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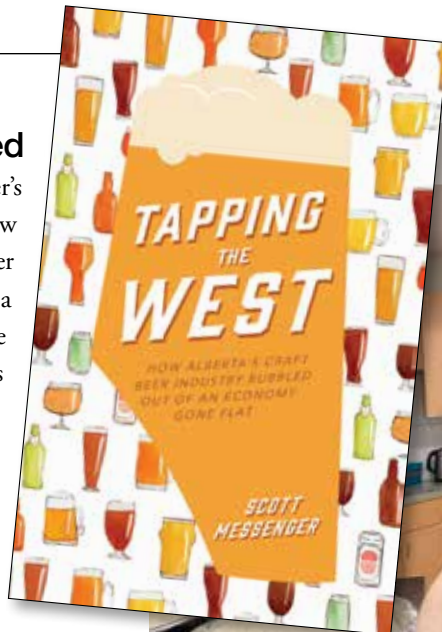
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### alberta craft beer, explained

Check out Edmonton author Scott Messenger's new book *Tapping the West* about the who, how and why of Alberta's craft beer boom. Messenger uses personal experience and the history of a few key breweries to illustrate the idea that the business of brewing in Alberta is all about its politics and the boom and bust economy. He explores how small malting and hop-growing operations are all part of the wonderful ripple effect caused by the rise of high-quality local brewing. If you love craft beer, you'll love this book. *Tapping the West*, TouchWood Editions, \$23.



### japanese alberta whisky collab

Alberta-raised Hong Kong hospitality mavens Lindsay Jang and Matt Abergel, along with Calgarians Elliot Faber and Alex Staniloff, worked with spirit company Sasanokawa Shuzo on a new Alberta-inspired Japanese whisky. Sunday's Whisky is barrel-aged malt and grain spirits blended with the soft water of Koriyama, aged in ex-Bourbon casks. Complex, clean flavours, a round and full-bodied texture, ideal on the rocks, in an Old Fashioned or The Highball: frozen whisky, near-frozen soda and lemon peel garnish, squeezed to release the oils for additional flavour. Find at Color de Vino, Sherbrooke and other fine shops, \$85.



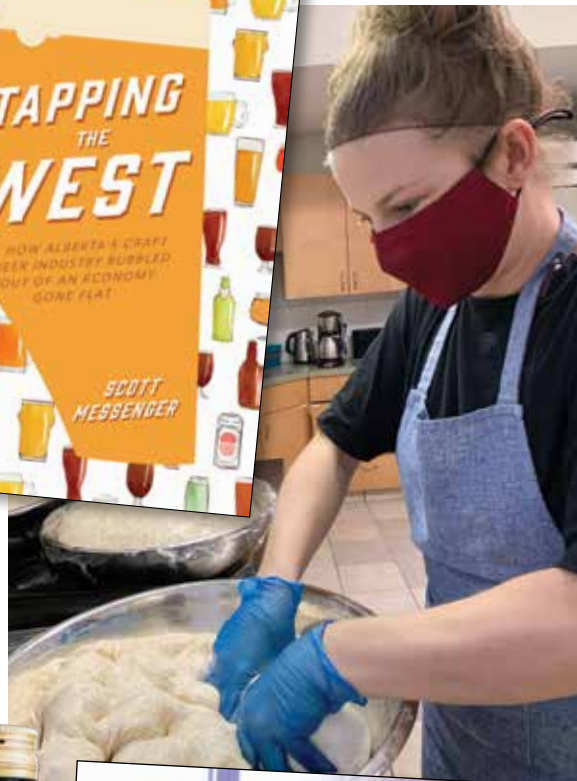
### tasty baