenland, Austria) \$25**

A pink, bubbly bouquet of strawberry, a dangerously delicious bottle of freshness and bright acidity. It tastes as beautiful as it looks and smells. I'm eating olives and salami right now and this is delicious! Plus, who doesn't like to say Zweigelt and Blaufränkisch?



**Rich Uncle**  
**2016 Joseph Drouhin**  
**Corton-Charlemagne**  
**Grand Cru (Burgundy, France) \$265**

In the words of Véronique Boss-Drouhin; 'One of the greatest wines of Burgundy, to be tasted with awe and reverence.' An incredible wine with an amazing balance of richness and elegance.

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2015 Alvear Pedro**  
**Ximénez de Añada**  
**(Montilla-Moriles, Spain) 375 ml, \$25**

Warm and intense with flavours of golden raisins, toffee, toasted almonds—a



**Rob Filipchuk, The**  
**Glass Monkey**  
**Cash-strapped**  
**Friend**  
**2016 Montes Twins**  
**White (Aconcagua**  
**Valley, Argentina)**  
**\$20**

This crisp white, a blend dominated by Sauvignon Blanc, with Chardonnay and Viognier, delivers great value. The super funky label by artist Ralph Steadman is as fun

and fresh as the wine inside the bottle.



**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2017 Meinklang**  
**Burgenland Red**  
**(Burgenland, Austria) \$24**

An organic and biodynamic wine that's so bright, fresh and juicy! This is made with Austrian natives Blaufränkisch, Zweigelt and Saint Laurent. I love the fact that this winery is family owned and operated with a focus on healthy soils and wines.

definite must-have in your Edmonton winter survival kit. Could quite happily end every meal with this poured over some French vanilla ice cream (or pumpkin pie if you're feeling extra festive).



**Rich Uncle**  
**2016 Little Engine Platinum Chardonnay (Naramata Bench, B.C.) \$110**

With a soft texture, light oak and a buttery, caramel finish, this juice is a true expression of what Canadian Chardonnay has to offer. Proprietors Steven and Nicole French, along with their Okanagan-based wine making team, believe that a wine should speak for itself and this is exactly what is accomplished in this Chardonnay. A fantastic pairing with rich fish or poultry, but I'd just as soon pass on dinner and take a top-up of my glass!



**Dianna Funnell, Sherbrooke**  
**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2016 Château de Romance Blanc Sec (Bordeaux, France) \$25**

This Semillon, Sauvignon Blanc blend is bone dry, offering lively aromas of honeysuckle and lychee. The palate is round and unctuous, redolent of stone fruit and a hint of minerality, balanced with a vibrant streak of acidity. It is perfect on its own or with white fish, oysters or sushi. A go-to of mine when I want something fresh, elegant and mouth-watering.

**Rich Uncle**  
**2013 Continuum (Napa Valley, USA) \$230**  
 Continuum was the last project Tim Mondavi worked on with his father Robert Mondavi. Their idea was to create a California First Growth. This vintage is special because it marks 100



years from Robert's birth year, it was Tim's 40th year as a winemaker and is the very first vintage grown, produced and bottled on Tim Mondavi's Pritchard Hill estate. Aside from the obvious heritage, the wine is plush with dark fruit, mocha and graphite. It's a delicious piece of history.



**Paulette Scott, Pacific Wines & Spirits**  
**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2016 Finca La Linda Private Selection Cabernet Sauvignon (Mendoza, Argentina) \$20**

La Linda is straightforward and voluptuous, with supple tannins, a touch of candied fruit, finishing with a pleasant smoky aftertaste due to the barrel ageing.

A new winning wine from 4th generation wine producer Luigi Bosca, made from 30-year-old vines.

**Rich Uncle**  
**2017 Taylor Fladgate Quinta de Vargellas Vinha Velha (Douro Valley, Portugal) \$390**  
 Exquisite cassis and black cherry aromas, voluptuous and rich, a wine of majestic scale. This outstanding estate, recognised as one of the world's finest vineyards, was acquired by Taylor Fladgate in 1893. And this Port is one of the rarest and most collectible vintage Ports of all, made from the oldest vines on the estate.



**Nicole Brandt, Wilfred's**  
**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2017 Edoardo Miroglio Blanc de Noir (Bulgaria) \$24**

If you're looking for something that will get people talking and also won't break the bank this is definitely it. This super unique white Pinot Noir has a beautiful full mouth feel, with notes of apple, quince, and pear. A perfect white for the fall/winter season as it will stand up well to richer dishes.



**Rich Uncle**  
**2017 Pearl Morrisette Metis Rouge Magnum (Niagara Peninsula, Ontario) 1500 ml, \$90**

Bigger is always better, right? When given the chance one should always choose to drink wine from large format bottles. This tasty Canadian blend is Pinot Noir, Cabernet Franc and Gamay grown organically and biodynamically. Extremely complex and densely layered while still being completely elegant.

**Barb and Susan Giacomini, Winequest**

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**Birrificio del Forte Micro Brews (Tuscany, Italy) \$9**

Elevate hockey night with a Tuscan microbrew—big in quality and flavour, low on bitterness. The special care Italian artisans are known for is amply displayed in these beers—careful selection and blending of the hops; top fermentation and cold maturation; with no micro-filtration, nor pasteurization. Try the trio: La Mancina, Belgian-style strong pale ale; Regina del Mare, a Belgian-style strong dark ale and 2 Cilindri, an English-style brown porter.



**Rich Uncle**  
**2009 Cantine Madonna della Grazie Drogone d'Altavilla Riserva Aglianico del Vulture DOC (Basilicata, Italy) \$60**

Aglianico is a notorious big boy that needs plenty of time to settle down and loosen up. 'Prunes and spices; round and chewy tannins and a juicy finish,' says James Suckling. Nothing says special like rarity and a wooden case. Buy a case (six bottles). You get the wooden case, and you can enjoy a bottle annually to see how it evolves. Sophisticated yum.

**Christina Masciangelo, Salivate Wine Consulting**

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2018 Soli Rosé Edoardo Miroglio (Thracian Valley, Bulgaria) \$22**

A gem of a rosé. Everything is in balance; it's fresh and delicious, dry, with ripe juicy fruit. It's a blend of Syrah, Cabernet Franc and Melnik (native to Bulgaria). The perfect aperitif.



**Rich Uncle**  
**2015 Prieler Goldberg**

**Blaufränkisch (Leithaberg, Burgenland, Austria) \$100**

This gorgeous red is the top single vineyard Blaufränkisch from the renowned Prieler wine-making family, from a superb vintage. If you love elegant, beautifully structured reds, and don't know about this native Austrian grape, this is one of the best. This would be a fortunate treasure to find under the tree this year, as it will only be available at a few specialty shops for a short time.



Please see "Wines" on following page.



## Wines

Continued from previous page



**Deb Pirker, Andrew Peller**

**Cash-strapped Friend**

**2017 el Picoteo Red (Almansa, Spain) \$13**

The juicy tannins of this organic Spanish wine (Monastrell and Syrah blend) are perfect with the smoky sausages and cured cheeses that we love to snack on. It will have you dreaming of the Spanish sunshine in the midst of winter—an absolute bargain.

**Rich Uncle**

**Nomad Outland Whisky (Scotland/Jerez) \$65**

Expect lovely aromas of malt, wood and hints of sherry. Smooth, tasting of raisins, honey with notes of vanilla and dried fruits. Nomad is a premium blended whisky produced from over 30 5-8 years-old malt and grain whiskies. It's matured in sherry casks for three years in Scotland before being finished for a minimum of one year in Pedro Ximenez casks in Jerez, Spain. Born in Scotland and raised in Jerez; an elegant and complex whisky to keep you warm on a cold winter night.



**Anita Jarmolicz, International Cellars**

**Cash-Strapped Friend**

**2017 Stemmari Nero d'Avola (Sicily, Italy) \$15**

My family Sunday dinner wines change from time to time, but this little gem is here to stay. The flavour profile suits everyone from wine newbies to wine weenies and so does the price. Nero d'Avola is an indigenous grape to Sicily and is often compared to Shiraz. The Stemmari is



medium-bodied with wild berry and ripe cherry aromas and finishes with a touch of spice.

Fruity enough to go with lots of different foods and just as wonderful by a toasty fire.

**Rich Uncle**

**2008 Tommasi De Buris Amarone Classico Riserva (Veneto, Italy) \$300**

This is from an old Amarone property now owned by the Tommasi family. Very little is made and it's highly

allocated, available only at Wine & Beyond.

**Jason Sanwell, Galileo**

**Cash-strapped Friend**

**2015 Zenato Veneto Rosso (Veneto, Italy) \$20**

Luscious and smooth, with flavours of ripe cherry and raspberry, this red is a perfect pairing with pizza, pasta, burgers, or a quiet evening with book and blanket. The lusciousness is due to the partial appassimento method, used with Corvina, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes.

**Rich Uncle**

**Delamain Cognac Gift Box Trio (Cognac, France) \$180**

The House of Delamain is one of very few cognac producers to work exclusively with eaux-de-vie from the Grande Champagne appellation, home to the very finest Cognac crus. The Delamain Gift Box trio contains three 200 ml bottles each of three



Cognacs—Pale & Dry XO, Vesper and Très Vénéré—a great gift that gives the opportunity to taste three beautiful Cognacs of different ages and styles.

**Lana Heiman, PMA**

**Cash-strapped Friend**

**2018 Emiliana Adobe Syrah Rosé (Central Valley, Chile) \$15**

This 100 per cent organic Syrah rosé has aromas of ripe strawberries and raspberries with a touch of spice, crisp acidity and a dry finish. Pairs well with anything rosé-all-day, especially with brunch.



**Rich Uncle**

**Camus Borderies XO Cognac (Cognac, France) \$200**

The aromas are light and floral with a hint of violets and the finish is refined, elegant, long and persistent. Camus is a 5th generation

Cognac house who owns the majority of the vineyards in the very prized Borderies region of Cognac.

This is the only Cognac to be made with

100 per cent Ugni Blanc grapes from the area. A beautiful sipping Cognac. If you are looking for something rare and unique, this is it.



**Tara Smith,**

**wine professional**

**Cash-strapped Friend**

**2017 Bodegas Ponce Depaula (Jumilla, Spain) \$20**

A juicy 100 per cent Monastrell that's infinitely drinkable. Bring this as either a hostess gift or stock up for your own hosting. It won't break the bank, nor make you feel bad if you open a second (or third) bottle.

**Rich Uncle**

**2017 Le Vieux Pin Ava (Oliver, B.C.) \$50**

It is everything you want in a white wine, a classic white Rhone blend that's predominantly Viognier, with gorgeous stone and tropical fruit on the nose and palate with enough structure and acidity to make it a natural for aging—not to mention super food friendly. My favourite white from the Okanagan Valley.



**Lisa Rogers, Select Wines**

**Cash-strapped Friend**

**2017 Carmen Gran Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon (Maipo, Chile) \$20**

A deep and intense ruby-red color and aromas of black currants, blackberries and licorice, with smooth, elegant cedar notes on the nose, a rich and generous yet fresh and vibrant palate, with abundant fruit and firm tannins that lend structure and depth.

Hand-picked from a single estate vineyard in the upper Maipo Valley, this wine just earned a stunning 97 points from Decanter Magazine in a blind tasting. Vina Carmen, Chile's oldest commercial winery, continues to offer incredible consistency, value and high-quality with this killer Cab at a killer price.



**Rich Uncle**

**Billecart-Salmon Brut Rosé NV (Champagne, France) \$135**

The wine has outstanding tactile sensation, with a creamy smoothness and subtle flavours of wild strawberries and raspberries.

Precise, harmonious and delicious. Billecart-Salmon is renowned for the quality and delicacy of their Brut Rosé. The house celebrated its 200th anniversary last year and is still owned by the same family.





.....  
**Dix Richards, Bin 104**

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**Yoshi Toji No Banshaku**  
**Honjozo Saké (Niigata**  
**Prefecture, Japan)**

Aromas of pears and melon with a crisp, clean, and dry finish. This saké is bound to please even those who have never had the luxury of experiencing this extraordinary brewed beverage before. Go ahead, sip and simply enjoy. Kanpai!



**Rich Uncle**

**Adictivo Extra Anejo Tequila**  
**(Mexico) \$140**



A sensory explosion! Aromas of exotic spices, vanilla and honey, flavours of toast, caramel, dried fruits, a kiss of sweetness and the texture of silk. A beautiful dark amber colour due to the seven years of barrel age. This 100 per cent blue agave tequila is not easily forgotten, nor will you ever want too. Sexy and mysterious.

.....  
**Marcia J. Hamm, wine professional**

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2016 Casale del Giglio**  
**Petit Verdot (Lazio,**  
**Italy) \$25**

Casale del Giglio has made this rich, savoury, inky black, full-bodied delicious beauty from Petit Verdot, typically a blending grape in the great wines of Bordeaux, here in a single varietal wine. My friend may not have a lot of cash lying around but is savvy enough to know a good wine when they taste it.



**Rich Uncle**

**2013 Solaia (Tuscany, Italy) \$250**

Ripe red fruit aromas and flavours, especially cherry, there's also complex notes of licorice, vanilla spice and smoke, making this a great wine to age. Solaia, a blend of Sangiovese and the Cabernets (Franc and Sauvignon) is from the sunniest plots of the Antinori family vineyards in Tuscany; and from a vintage full of sunshine aplenty. Good vintage or bad, this wine will always be known as one of the world's greatest cult wines. Nothing is too rich for Uncle Bob's blood and a bottle of this wine would certainly stand out under any Christmas tree.

.....  
**Sasha McCauley,**  
**Bonvida Wines**

**Cash-strapped**  
**Friend**  
**Antech Blanquette**  
**de Limoux (Limoux,**  
**France) \$25**

This *méthode traditionnelle* (made the same way as Champagne) sparkling wine is soft and creamy, with a lovely floral, citrus and fresh-cut green apple bouquet. The 6th generation family winery is now led by the dynamic and fierce Françoise Antech-Gazeau. Her winemaking philosophy is to keep the wines as natural as possible, using modern techniques only when they improve the taste of the wine. What better recommendation for my style-savvy friend than a sparkling wine that has flair, is well-made, affordable and delicious?

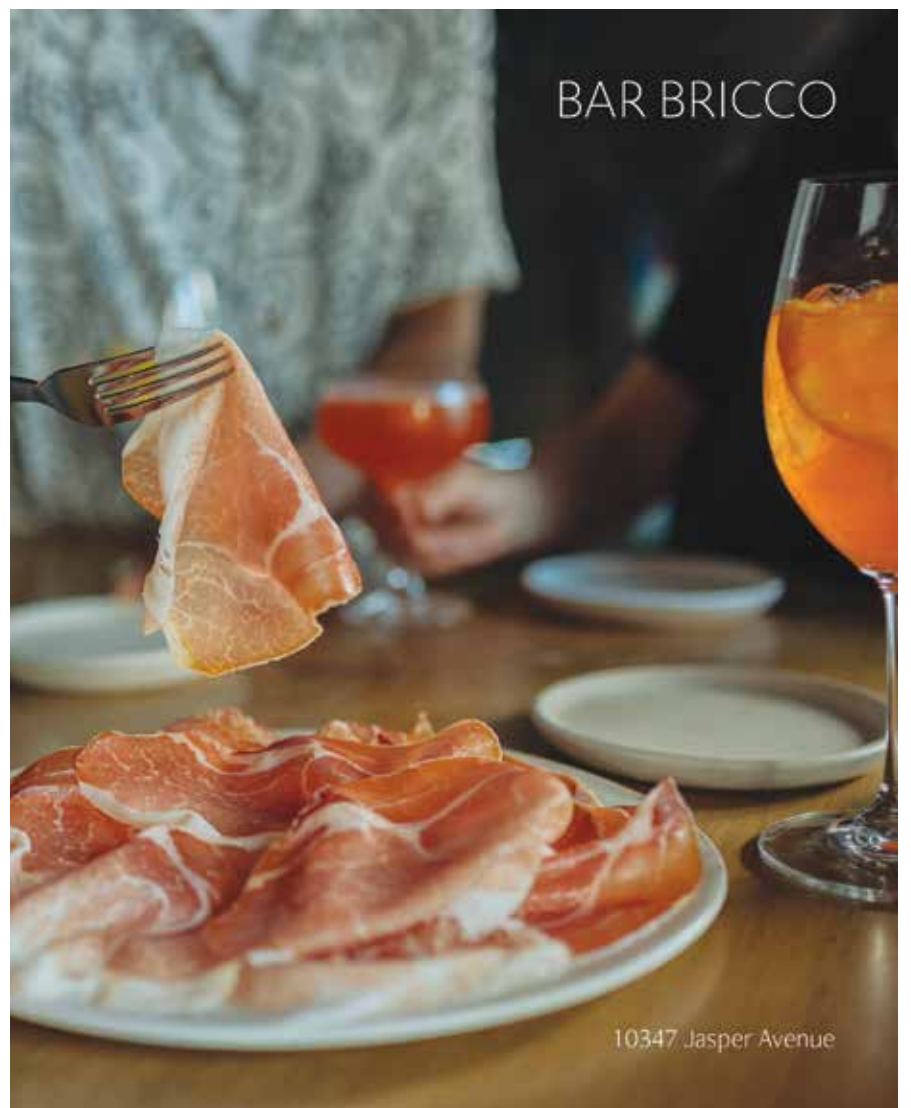


**Rich Uncle**

**2012 Elio Altare Barolo, Cerretta**  
**Cru DOCG (Piedmont, Italy) \$180**

Wonderfully rich, layered with sweet mixed fruit, spice and earthy notes. Silvia Altare, the winemaker and owner, is the third generation to take the helm at this small family winery. 'Harvest in Barolo is about family and respecting tradition,' she says. She and her female

Please see "Wines" on following page.



**gather**  
with food, family & friends

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FRESON BROS.



## Wines

Continued from previous page

peers have started The Barolo Bitches in homage to their fathers' group The Barolo Boys who launched the modernist Barolo movement. Like the prior generation, this new generation of female winemakers and winery owners are evolving Barolo. Yay women in wine! Now, if my wine-savvy relation could only find a Barolo Bitches t-shirt for me.



.....  
**Ryan Everitt, Trialto**

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2017 Bodegas Izadi**  
**Rioja Blanco (Rioja,**  
**Spain) \$25**

Straw yellow in colour with bright green hues, succulent fruit, a well-structured white with perfect acidity. Made from Viura, Malvasia Fina, Grenache Blanc and Tempranillo Blanco. My white wine of the past summer—fresh, crisp and crushable—a bottle only lasted moments with friends.

**Rich Uncle**

**2015 Catena Zapata Malbec**  
**Argentino (Mendoza, Argentina)**  
**\$145**

Catena Zapata Malbec Argentino is made from a meticulous vine selection in the best lots of the Catena family's estate vineyards, Angelica and Nicasia. The vines are carefully hand-tended and produce extremely low yields. The Argentino is made in very limited quantities.

The new label, the brainchild of Adrianna Catena, pays homage to Malbec from its ancient roots in France to its modern success in Argentina, via four female figures illustrating different moments in the history of Argentina's treasured grape variety.



.....  
**Valerie Albrecht, Enotri**

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2017 Lucien Lardy**  
**Beaujolais Villages**  
**Blanc AOC (Beaujolais,**  
**France) \$24**

Enticing aromas of orchard fruit, apple, pear, lemon and notes of white flowers. Ripe fruit, unctuous texture with great minerality—drinks like a Maconnais at a fraction of the price. Lucien Lardy is a third-generation vigneron from Fleurie, who farms sustainably and crafts complex



wines that individually express their terroirs. It is rare to see whites from this region, as they only account for three per cent of the production in Beaujolais.



**Rich Uncle**  
**2013 Dal Cero**  
**Amarone della**  
**Valpolicella DOCG**  
**(Veneto, Italy)**  
**\$77**

Here is an Amarone that speaks to my soul—rich and heady yet still elegant. It has bountiful aromas of ripe fruit and

Christmas cake spice, an unctuous palate and is beautifully supported by acidity that lifts the wine. I have enjoyed it on different occasions with prime rib and lamb osso bucco dinners shared with friends or family.

.....  
**William Bincoletto, Vines**  
**Wines Merchants**

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2017 Ganadero Garnacha**  
**(Castille-La Mancha, Spain) \$25**

Intense red in the glass with hints of cherry and cranberries on the nose along with a wee bit of chocolate. Soft in the mouth, fresh and fun. If this little organically farmed gem from the Mentrída DO in central Spain was

under the tree from my cash-strapped friend, I would be thrilled.

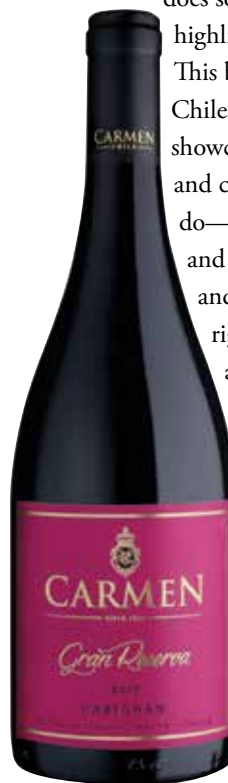
**Rich Uncle**  
**1867 Carvalhas Memories Very**  
**Old Tawny Port (Douro Valley,**  
**Portugal) \$4000**

Deliciously delectable and potentially ageless. This Tawny celebrates not only the great vintage of 1867, it arrived in Alberta shops during Canada's 150th year. Amazing! This Port unveils as a true memory of the 19th century, preserved in time with meticulous care and an almost religious devotion.

.....  
**Margaux Burgess, Lingua Vina**

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2014 Carmen Gran Reserva**  
**Carignan, El Secano Vineyard**  
**(Maule, Chile) \$25**

Carignan is one of those grapes that does so much but is rarely highlighted on its own. This bottling from historic Chilean winery Carmen showcases what older vines and care in the winery can do—aromas of red fruit and violets, very pretty and elegant with just the right amount of tannin and structure. The rusticity of Carignan is tamed and great varietal character at a crazy good price is showcased.



**Rich Uncle**  
**2014 Saó del**  
**Coster La Pujada**  
**(Priorat, Spain)**  
**\$350**

Inky and alluring with boatloads of complexity, there is ripe fruit, dried sour cherries, dried herbs, lots of spice, minerality while maintaining balance and elegance. I didn't plan it this way, but apparently, I am having a love affair with Carignan as this wine is also 100 per cent Carignan. La Pujada is a single vineyard, planted in 1927 and farmed biodynamically. The grapes are harvested by hand (350m elevation) with the help of a couple of friendly donkeys. The vineyard produces only 850 bottles each vintage. A true beauty.

.....  
**Stacey-Jo Strombecky,**  
**Renaissance Wine Merchants**

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2016 M de Mulonnière Anjou**  
**Rouge (Loire Valley, France) \$24**

There is a time in the fall when my husband says 'enough with the rose' and my first grab from the cellar is always a Cabernet Franc. Loire Valley Cabernet Franc is the one of the world's perfect red wines. The M de Mulonnière, a new wine from Château de Mulonnière is an inexpensive way to get acquainted with this lovely grape and region. Bright red fruits on the nose and palate, gorgeous herbacious character throughout and just enough interesting minerality (think graphite pencil) to keep it geeky. For pairing I love roast veggies and red quinoa with a smoky tahini sauce, but don't be afraid to play with meat dishes.



**Rich Uncle**  
**Koval Barreled Gin**  
**(Chicago, USA) \$95**

I am in love with gin in general, but this gin is making my heart sing. Koval is using a white rye base for their gins with local botanicals from the Midwest. Couple that with second-use rye barrels and you have one of the prettiest gins in the market. This beauty is as if a great whiskey and a great gin had a magical love child. And, its organic and kosher! I feel so much better about having seconds.







.....  
**Jillian Fonteyne, The Butternut Tree**

**Cash-strapped Friend  
2018 Benjamin Bridge  
Nova 7 (Nova Scotia  
and Ontario) \$25**

Beautiful floral notes on the nose and the tropical notes on the palate are balanced with an energizing acidity. This lightly effervescent wine from Nova Scotia is sure to please all palates. The 2018 vintage in Nova Scotia was a disaster. To ensure there was enough Nova 7, friends and

colleagues in Niagara who share the same philosophy as Nova's winemaker Jean-Benoit Deslauriers pitched in with ripe grapes. A beautiful story of cooperation and the perfect wine for every occasion.

**Rich Uncle**

**2017 Little Engine  
Platinum Pinot Noir  
(Naramata Bench, BC)  
1500 ml, \$225**

This Pinot is produced with all estate-grown fruit and displays depth, layers of complexity, elegance and finish. Little Engine Wines is an outstanding winery out of Penticton, BC producing three tiers of wines from silver to platinum. The silver wines are impressive, but if you can get your hands on one of the platinum series you are in for a treat.



They are usually only available to their club members, but they do release some large format bottles that would be the perfect wine for a holiday splurge.

.....  
**Caitlin Fulton, Rge Rd**

**Cash-strapped Friend  
2016 Tawse Chardonnay (Niagara  
Peninsula, Ontario) \$25**

This wine is dominated by aromas of ripe pear and orchard fruit with a hint of lemon curd. Food flexible and easy, it has nice acidity balanced by the restrained use of oak, which gives it medium body and a round finish. Tawse is a family-owned winery in Niagara committed to sustainable farming practices and producing high quality wines that reflect the Niagara escarpment terroir. I have mad respect for producers committed to farming organically and biodynamically while really paying attention to which grapes excel in more northern climates (Chardonnay being one of those grapes). Not only that, Tawse offers great value while still picking all their grapes by hand.

**Rich Uncle**

**2015 Grgich Hills Estate  
Chardonnay (Napa Valley, USA)  
\$75**

This estate grown Chardonnay is complex, balanced, with a lengthy finish without any heaviness. While fermented and aged in French oak barrels, the wine does not go through malolactic fermentation, preserving a linear acidity and crispness. There are slight nutty notes, apple and pear along with lemon-lime freshness and stunning minerality. An overly oaked, toasty, butter bomb it is not. Grgich Hills Estate is an iconic Napa producer for good reason. Miljenko Grgich is known mostly for Chardonnay—unseating Burgundian winemakers from their throne by winning best Chardonnay at the 1976 Judgement of Paris Tasting The estate is meticulous in their biodynamic vineyard management, barrel selection and commitment to environmental sustainability. ●

*Available at Bin 104, Color de Vino, deVines Wine & Spirits, Sherbrooke, Vines and other fine wine shops unless otherwise noted. Not all wines in each shop. Prices are approximate.*

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## Pantry

### Chocolate for Cheese

A little chocolate is a fine addition to a dessert cheese board. Or, a delicious housewarming or office gift. We found several tasty and well-made new products for this holiday season. Many are special order or just for the holidays—that's a guarantee of freshness for you. Break the bars into squares or pile on the bon bons and marshmallow puffs. An affordable indulgence.

#### Seed and Bean Bars

Seed and Bean started with seeds and beans lavished in high quality ethical chocolate. Now they also make delicious bars in clever and unusual flavours, \$7. Their beans, from Ecuador, Dominican Republic and São Tomé in west Africa, are made into chocolate at a small production facility (the batch size is just 45 litres) in England. They are in the forefront of ethical companies and zero waste initiatives; even the foil is compostable, made from something called Natureflex, which is created from eucalyptus wood pulp. Italian Centre Shop south carries most of the flavours, Freson's Stony Plain has Lavender Dark, Cornish Sea Salt and Lime and Coconut Raspberry Extra Dark. Maven & Grace have a limited assortment.

#### Barú Hot Chocolate Powders

Want to try the most delicious hot choc mix ever? Barú is it. The three Italian Centre Shops stock both the Dark and Marshmallow Chocolate Powder and the Dark is also at the Bon Ton Bakery, Freson Bros and Sunterra, \$10.

#### Summerdown Mint Chocolates

Summerdown distills its own Black Mitcham mint to make an exquisite peppermint oil. The result? Their confections possess a fresh, clear and vibrant peppermint taste. The Mint Chocolate Collection, \$18, can be found at Freson Bros, and the Italian Centre south and Maven & Grace. Freson Bros stock the Peppermint Thins, and Freson's Fort Sask stocks the Dominos, both \$16. Maven & Grace has the Peppermint Creams, \$16.





### Pralibel Belgian Pralines

Belgian pralines are filled chocolates, what we might call a bonbon, and Pralibel, with its all-natural flavours and melt in your mouth deliciousness, are top-notch. The luxurious gift box called the Dome is available at Careit Urban Deli, Homes and Cottages and the Plaid Giraffe, \$45. The Cubes, \$16.50 are stocked at Bella Casa, Heart of the Home, Homes and Cottages, Italian Centre west and the Plaid Giraffe.

### Mallow Puffs

Super-puffy vegan marshmallows dunked in UTZ-certified Belgian dark chocolate. They are made without gelatin but there is no loss in flavour—they are most delicious, \$7. Three flavours: Raspberry is stocked at Careit, Maven & Grace and Sunterra; Salted Caramel is at Freson Bros, Maven & Grace and Sunterra, Vanilla Bean is at Careit, Freson Bros, Heart of the Home, Maven & Grace and Sunterra.

### Galerie au Chocolat Bars and Bonbons

Galerie au Chocolat in Quebec have made their products from sustainable and ethical Belgium chocolate since 1985—gluten-free, made in a peanut-free facility, kosher, non-GMO, they use no emulsifiers and the dark chocolate is vegan (not all dark choc is dairy free). The bars come in both dark and milk chocolate at Bon Ton, Careit, Freson's Stony Plain, Heart of the Home, Homes and Cottages, Italian Centre north and west, Maven & Grace and the Plaid Giraffe, \$4. The assorted chocolates in a gift box are at Homes and Cottages and Maven & Grace, \$20. The green gift box of assorted chocs (hello teacher's gift) at Careit, Freson Bros and all Italian Centre Shops, \$18. Love the holiday tree ornament in white, milk and dark, at Careit, Freson Bros, Heart of the Home, Homes and Cottages, Italian Centre south and Plaid Giraffe, \$7.

*Prices are approximate. We've done our best to track everything down, but not all items may be available in every shop.*



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# THE ANATOMY OF A CHEESE BOARD

MARY BAILEY

What makes a cheese board that looks great and tastes better?

According to Cecelia Groblicka of the Cavern: “Go for variety, especially if the board is for several people. You want a little something for everyone; a double or triple cream-style cheese, a semi-firm such as a washed rind cheese, a firm aged cheese and maybe a blue.

“Double and triple creams such as Brie de Meaux, Délice de Bourgogne, and Brillat-Savarin are spreadable decadence,” says Cecilia; “extra special at the holidays.”

Next are the semi-firm cheese such as Gouda, Comté, Taleggio, Gruyère. “I’m in love with Swiss alpine cheeses—they don’t look like much but taste so good. Swiss is approachable, interesting but not polarizing.

“Washed rind cheeses have a soft texture and a wonderful umami, almost beefy,” says Cecilia. “People who love charcuterie love them. My favourite is Époisse, from Burgundy. It’s washed with brine and Marc de Bourgogne, the brandy from the region.”

Select a good Canadian cheddar, aged and sharp, from Ontario, Quebec or the Maritimes as the firm cheese for your board. Or, Parmigiano-Reggiano, Piave Vecchio, or an aged sheep’s milk such as Manchego, Ossau-Iraty or truffled pecorino.

“I love the Canadian blue cheeses such as Bleu Bénédicтин but if you want more punch, try Shropshire, Stilton or Roquefort,” says Cecilia.

As you start to make the board, pay attention to the shapes of the cheeses and the colour of the rinds. The hard cheeses are best crumbled into chunks as

they can be a bit unwieldy to cut at table. The triple cremè could be served with spoons. Cheese taste best at room temperature. You can make the board early and keep in a cool place (not the refrigerator) until ready to serve.

Condiments are easier to handle in small bowls each with their own little spoon or serving utensil. Break up the grapes into smaller bunches. To bring colour, add some mandarin oranges, roasted or candied nuts, olives, and crackers of different shapes and colours. Bite-sized is good especially if it’s a stand-up party. Everything on the board should be edible but use some greenery for (pine fronds are ideal at the holidays) to separate cheeses and provide some colour.

If it’s the main event, select charcuterie from Meuwly’s and the Italian Centre to accompany the cheeses. “Show a good array of sweet and savoury and pickled accompaniments, such as traditional cornichon, especially with the Alpine cheeses; Marcona almonds; chocolate-dipped almonds, jams and jellies; mustard and chutneys along with good bread and some crackers meant for cheese,” says Cecilia.

If it’s for dessert or after dinner, cheeses are best by themselves with some dried fruit, chocolate, some grapes.

Cecelia and her husband John Brodie bought the Cavern from Tricia Bell, the founder, last year. “My husband’s family tradition on Christmas morning is cheese and charcuterie and pâté with Champagne and fresh-baked croissants. We sit around in our pajamas and nibble all morning while we open gifts.”

---

*Mary Bailey, editor of The Tomato, is a cheese head.*





# CECILIA'S CHEESES OF THE SEASON

## Époisse

is a washed rind cheese from Burgundy. My favourite, it's stinky and complicated, so delicious.

## Langres

is made in Champagne and comes in a 160gm wheel, ideal for a cheese board. The classic way to serve it is to cut an x and pour Champagne into it. It brings out the breadly yeasty flavours of the cheese.

## 14 Arpents

is from Quebec. It's a little square loaf, silky and smooth, with an orange rind and melts at room temperature. It's buttery and almondy and gives the French cheeses a run for their money.

## Old School Cheesiry

is a small family-run cheesiry in Vermillion. I like their fantastic Brie-style cheese called Bebe Lune and the Eclipse Bebe which has an ash vein. They also make really great cheese curds.

## Grey Owl

from Quebec is a surface ripened goat's milk cheese pressed with ash. Grey outside, bright white inside. It's often on the Butternut Tree's cheese board.

## Besace Berger Cendre

is from Dordogne. The name means saddle bag or something of the like. It's a ripened goats milk cheese rolled in ash, a little bundle of joy!

## Tête de Moine

is from the Jura. Monks starting making this cheese in the eighth century (in the shape of monk's head.) The best way to eat it is to scrape the top with a girolle.\*

## Five Brothers

I'm super excited about Canadian Swiss-inspired cheeses such as the Five Brothers from Gunn's Hill in Woodstock Ontario. Similar to Appenzeller or Gruyère in texture and flavour, it ages on cedar planks for nine months. Melts absolutely.

## Quebec le Silo

is seven-year old raw milk cheddar that is aged in a silo. It's so moist and juicy for being so old. Sharp, with tons of Bovril-like taste. When you cut into the crystals the cheese develops angel's tears (a good thing).

## Cows Creamery Cheddars

out of PEI is a raw milk three-year old cheddar. We usually have the applewood smoked and the cloth bound cheddar from them too.

## Bleu Bénédicтин

is made by monks at their abbey in Saint-Benoit-du-Lac, Quebec. Crumbly and moist and creamy with an aroma like mushrooms and forest floor. It's not a salt bomb either. Made from pasteurized cows milk.

## Bleu d'Élizabeth

A Quebec blue similar to Roquefort with lovely creamy, mushroomy flavours. It has phenomenal balance and I love the crumbly and dense texture, almost like a washed rind.

## Valdeon

is a Spanish blue from Leon. It's wrapped in chestnut leaves. It's spicy and piquant awakening the sinuses and sides of your tongue with its earthy and herbaceous flavours.

*Cavern (10169 104 Street, 780-455-1336, thecavern.ca) will be closed December 25-January 15.*

*\*The girolle is tool with a spike and a cutter attached to a wooden board. The idea is you spike the Tête de Moine and let the cutter revolve around the top to make florets, which boosts the aromas and flavours of the cheese.*

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Photo Massimo Vitali

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# THINGS THAT GO WITH CHEESE

MARY BAILEY

Consider the condiments, nuts and crackers that will elevate your cheese board into something special for your guests. Ideal hostess gifts too.

## Escuminac Syrups

Italians like a drizzle of chestnut honey on Pecorino and Parmigiano. Try the bold flavour of Escuminac syrups on aged cheddar: Organic Yellow Birch Syrup, 50 ml, \$13, or the delicate and balanced Organic Maple Syrup Extra Rare, 200 ml, \$15. From Baie-des-Chaleurs in Gaspésie, Quebec, just three kilometres from the sea. The Escuminac web site explores the molecular harmonies of the syrups, by top sommelier Francois Chartier. The Yellow Birch Syrup is at Careit Urban Deli and Maven & Grace. The Extra Rare Maple Syrup is at Bon Ton Bakery, Careit and Heart of the Home. Find more types of Escuminac syrups at the Italian Centres south and west.

## Olive Branch Tapenades

These savoury tapenades made in Greece provide a punchy, flavourful note to your cheese board. They are all delicious; try the Florina Pepper and Chili

Tapenade with milder cheeses and Kalamata Olive with Fig and Mint with Manchego, \$8, at the Italian Centre Shops.

## Alemanys Nuts

These irresistible nuts from Catalonia are generous clusters of almonds and walnuts in honey or chocolate. So good on a cheese board or by themselves, \$13. The dark chocolate-covered walnuts with honey are at Careit Urban Deli, Cavern, Italian Centre south and Sunterra. The caramelized almonds with honey are at Bon Ton, Careit, Italian Centre south and west, Maven & Grace and Sunterra Lendrum.

## The Fine Cheese Co. Crackers

The Fine Cheese Co. makes all sort of terrific crackers suitable for cheese, from the large, crisp, all-butter Bath Ovals (Paddy's), \$9 to the Sea Salt and Extra Virgin Olive Oil and the Fig and Honey Cracker available at Careit, Cavern, Italian Centre south and Sunterra, \$7. New this year is the Gluten free Water Cracker, made from maize flour, soya bran and tapioca and are wheat free, gluten free and dairy free. Toasty, thin and crunchy, stocked at Cavern, Freson Bros, Italian Centre south and Paddy's, \$7.

## The Pea Green Boat Crackers

These delicious crumbly morsels come in fennel and chili, cumin, and original. All three flavours can be found at the Italian Centre south; fennel and chili at Careit; cumin and original at Careit and Maven & Grace, \$10.

## Toast Crackers

Toast Crackers come in several flavours. We are partial to the limited edition Festive Cracker with spiced fruit and pecans, \$9. Find at Careit, Freson Bros and Italian Centre south.





### Shortbread House Fingers

A delicious and authentic British shortbread in a handy two cookie package, \$2.50 at Cavern and Freson Bros.

### Baked with Love Gouda and Cheese Biscuits

Find these crunchy, cheesy crackers at Careit, Italian Centre south and Paddy's, \$4.

### Buiteman's Gouda Chive Biscuits

Who better to make a Gouda cracker than a Dutch company? These are made with 22 per cent, 18-month-old Gouda. Find at Careit, Freson's Fort Sask, Italian Centre south and west and Paddy's, \$4.

### Cheese Knives in Gold-finished Stainless Steel

Looking for a warmer colour palette for your cheese board? This set has four knives in a gold colour, suitable for soft, semi firm and hard cheeses. The book-style gift box makes for easy storage, \$27 at Bella Casa.

### Natural Living Alpine Cheese Set

This acacia wood board comes with a clever cheese ax, ideal for semi firm or aged cheeses. Excellent for two to three people, \$30 at Bella Casa.

### Natural Living Cheese Knives

Traditional stainless knives with wooden handles in a gift box. The solid pronged knife is for hard cheese and the perforated knife is for soft cheese, \$20 at Bella Casa.

### Serving Platters

Zocalo has several boards and platters to add to your collection—a small charcuterie or cheese board, \$15, an extra-long board for dramatic effect, \$32 and a round beech wood serving tray, \$36. 🍷

*Prices are approximate. We've done our best to track everything down, but not all items may be available in every shop.*



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# Plain Vanilla? *Not a Chance.*

Iain Ilich

*From tropical orchids to your cookie recipe, this classic natural flavour never gets old.*

It's a staple of every well-stocked professional kitchen and home pantry, but how much have you thought about the story behind that little bottle of vanilla? Where does it come from, why is it so expensive and why do chefs keep choosing natural vanilla over far cheaper artificial options?

"I love vanilla!" says Franck Bouilhol, the Edmonton pastry chef and ice-cream maker behind Little Bear Gelato. "Vanilla makes everything better. I love to use it for my apple sauce (apple tart, apple turnover), ice cream, flan Parisien or crême brûlée."

## Where it all began

But as much as it's a vital ingredient in every kitchen, including Franck's, it's one with a curious past and a supply-challenged present.

Vanilla's origins lie on the tropical southeast coast of Mexico, where the finicky vanilla orchid still yields flowers that, when pollinated, develop into long pods that take nine months to ripen on the vine. After picking, the pods are cured through an elaborate process (another nine months) that preserves the vanilla while developing its flavour. In all, it's an extremely labour-intensive crop to produce.

Cultivation eventually spread to Tahiti, as well as to the islands of Réunion (formerly known as Bourbon) and Madagascar, where it flourished, and where about half of all vanilla is grown today. Madagascar Bourbon vanilla is now the standard specialty vanilla.

"I've been a few times to La Réunion island near Madagascar," says Franck, who originally hails from France, "and the smell of fresh vanilla beans in the local market makes it a unique experience."

## Prices and eggs in a basket

As much of the world's vanilla supply is dependent on Madagascar, a crop failure there is felt by pastry chefs around the

world. This happened most recently in 2017, when Cyclone Enawo slammed into the island, destroying an estimated 30 per cent of the crop, ensuring there would be nowhere near enough vanilla to meet global demand.

Following the cyclone, vanilla prices surged, and wholesale prices to chefs are still hovering around \$150 per four ounces of vanilla beans, which doesn't go a long way in a busy pastry kitchen. Industrial production of cookies and other baked goods can make do with artificial vanilla, but chefs who rely on natural vanilla have had no choice but to

adapt. According to Franck, many pastry chefs have been turning to natural vanilla paste as a cost-saving measure. Home cooks may grumble that a small bottle of vanilla extract now costs \$20, but if you make natural vanilla ice cream for a living, the financial pinch is more acute.

## Vanilla Types

There are three typical types of vanilla extracts and beans available to bakers in Canada: Madagascar Bourbon, Tahitian and Mexican. The one you should choose comes down to what you have on hand, and what flavour you're aiming for in your baking or cooking.

Madagascar Bourbon vanilla is the closest there is to an all-purpose vanilla, and if you could only pick one to keep in your pantry, this is it. It's a good choice for baking, as it can handle heat well. Try this one in cakes, cookies and French toast.

Vanilla from Tahiti is known for its more floral, fruity characteristics, with cherry and anise-like notes. It's not fond of heat, so it's most prized for use in pastry creams, ice cream and custards, where its unique complexity has room to shine.

"I mostly use Bourbon vanilla from Madagascar," says Franck. "I use Tahiti vanilla for very specific pastry. It's stronger than the Bourbon but also more difficult to source. The production is really small compared to Bourbon vanilla."

Mexican vanilla is far more difficult to track down, and the quality varies by brand. If you get it from a reputable manufacturer, expect it to have a more warm, spicy profile than the standard Madagascar Bourbon, with a hint of clove or nutmeg. Just beware the dubious fake extracts sold to tourists in Mexico.

## Real vs. Artificial

Vanilla bean prices have a habit of swinging wildly up and down, causing both grief in producing areas and in bakery expense reports. And yet, chefs keep choosing to use real vanilla over the artificial substitute. Because, as chefs see it, there simply is no substitute.

"I really do my best to not use chemical products in my recipes, so artificial vanilla has absolutely no place in my kitchen," says Franck, as if there was any question. "How dare you!" he adds, cheekily. 🍌

*Iain Ilich blogs about curious grocery items at [www.nearof.com](http://www.nearof.com). He recommends against Googling "vanilla" from a workplace computer.*

## Quick Vanilla Facts

According to author Tim Ecott's book, *Vanilla: Travels in Search of the Ice Cream Orchid*, more than half of the vanilla produced in the world is now destined for the U.S. and half of that is used by the dairy industry.

While extract is the most common form of vanilla found at retail, a few supermarkets are now carrying it in bean form. Vanilla paste is difficult for home bakers to find, as it is most commonly used in professional kitchens. Gourmet food specialty shops should carry beans and extracts from multiple places, and maybe even some paste if you're lucky.

Under optimal conditions, vanilla extract will keep for roughly three years after its produced, while beans should be used within two years. If beans are dry and hard instead of pliable, they're too old.

According to specialty vanilla supplier Nielsen-Massey, you should never store vanilla in the fridge or freezer. The cold will have a negative effect on the uniform mix in an extract and chilling beans can speed up mold growth.

## Vanilla Sugar

*The simplest vanilla recipe in the world is vanilla sugar, yet it's also a deeply satisfying winter favourite that many consider to be a pantry mainstay. All it takes is two ingredients, a sealed jar and a bit of patience. Consider making a few jars to gift to friends over the holidays or put together a batch for your own holiday baking needs. It's great added to tea, sprinkled on top of holiday drinks, used to jazz up whipped cream, drifted over freshly-cut fruit or used in baking—either dusted on, or incorporated into batter in place of a portion of regular sugar.*

- 2 c granulated sugar, divided
- 1 vanilla bean
- 1 jar (glass, a bit larger than 500 ml), with a clean, scent-free lid

Add 1 cup of granulated sugar to the glass jar.

With a sharp knife, cut the vanilla bean along the length, splitting it open and exposing the tiny seeds inside.

Scrape the seeds out, then add them to the sugar in the jar.

Add the remaining vanilla pods to the jar, then top up the jar with the rest of the sugar.

Put the lid on the jar, close it tight, then give it a good shake for a minute.

For the next two weeks, continue to give the jar occasional shakes.

After two weeks, your vanilla sugar should be ready to use.

Makes 2 cups of vanilla sugar.



# Nothing *plain* about vanilla ice cream

Mary Bailey

Funny how vanilla ice cream got its rep as ho hum when it's made with one of the world's most expensive and rare ingredients.

I spent a few hours with chef Chael MacDonald at Kind Ice Cream to watch how they make their vanilla ice cream.

The custard base is made with eggs, cream, milk and sugar. That's it. No artificial emulsifiers, no stabilizers, no gums. The vegan (non-dairy, no eggs) is made with cashew and coconut milks plus cocoa butter and coconut oil. They use several sous vide machines to cook the custard, ensuring that it cooks evenly and quickly.

"If we didn't do it this way we would have to use a steam kettle, expensive and not as fool proof," says Chael.

The vanilla recipe uses both vanilla paste (Madagascar and Tahitian) and a natural Madagascar vanilla extract. After the paste and extract are added to the base it's poured into the batch freezer, a heavy-duty, sturdy looking floor unit which churns 22 litres at a time. It's built to run every all day every day. This summer the machine was running eight to 10 hours (with breaks for cleaning and sanitizing). The chamber inside the freezer rotates quite slowly actually which means less air in the finished product (called low flow). The vanilla custard base will take about 15 minutes in the freezer, then at least six hours or overnight in the blast chiller. The ice creams then find their way to the dipping cabinet (short term) or the hardening cabinet.

If you ever thought working in an ice cream parlour would be sweet, you are right. Each staffer is able to take two pints home every week.



Vanilla ice cream right out of the batch freezer.



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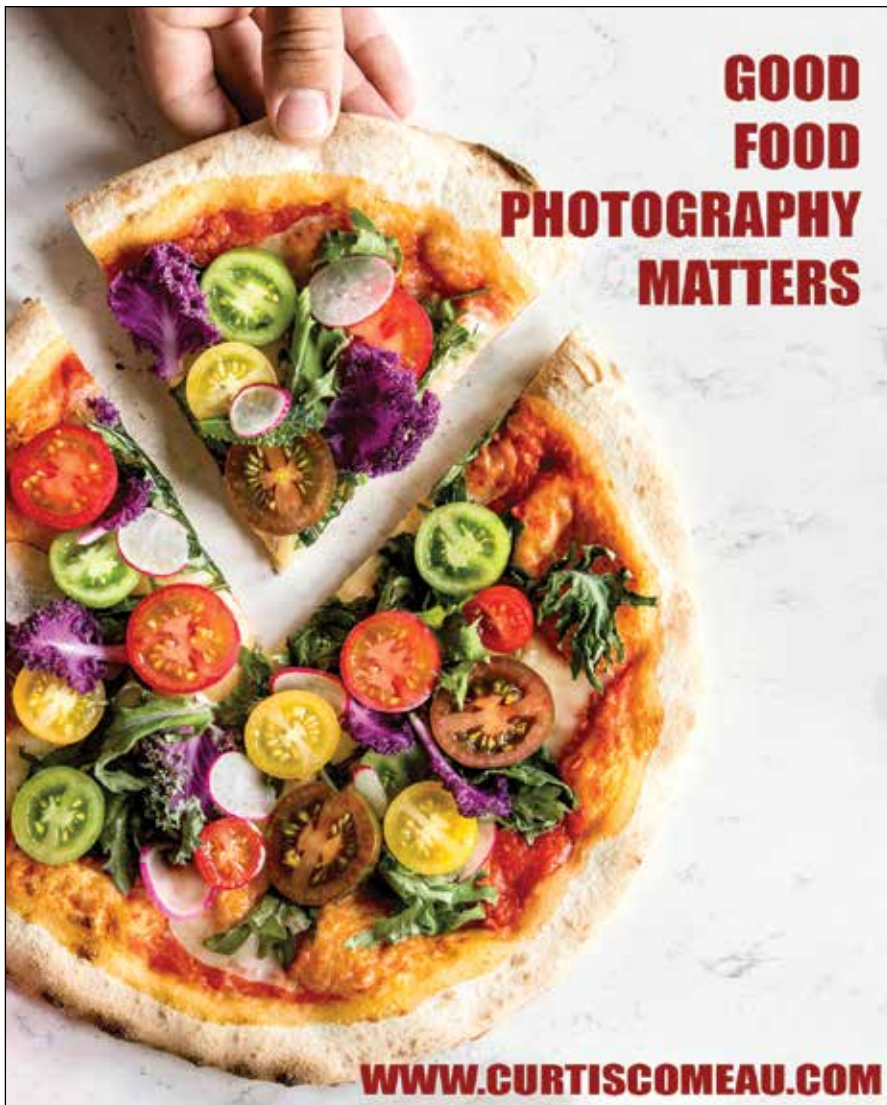
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## Beer Guy

### Year in Beer

*Of travel, I've had my share, man, I've been everywhere.*

—Hank Snow

This year I travelled thousands of kilometres in search of good beer. Yes, like every year. In Toronto in January I overcame an epic snowstorm to make it to Bellwoods Brewery. Drinking a luscious Tangerine Jelly King sour, I hoped my sighs of pleasure didn't alarm the couple beside me.

With friends in May, our flight from Houston to Austin was cancelled because of a massive storm.

We hired an Uber to drive us the three hours to Austin. An hour outside Houston our phones blew up, first with flash flood and then with tornado warnings:

"Take shelter immediately!" "What should we do," we asked our driver. "No idea," he answered, "I just moved here from Brooklyn". We kept moving and made it to Austin for last call.

I visited Winnipeg in July for the first time in almost 20 years. Don't tell Winnipeg, but I didn't hate it. First stop was a One Great City brewpub, named after the Weakerthans' song with the chorus, "I hate Winnipeg". Next stop was the Forks, where I bought a local Barnhammer IPA at an open air craft beer kiosk, The Common, and enjoyed it in the sun, watching geese float by on the Assiniboine River. Delightful. Civilized. How about this idea for Edmonton, Mayor Iveson?

Escaping Edmonton's dismal summer in August, my wife and I flew to San Francisco and drove south along the coast to L.A., hitting beaches and beer spots from Berkeley to Big Sur to Manhattan Beach. In Paso Robles

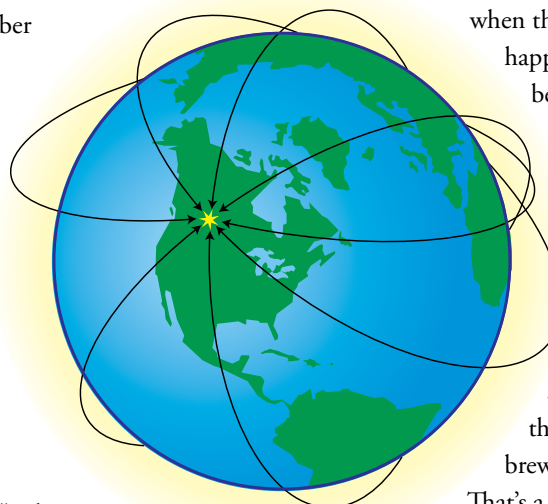
wine country, we bypassed wineries and visited Firestone Walker Brewing and Tin City Cider. At Dodger Stadium in L.A. we walked in behind Warren Beatty and Annette Bening. On the downside, I paid \$17 US (\$22 CDN) for a Golden Road IPA and the Blue Jays blew a two run lead in the 9th.

Travelling gives us perspective on where we live. Coming back from my beer travels, I found that the best beer experiences can be found right outside my door. It wasn't always so. I started writing this beer column for

The Tomato back in 2009, when there wasn't much happening locally beyond Alley Kat. Thank God for Alley Kat. By 2013 there were still only 12 breweries in Alberta. Then everything happened. Today there are 120 breweries in Alberta.

That's a ten-fold increase in six years. There are 16 breweries in Edmonton and area now. The beer world that I once dreamed about is now a reality.

That reality means a five minutes' walk out my front door takes me to Arcadia, a bar on 124th Street serving only Alberta craft beer. Down 124th I can hit up Woodshed Burgers, Northern Chicken or Canteen, all places matching great food with great craft beer. Ten minutes by bike gets me to Sherbrooke Liquor, retailer of the year at the Alberta Beer Awards. Ten minutes also gets me to The Growlery, a new 2019 brewery in Blatchford. My favourite 2019 addition is Odd Company Brewing in the Oliver Exchange building. Odd Company is stylish but comfortable, with interesting beers that change frequently, plus good ciders and decent snacks. Tucked away inside I could be anywhere—Portland, Austin, Toronto—but I'm not. I'm in Edmonton. And that makes me very happy.



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Peter Bailey



## Year in Beer Six Pack

### Alley Kat Fish Bone New England IPA Edmonton

Founded 1995. Can an old kat learn new tricks? You betcha. Alley Kat had a great 2019, winning brewery of the year at the Alberta Beer Awards and introducing a great new beer to their core beers: Fish Bone. Alley Kat's NEIPA is unfiltered, slightly cloudy IPA, brewed with classic west coast hops and new-style tropical hops.



### Blindman Batch 500 Traditional Kveik Lacombe

Founded 2015. Blindman has the knack of brewing excellent production beers but also making quirky one-offs for the beer nerds. Here Blindman makes use of Norwegian Kveik yeast, the hot trend of 2019, in a farmhouse ale brewed traditionally, using barley, oats, rye, a long rolling boil and filtered over fresh cut juniper.



### Bent Stick Electric Boogaloo IPA, Edmonton

Founded 2016. The Bent Stick boys dance to the beat of a different drum. Here they get funky with their Northeast IPA—brewed with wheat and oats, double dry-hopped with Citra, Mosaic and Ella hops. Love that it is available in tallboy cans, for sale at the 124 Grand Market and on tap at Woodshed Burgers on 124th St.



### Origin The Darkness Porter, Strathmore

Founded 2017. Climate change is already impacting barley production. One future forward idea is farm to glass—growing, malting, and brewing with barley from and in one place. That's what Origin does. Their porter uses their own oats and malts to make a big, roasty beer with notes of chocolate and coffee. Silver medal, Alberta Beer Awards.



### Establishment Fat Sherpa Robust Porter, Calgary

Founded 2018. Establishment Brewing notes that this porter was designed to be enjoyed while standing around a fire with friends in the middle of a Calgary February! It's a great combination of malty toasty and coffee chocolate flavours with just enough sweetness in the background to round it all out with a little American hops in the finish. Gold medal, Alberta Beer Awards.



### SYC Kreature Autumn Ale, Edmonton

Founded 2019. Located in an industrial park in the wild west end, just past the women's prison, SYC (Show Your Colours) zigs where others zag. Kreature is made with sweet potatoes and dry roasted fenugreek, tasting sweetly of maple and caramel. Perfect for Halloween and the dark nights that follow. 🍷

*Peter Bailey took the road less traveled, and that has made all the difference. He's on Twitter and Instagram as @Libarbarian.*

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# The Proust Culinary Questionnaire

## Brad and Leanne Smoliak, Kitchen by Brad

*In the late nineteenth century, French novelist Marcel Proust participated in an exercise which could be thought of as the Facebook of its era—he answered a questionnaire about himself in a friend's Confession Album.*

*Proust's answers have been published, in one form or another, for more than a century. Many have used the questionnaire for their own devices, the most notable being Vanity Fair's Proust Questionnaire featuring celebrities. The Tomato gives it a culinary twist.*

Brad Smoliak is a miracle man. Born with a congenital heart defect (his heart is, essentially, backwards) Brad had lived a fairly normal life up until last year, when his defective heart reached the end of the line.

A transplant would have been the solution, except it wasn't viable (yet). Enter the VAD (ventricular assist device). The Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute has the largest Canadian VAD program; Brad entered in January.

It was a long haul. Over 100 days in the hospital post-surgery with some tense moments during that time, along with weeks of VAD training, physio, getting strength back, daily blood work.

Over four months in which we had to live without Brad's wisecracks and Cosmo wondering where Brad went.

When you see our favourite chef out and about, as he is back to living his life in the fullest way possible, don't be put off by the tubes and battery packs. Brad is VAD powered and lovin' it.

For more information:  
[www.bradsjourney.givetoUHF.ca](http://www.bradsjourney.givetoUHF.ca)

Organ donation:  
[www.myhealth.alberta.ca](http://www.myhealth.alberta.ca)

### Hometown?

**B:** Rio Terrace, Edmonton. Still know people from kindergarten.

**L:** Ottewell, Edmonton. We live three blocks from where I grew up.

### Years cooking?

**Both:** Decades

### Where would you like to live?

**B:** I love living here, you can always hop on a plane.

**L:** I have no desire to live anywhere but Edmonton. Our roots are here, our friends and family are here. Love to travel to faraway places though.

### Your favourite food and drink?

**B:** A simple pasta with tomato sauce, Pinot Noir. I can only have one glass now, so it's got to be good.

**L:** Italian anything! Wine from the region of the food.

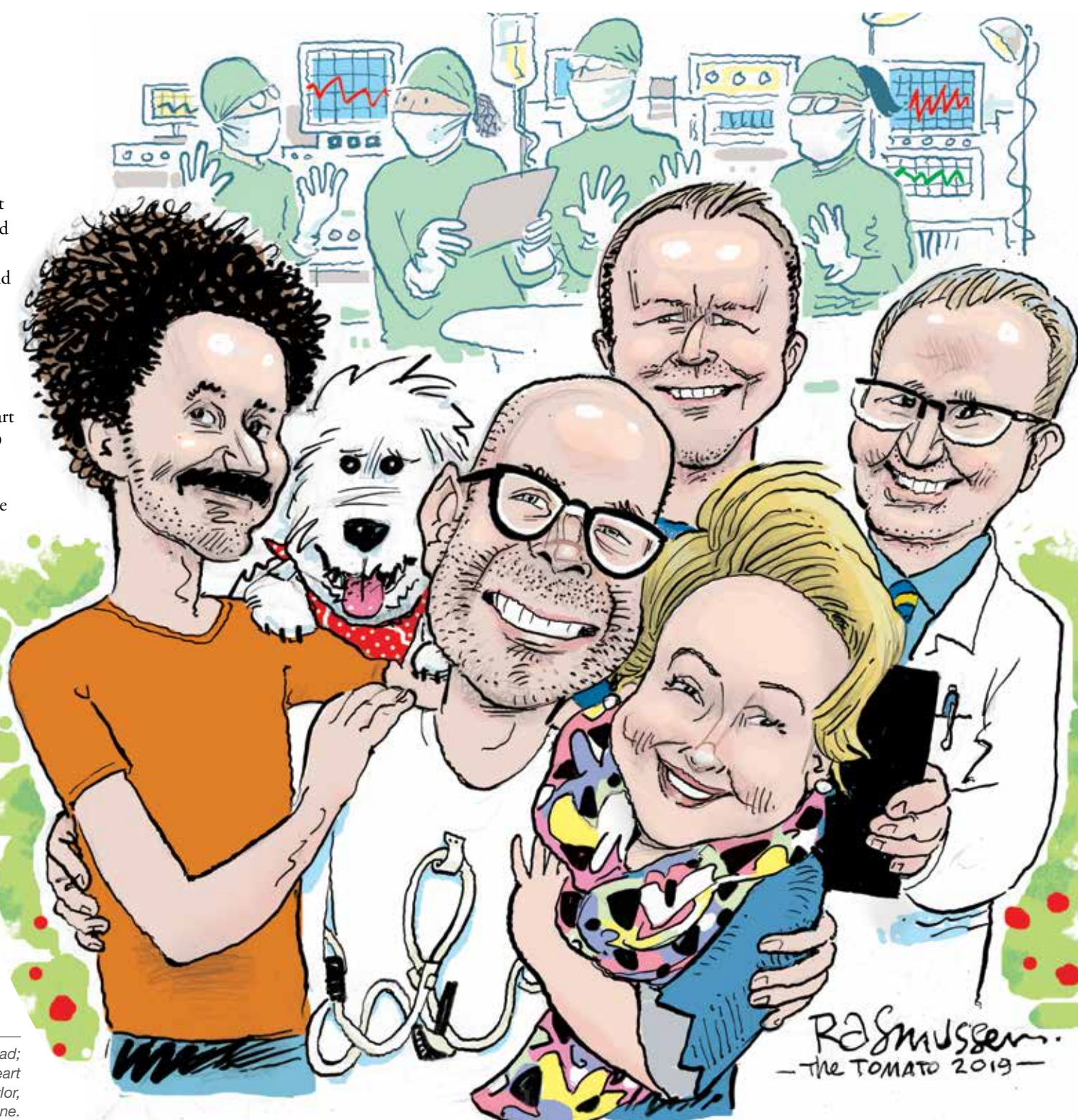
### What would you be doing if you weren't cooking?

**B:** A groundskeeper on a golf course. I love being outside.

**L:** I love what I do, but, maybe when I retire, I could work in a greenhouse. I like to be in the dirt.

### What do you most appreciate in your friends?

**B:** Sense of humour.



*Clockwise from left: son Nicholas; Cosmo; Brad; Dr. Holger Buchholz, Director Adult Artificial Heart Program; Brad's cardiologist Dr. Dylan Taylor, Facility Medical Director and Brad's wife Leanne.*



**L:** I most appreciate the generosity that our friends have shown us, particularly in the past year. The generosity of support, generosity of kindness, generosity of food and drink when I needed it. Mostly their generosity of love. I couldn't have made it through this last year without them.

**Your favourite qualities in a dish?**

**B:** Simplicity.

**L:** Balance.

**A cook?**

**B:** Passion and a willingness to learn.

**L:** Passionate about their craft. Willing to take others under their wing to show them the ropes.

**Who would be at your dream dinner table?**

**B:** My two babas, my guido Ferbey, my wife, my son and me.

**L:** Brad's two grandmothers. I think the babas would be blown away by the talent of these two. They would likely fight over which baba was the biggest influence.

**Who would cook?**

**B:** We all would!

**L:** Brad and Nicholas cooking a full Ukrainian feast—SMO style.

**Which words or phrases do you most overuse?**

**B:** I remember when...

**L:** It's all good! I always try to see the positive in any situation. Is that a bad thing?

**Current culinary obsession**

**B:** Back to my culinary roots. Ukrainian food is so my much more than cabbage rolls and pyrohy.

**L:** We are eating more plant-based foods. We love a big hunk of meat, but we are trying to balance our diet more. It is a good way for us to be more creative with veg—used to be a side dish, now we make it the focal point.

**Meaningful/crazy cooking experience?**

**Both:** The lunch at Kitchen after the Mazankowski Heartbeat Run. We were surrounded by family and friends and doctors gathering and having fun. It was a wonderful celebration.

Opening Kitchen. We are part of so many people's birthday parties, weddings, anniversaries, their big moments. We get to build memories for other people.

**Best (cooking) thing that ever happened to you?**

**Both:** We have been able to share so many memorable cooking and dining experiences—together.

**Mentors?**

**B:** My Dad, the way he treated people was a life lesson and my guido Ferby—work was important but so was family time. My son.

**L:** My Mom for sure. She is a tremendous human being. The many things she taught me: family comes first; exercise your brain (she is the smartest person I know); be resilient (God knows she has been). Give back. Don't act your age. My mom is 83 but looks and acts 65.

My professional mentor is Kevin Toth. I worked for him when the Hotel Macdonald reopened in 1991. I learned in the hospitality industry we are in service to our guests; regardless of your title, the guest comes first. I find it interesting when I see politicians, actors, musicians and many chefs become so high on themselves that they forget that without the constituent, audience, client or guest, they wouldn't be anywhere.

**Favourite casual cheap and cheerful/afterwork food?**

**B:** Double Greeting Wonton House and soup.

**L:** Love a bowl of pork vermicelli at Phobulous.

**Philosophy?**

**B:** Got to have a giggle everyday.

**L:** Be kind. To see all with the same loving and caring attitude.

**What's next?**

**B:** At Kitchen we will do more things with healthy, ready to eat food. Raise \$1million for the VAD program.

**L:** Take care of my health issues and get back to work! Savour every minute of this beautiful life we have been given. 🍷

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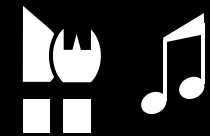
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**Dario Carlentini** visited with a selection of beautiful Poli grappas, including something for Christmas morning—**Poli Moka**, made with Poli's Bassano grappa, coffee, fresh cream and a bit of sugar. Its clean coffee and cream taste will readily replace that other cream liqueur in your coffee cup come the holidays. The **Eliser Camomilla** is made by a three-month infusion of golden chamomile flowers. Soft, bright, relaxing, think chamomile tea with a bit extra. The single vintage **Amorosa di Dicembre** is made from dried Vespaiola grapes. Rich, soft and deeply flavoured, with notes of tropical and dried golden fruits. A gentle grappa. The **Cleopatra Moscato Oro** is a spectacular drink named after the Egyptian alchemist who first created distillation. (Poli makes the Cleopatra in their space age Crysopaea vacuum pot still.) The scents and flavours are from Muscat grown in the Euganei hills in the Veneto. "**The Marconi 46 Gin** recreates the feeling you have when you walk through the woods," says Dario. Clean and fresh with balanced aromas and flavours of juniper berries, muscat, pine, mint, cardamom and coriander. It's the gin in Bar Bricco's singular Negrone.

### We can thank Salivate Consulting's Christina

Masciangelo for bringing these terrific **Blaufränkisch** wines to Alberta, igniting an interest in wines from Austria in general and in these delicious reds in particular. Blaufränkisch, native to Austria, makes deeply-coloured, juicy, fruity wines that develop into elegant and supple wines as they age. The **2017 Krutzler Eisenberg** is a good introduction to the grape, with its flavours of plums and cherries, firm tannin, brightness and balanced acidity. The **2015 Krutzler Reserve Eisenberg** is from older vines with lower yields. The wine is smokier with more obvious wood influence, a bit backward now, needs time. The **2015 Prieler Blaufränkisch Ried Johanneshöhe** (single vineyard) is fresh and fruity, reminding of Gamay, delicious on a Wednesday night. More on the outstanding **2015 Prieler Blaufränkisch Ried Goldberg** (single vineyard) on page 9 (rich Christina). Don't miss Prieler's delicious **2017 Rosé vom Stein**, dry yet fruity, ideal for winter rosé drinking.



### "We are vegan by default",

says Jane Ferrari, the ebullient and knowledgeable voice of **Yalumba**. "No isinglass, no casein, egg whites. We don't move the wine as much, so don't need clarification agents very often. When we do, we use bentonite clay," she says. Over lunch and a tasting of Yalumba wines at Lyon, the talk is about what wine drinkers are looking for. "Vegan is huge in Australia and also business ethics," she says. "The biggest concern is water. We are acutely aware of water too, or the lack of it, in south Australia. We now use only 3/4 litre to make every litre of wine." The **2018 Y Series Viognier** is peachy, a bit tropical with some citrusy lime notes, with a bright and long finish. All the whites ferment naturally with wild (ambient) yeasts. The **2018 Barossa Bush Vine Grenache** has a new label honouring the founder Samuel Smith and Yalumba's 170th birthday. It's a handy bottle to have around due to its congeniality. The **2015 Cigar Cabernet Sauvignon** (cassis, clove and briar) is the little brother to the **2014 Menzies** (dark fruit, shitake, Chinese five spice, aniseed, spice, and something Jane calls vanilla fudge from the oak influence) both showing the influence of the Terra Rossa soil on limestone of the vineyard in Coonawarra. The **2015 Octavius** (Coonawarra Cab Sauv and Barossa Shiraz) is rich and mellow with sweet red fruit and white pepper. The **2014 Signature**, Cab Sauvignon and Shiraz from Barossa, has firmer tannins and is more austere with a slightly chewy finish, best to cellar. The **2013 Caley** Cab Sauvignon and Shiraz, the icon of the winery, is muscular, with a dense texture and a lengthy finish. It's quite closed right now, nowhere ready. Only 5000 bottles were made in 2013.



### Alvaro Ruiz was in town recently for a tasting at Wilfred's

of the exceptional **Alvear** wines. He encouraged us to think of both sherry and Montilla as Andalusian (southern Spain) wines and open our palates to the flavours of Pedro Ximénez (PX) the dominant grape of Montilla. "It's an accident of history that we end up classifying wines as sherry, after the port from which they were shipped (Jerez) and thinking Montilla-Moriles wines are in a separate category," he says.

No problem there, the **Fino Capataz** is an outstanding dry white wine to drink before dinner with almonds and a slice of *jamon Ibérico*. Unlike the Palomino grape of sherry, PX does not need further fortification, so the wines can be a little lower in alcohol. The **Criadera Amontillado** is essentially a 15-year-old fino. Exceptionally fragrant, dry, a real treat and rare, it's not made every year. There was also a dry white from a single vineyard, the **2018 Marques de la Sierra**, which was a delightful surprise. Absolutely delicious, it brought to mind Loire Valley Chenin Blanc with its freshness and depth of flavour. Delish and well-priced.



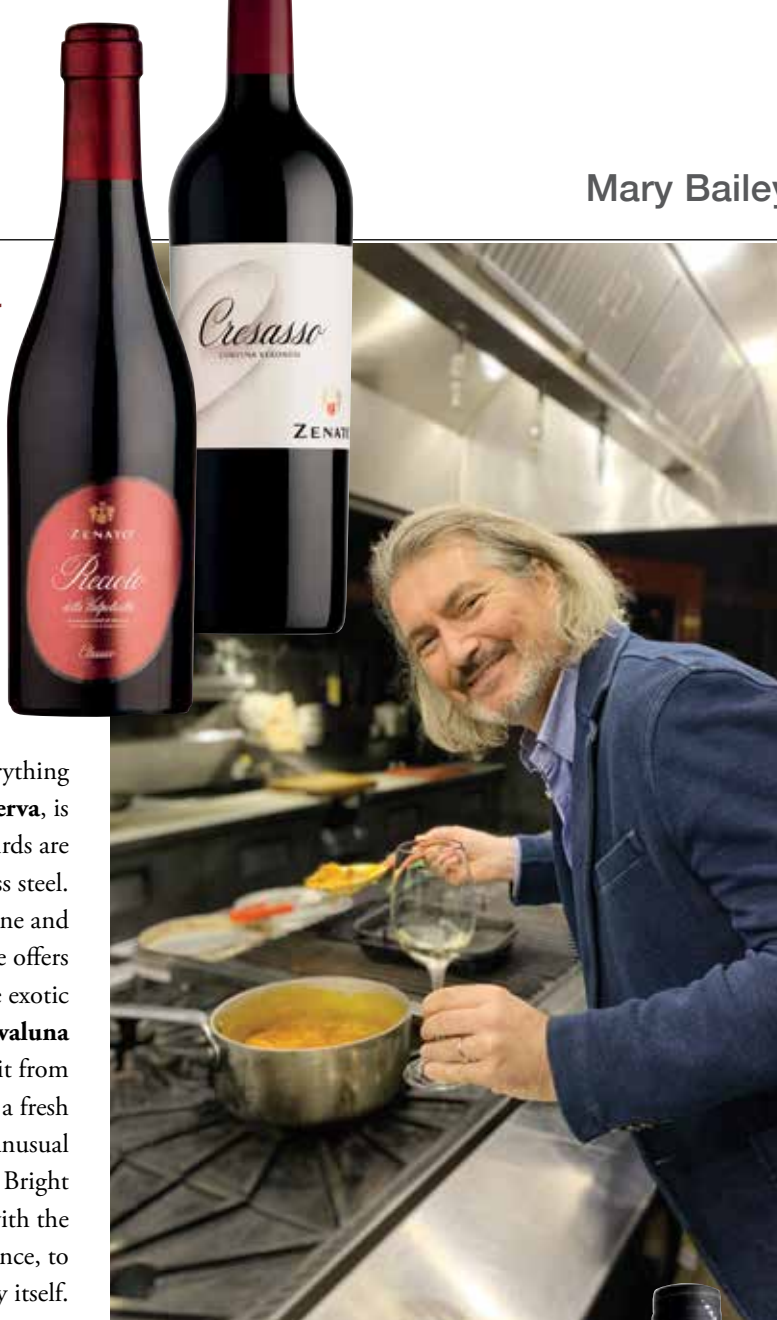


Mary Bailey

## EVENT CALENDAR

**“I run the business with my mother** Carla and my sister Nadia,” says Alberto Zenato, in town for a wine lunch at Vivo. “My father died 11 years ago. Even when I was kid, I knew this was what I wanted to do. I would follow him around the vineyard all day.” The **Zenato family** has vineyards in Valpolicella and in Lugana near Lake Garda. “We have spent decades improving the vineyards in Lugana. They were not iconic when we bought them back in the ‘80s,” he says.

Zenato Amarone are well known and highly regarded. The surprise of the tasting was everything else. A delicious white, the **2016 Lugana Reserva**, is fragrant, dry, textuery, with a long finish. Two thirds are fermented and aged in wood, the rest in stainless steel. It has beautiful minerality from the clay, limestone and sand of the area. The microclimate around the lake offers cooling breezes from the Alps at night to keeps the exotic fruit aromas and flavours bright. The **2017 Evaluna** is dynamic, with herbaceous red and black fruit from the Cabernet Sauvignon and Franc, finishing on a fresh note. The **2017 Cresasso Corvina Veronese** is unusual in that rarely do you find Corvina all on its own. Bright fruit fresh, tasting of grape skin. Let’s end with the **Recioto**, a half bottle of total luscious decadence, to have with dark chocolate, or cheese or all by itself.



### TUESDAY, NOV. 5

Taylor Fladgate Wine Dinner with Jorge Ramos, The Glass Monkey, 780-760-2228

### THURSDAY, NOV. 7

Dirty Laundry Winemaker Dinner, The Butternut Tree, 780-760-2271  
Phillips Brewing Tasting, Sherbrooke Liquor, 780-455-4556

### FRIDAY, NOV. 8

Kanto 98 Pop-up and Wine Tasting Color de Vino, 780-439-9069

### FRI.-SAT., NOV. 8-9

Rocky Mountain Food and Wine Festival  
Edmonton Convention Centre

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

NAIT Culinary Team Luncheon Ernest’s at NAIT, 780-471-8676

### WEDNESDAY, NOV. 20

Bill’s Big Bang for Your Buck Wine Tasting, Color de Vino 780-439-9069

### WEDNESDAY, NOV. 21

Cannonball Winery Dinner with Chantal Landreville The Bothy, 780-761-1761

### FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22

Untapped Food Pairing Sherbrooke Liquor, 780-455-4556

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Undercover Blind Wine Tasting Sherbrooke Liquor, 780-455-4556

### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Jajan, Indonesian Street Food Night, Filistix Downtown, 780-716-4708

Jeff Meyers Glenrothes Tasting with Jeff Meyers, The Bothy, 780-761-1761

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13

Untapped Blind Beer Tasting Sherbrooke Liquor, 780-455-4556

### Your holiday martinis will be golden.

**Eau Claire’s 2019 Christmas Gin** is made with juniper, coriander, Frankincense, Myrrh, and, flakes of 24 karat gold. The Frankincense (the milky sap of the Boswellia tree) has a balsamic lemony aroma, while the Myrrh tree resin contributes the long floral finish. Eau Claire’s labels are always a treat. The Christmas Gin label replaces their signature social animals with the three wise men looking at the north star in a Canadian mountain forest. Now in 750 ml.



### At a wine dinner at Sorrentino’s West, Federica

Mascheroni Stianti tells a story about her mother’s wedding present from her father—a hamlet with vineyards in Radda in Chianti. Obviously, her mother wasn’t meant to be a Milanese housewife. Now, it’s the exceptional **Volpaia Estate** with some of the highest, and best, vineyards in the area. The **2016 Chianti Classico** should be in everyone’s cellar. It’s extremely versatile, have with pasta or meat dishes, drinking beautifully now. The **2016 Coltasalla Gran Selezione** (single vineyard, and Gran Selezione refers to the top level of Chianti Classico, above Reserva). It’s a beautiful wine, keep for five-seven years to show its incredible balance and longevity. The **2015 Balifico**, Volpaia’s super Tuscan (Sangiovese and Cabernet Sauvignon) is elegant, ageable and delicious. 🍷





# Canada's Great Kitchen Party 2019 Edmonton



Bronze



Silver

From left: Silver medalist Serge Belair, Edmonton Convention Centre; Gold medal winner JP Dublado, SC at River Cree; and Bronze medalist Doreen Prei, Zinc.

Canada's Great Kitchen Party celebrates excellence in Canadian food, wine, sports and music. The main event of the evening is the chef's competition where nine chefs vie for the opportunity to compete in the national Canadian culinary competition. This year there was only one newcomer to the competition and five previous podium finishers. Chefs chose to work with duck, scallops, salmon, no meat at all, lamb, sweetbreads and pork. No beef!

## Bronze

Doreen Prei from Zinc created a delicious ode to fall and sustainability—plump and tender squash dumplings with pan-seared maitake mushrooms, crispy discs of sunchoke and smoked

pine nuts along with a dribble of carrot butter. It was woody and delicious with a variety of pleasing textures. Evidently the audience agreed, voting chef Prei's dish the People's Choice. Chef paired it with the 2015 Stoneboat Rock Opera Pinotage—a terrific match.

## Silver

Serge Belair from the Edmonton Convention Centre had me at the perfectly seared duck breast slice, meltingly tender and flavourful. (As it should be, after being dried in the ECC's special meat aging cabinet.)

Accompanying it was a small drum of confit duck meat, pulled from the leg, compressed, then wrapped in

wisps of kataifi pastry, like a bijou gift in raffia. Then came the *coup de grâce*: a large sphere of pomme soufflé cradling a liquid *foie mousse* that tasted faintly of pumpkin pie. The dark and delicious sauce was made with the duck bones, with subtle hints of maple syrup. For contrast to the sweet, a tiny bit of pickled pumpkin. It was a crazy delicious dish which partnered beautifully with the 2018 Dirty Laundry Dangerous Liaisons Malbec blend.

## Gold

JP Dublado from SC at River Cree's dish was a riot of colour and ingenuity. Clever, playful and delicious, the dish worked on several levels. A sublime terrine, like stained glass, made with char sui (roasted) foie gras, layers of truffle and cured duck egg yolk exploded with flavour alongside an odd-looking cone. It was a dumpling made of *ube* (purple yam) stuffed with toothsome chicken rillettes. Alongside were puddles of yellow purée (parsnip, carrot and brown butter); pearls of calamansi with verjus and green tea; white foie gras powder like a dusting of snow;

tiny drums of kiwi fruit adding a fresh note and addictive soy-pickled baby chanterelles. It was enchanting. Each bite was a revelation of flavour and texture. The 2018 Howling Bluff Sauvignon Blanc-Semillon enhanced the vegetal notes and played off the richness and had the requisite acidity to work with all the varying textures and flavours of the dish. A well-deserved first place.

**Of note:** Ryan Hotchkiss' (Bündok) lamb dish; Scott Downey's (The Butternut Tree) introduction of carpenter ants to our palates (for the acidity) and Spencer Thompson's (The Marc) sweetbreads.

Canada's Great Kitchen Party supports Community Food Centres Canada, which helps at risk children learn about healthy eating and food careers, provides musical instruments for 20 children each year through MusiCounts and creates funding for elite amateur athletes and their coaches via the sports non-profit, B2ten.

JP Dublado will compete against other regional winners at the Canadian Culinary Championships in Ottawa in January. Go JP! 🍷



# on Winners



Gold

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## wine tastings, happenings and events

Enjoy the **Port Experience Dinner** with **Jorge Ramos, Taylor Fladgate** at the **Glass Monkey** (5842 111 Street, 780-760-2228, theglassmonkey.ca) 6pm, Tuesday, November 5. Tix: \$95/p++, call to book.

**The Butternut Tree** (9707 110 Street, 780-760-2271, thebutternuttree.ca) is having a five-course wine dinner with **Dirty Laundry** winemaker **Mason Spink**, 6pm, Thursday, November 7. Tix: \$110/p++, Eventbrite.

Lots of tasting opportunities at **Sherbrooke** (11819 St Albert Trail, 780-455-4556, sherbrookeliqour.com) coming up: Thursday, November 7, **Phillips Brewing**; Friday, November 22, **Untapped Food Pairing**; Saturday, November 23, **Undercover Blind Wine Tasting**; Friday, December 13, **Untapped Blind Beer Tasting**. Free store tastings every Friday and Saturday until Christmas. Check prices and register online.

Enjoy Filipino food with wine at the **Kanto 98 Pop up and Wine Tasting** at **Color de Vino** (9602 82 Avenue, 780-439-9069, colordevina.ca), 7pm, Friday, November 8. Tix: \$25/p+, call to book.

Expect live music, beverage gardens, food trucks, s'mores around the fire, street performers, fire dancers, sleigh rides and a children's activity area during the free **124 Street All is Bright** event. The main event happens at 6pm sharp, Saturday, November 16, 124street.ca.

Help NAIT's culinary team prep for the 2020 IKA Culinary Olympics, at a lunch at **Ernest's at NAIT** (10701 118 Avenue, 780-471-8676) 11:30am-12:30pm, Saturday, November 16. Tix: \$21/p++, Eventbrite.

Taste great buys at **Bill's Big Bang for Your Buck Wine Tasting**, at **Color de Vino** (9606 82 Avenue, 780-439-9069, colordevino.ca) 7pm, Wednesday, November 20. Tix: \$25/p+, call to book.

**The Bothy** (5482 Calgary Trail, 780-761-1761, thebothy.ca) is having a **Cannonball Winery** four-course wine dinner with **Chantal Landreville**, 6:30pm, Thursday, November 21. Tix: \$55/p++, call to book.

Enjoy the **Jajan Indonesian Street Food Night** at **Filistix Downtown** (10621 100 Avenue, 780-716-4708, filistix.ca), November 28. There is another **Bayanihan Dinner** in December, called **Pasko**. Enjoy all the traditional Filipino dishes for *Noche Buena* (Christmas Eve) with **Roel and Ariel** (Filistix), **Edgar Gutierrez** (Kanto 98 St.), **Ailynn Santos** and **Jason Wong** (Yelo'd Ice Cream), **JP Dublado** (Great Kitchen Party top chef), and **Earl Briones** (Drunken Ox Sober Cat). Visit Eventbrite for ticket info.

Taste the new **Glenrothes** bottlings and have some nibbles with **Jeff Meyers**, the Glenrothes brand ambassador at **The Bothy** (5482 Calgary Trail, 780-761-1761, thebothy.ca) 6:30pm, Thursday, November 28. Tix: \$20/p+, call to book.

Don't miss the **2019 Glow Gardens**, from November 28-January 4 at the Edmonton Expo Centre, with a Christmas market, a bar, local food trucks and all those beautiful lights, GlowGardens.ca.

## restaurant buzz

**Alchemy** (JW Marriott, 10344 102 Avenue, 780-784-7950, alchemybar.ca) is a secret. Behind library doors on the fifth floor, it is a sweet spot for a cocktail. The long bar hugs the windows providing sunset views for days. Comfy leather couches lend a men's club air. And that patio—can't wait to check that out next spring. Clever cocktails (loved the crisp and tangy Oh My, with fresh grapefruit juice, Tio Pepe sherry and Aperol, a little less of an alcohol bomb), a fun snack menu and a decent wine list with a glass of Taittinger Brut NV for \$19. Check it out!

Love **The Art of Cake**? Visit their spinoff, **The Baker's Son** in the Allin Clinic building (10155 120 Street) for coffee and muffins. It's a gem of a spot for coffee and a sweet. Bet the staff at the clinic love their new neighbour.

Hospitality guru **Charles Rothman** is now the regional manager for **Food Service Solutions Canada**. The company represents manufacturers (Hespin, Naboo) who sell to companies like Russell Foods. FSS is unique in its approach to the on the ground support of professional kitchens. All are former chefs and restaurant people who work consultatively with chefs, foodservicesolutions.ca.

Which Edmonton baristas finished big at the 2020 Canadian National Brewers Cup? **Ply Pasarj** of **Rogue Wave Coffee** took first place, **Santiago Lopez** of **The Colombian** took third. Ply Pasarj will compete at the 2020 World Brewers Cup Championship in Melbourne, Australia in May. Congrats baristas!

Farmers' market favourites **Mini Kitchen** and **El Gringo** have opened a casual deli-style café at 9729 42 Avenue. Enjoy their tasty, ready-to-eat Indian, Thai, and fusion Mexican food almost daily.

**The Bodega Tapas & Wine Bar** empire grows with a new location in St. Albert (1 Hebert Road, 587-290-1119, bodegayeg.ca). It is as delightful as their other locations, downtown, on 124 street and in the Highlands. Don't miss the bacon-wrapped dates.

Some new things at the new **OEB Breakfast Co.** (10240 124 Street, 780-250-0788, eatoeb.com), brioche French toast that tastes like banana cream pie, Sea Change is on tap and there is a chef's table. As if you needed more reasons to go. Opens at 7am.

**Fox Burger** (780-250-0369, foxburger.ca) and **June's Delicatessen** (780-752-5863, junesdelicatessen.ca) are now open, joining Highlands Liquor in the transformation of the Gibbard Block (6425 112 Avenue) Lucky Highland

folks! Expect traditional deli fare at June's—bagels and cream cheese, matzo ball soup, reuben sandwiches and blitzes in a brightly lit casual atmosphere. At Fox Burger, enjoy the main event eight ways including two vegetable heavy selections, a kid's menu and, wait for it, milk shakes!

**The Blue Plate Diner** (12323 Stony Plain Road, 780-429-0740, blueplatediner.ca) has made the transition from 104 Street to join the burgeoning 124 Street restaurant scene. All the Blue Plate faves on the menu in a bigger and brighter space. Open daily.

New hours at the **Cave Beastro** (6104 104 Street, 780-540-2283, the-cave.ca) Closed Monday, Tuesdays; Wednesday Thursday from 11am-9pm; Friday 11am-10pm; Saturday, 10am-3pm and Sunday Brunch, 10am-2pm.

## product news

**Popowich Meat Company** (6843 170 Street, 587-462-8926, popowichmeatcompany.ca) has just opened in the west end. It's a full-service butcher shop with locally sourced meats including beautiful lamb from **Haywire Farm** as well as Thai Sesame chicken, pork schnitzel and pork sausages in flavours like potsticker and apple fennel. **Mike Popowich** left corporate life, took the butcher course at Olds College and opened up the shop with his wife Treena. **Elyse Chatterton**, a member of the World Butcher Championship Canadian team, is behind the counter most days. Check it out!

Lots to do at the **Italian Centre Shops** before the holidays. The Switzerland Cheese Marketing folks are offering samples of Switzerland's famous **Raclette** cheese, November 8, 9 and 10. On December 6 and 7 chefs from Aurora Importing will be sampling giant *Fiasconaro panettone* (traditional Italian Christmas sweet bread) and **Alessia Torrone** (Italian nougat bars). On December 14 the **Thumbs Up!** a capella quartet will be touring each shop performing Christmas carols. They



## what's new and notable

will be joined by Santa Claus, who will be available to visit with kids and take photos. Very festive.

**Kind Ice Cream** (9551 76 Avenue, 587-759-0080, kindicecream.ca) has new fall/winter flavours, the delicious **Goat Cheese Cherry Crumble** (made with Crystal Springs goat cheese and a fine Sicilian extra virgin olive oil), **Vegan Chai** (with The Northern Table's chai). The pumpkin spice waffle cones (with Herbologie spices) are still available. Chef Chael MacDonald is working on peppermint and gingerbread flavours for Christmas. Winter hours are Sunday-Thursday 12-9pm, Friday and Saturday from 12-10pm.

**Bella Casa** (9646 142 street, 780-437-4190, bellacasadcl.com) is looking festive with **Spode by Portmeirion Old St. Nick** and **Lastra** holiday patterns now available. As well, they have a robust selection of **Frasier Fir** candles and **Thymes** room diffusers and such in seasonal fragrances. Don't miss the **Festive Party**, Thursday November 14, 1-6pm with door prizes and 10 per cent off all regular merchandise and up to 20 per cent off on selected items. Extended shopping hours from Sunday, November 24 until Christmas; Sundays 1-4pm; open until 7pm from Friday, December 20. Closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Live outside of Edmonton and love **Meuwly's**? Now the delicious **Secret Meat Club (SMC)** subscription box is available for province-wide delivery. SMC has launched three new packages: two types of artisan sausages each month, \$20; sausages and charcuterie, \$40. The Gourmet Package with all the meats, cheeses, pickles and condiments is \$65. What a terrific way to have these amazing locally-made products in your kitchen. Meuwly's (10706 124 Street, 587-786-3560, meuwlys.com) is now stocking some regular grocery items such as milk, cream and butter, free range eggs and over a dozen local and imported cheeses.

Holiday specials include their smoked turkey (\$94/half bird with gravy and

cranberry sauce); the honey hams (\$35/sm, \$89/lg with honey cider mustard). Charcuterie platters are available in a box or on a board. All are available by pre-order, order in-store or online at [secretmeatclub.com](http://secretmeatclub.com).

**Violet Chocolate Company's** holiday collection of flavoured bars, chocolate covered fruits and nuts and of course some delicious hot cocoa launches November 23. They have a fun and beautiful Advent Calendar available too. Find both at [the-violet-chocolate-company.myshopify.com](http://the-violet-chocolate-company.myshopify.com).

**Heart of the Home** (12539 102 Avenue, 780-705-4928, [heartofthehomeyeg.ca](http://heartofthehomeyeg.ca)) has a full lineup of holiday shopping moments. On November 16, enjoy demos and hot chocolate from 3-6pm during **All is Bright**. November 20 is the **Zwilling's J.A. Henckles and Miyabi** knife sharpening clinic; November 27, **Ladies Sip & Shop** from 4-8pm, reserve on their Facebook page. November 29 to December 1 is the **Black Friday** sale. The **12 Days of Christmas** starts December 11 and the **Christmas Blow out Sale** is December 28-31. Christmas hours: Monday, Tuesday and Saturday; 10-5:30pm Wednesday to Friday; 10-8pm, Sundays 11am-4pm. December 24 and 31, 10am-3pm.

### cooking classes

Upcoming classes at **Kitchen by Brad** (10130 105 Street, 780-757-7704, [kitchenbybrad.ca](http://kitchenbybrad.ca)) **Preserves and Fall Cooking**, 12:30-3:30pm, Saturday, November 16 and Saturday, November 30. There will be a **Holiday Do Ahead** cooking class in December and a **Ukrainian Cooking Class** in January. Check [kitchenbybrad.ca](http://kitchenbybrad.ca) for dates. All classes are \$145/p++, [kitchenbybrad.ca](http://kitchenbybrad.ca).

There are spots available in various classes at **The Ruby Apron**. Don't delay! Book at [therubyapron.ca](http://therubyapron.ca).

Send interesting food and drink news for *Kitchen Sink* to [hello@thetomato.ca](mailto:hello@thetomato.ca).



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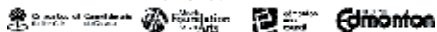
### All-You-Can-Eat-Cereal Cartoon Party December 7 at 10AM

It's the Annual Christmas edition! The cartoon lineup is always a mystery, but you'll see both Holiday faves and obscurities spanning the 40s through the 80s, all punctuated with vintage commercials and PSAs!

Adult: \$16, Student/Senior: \$14, Children 12 Under: \$12. Admission includes cereal.

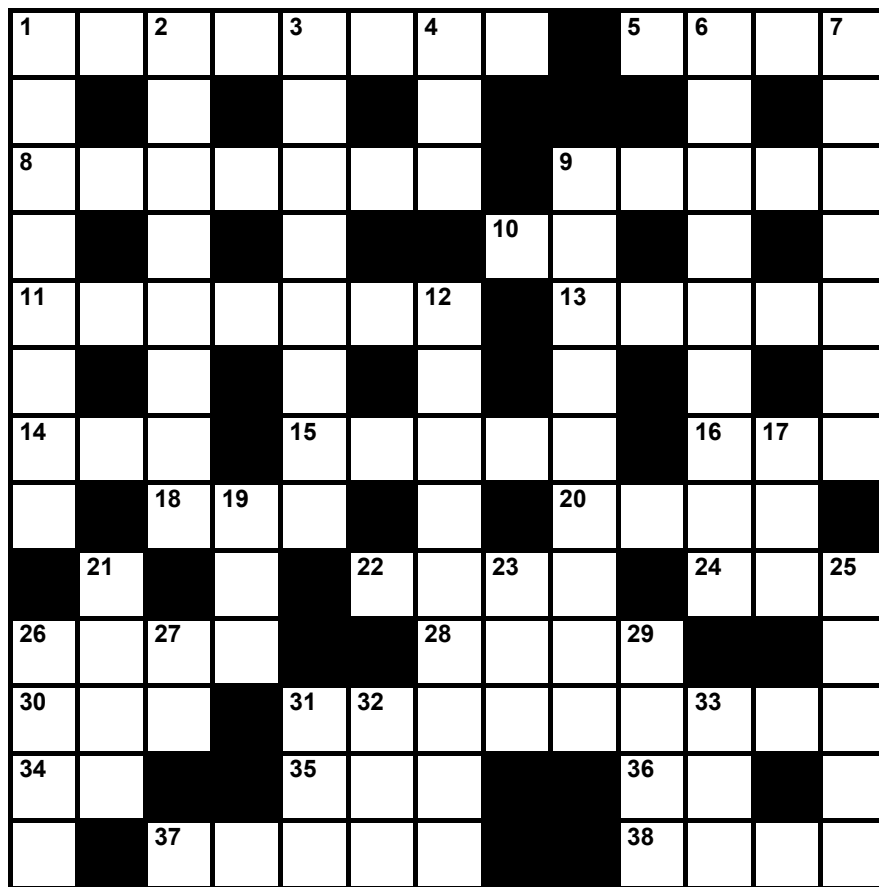
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## Tomato Crossword

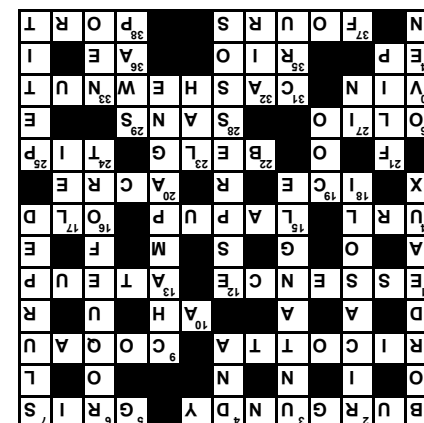
Myles Mellor



### Across

- 1 Where the Drouhin family owns Premier and Grand Cru vineyards
- 5 Pinot \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 Soft cheese
- 9 Braised chicken dish, goes with 30 across (3 words)
- 10 Expression of surprise
- 11 Inherent quality
- 13 Finished the meal, say (2 words)
- 14 Website address
- 15 Take in enthusiastically, 2 words
- 16 Aged
- 18 Inniskillen Riesling \_\_\_\_\_ wine
- 20 Vineyard measurement
- 22 EU country known for its chocolate, abbr.
- 24 Appreciation for service
- 26 Edible hodgepodge
- 28 Without, French
- 30 See 9 across
- 31 It's kidney shaped and is often roasted, 2 words
- 34 Old record
- 35 Brazilian resort city
- 36 Channel with mystery shows, \_\_\_ & \_\_\_
- 37 See 25 down
- 38 Dark red dessert wine

- 2 Francesco with extensive vineyards at Castello Brolio (Italy)
- 3 Straighten out
- 4 Genetic strands
- 6 Mild sheep cheese from the south of France
- 7 Drank rudely
- 9 Veuve Clicquot, for example
- 12 Strong coffee brews
- 17 Oahu garland
- 19 Dove sound
- 21 Class of mixed drinks
- 23 "Well, \_\_\_-di-dah!"
- 25 Small bites of confectionery, goes with 37 across
- 26 Chef's equipment
- 27 Stylish
- 29 Exchange
- 31 High-quality French vineyard
- 32 Aerating gas
- 33 \_\_\_\_\_ impressionism



### Down

- 1 Notable area for French wines

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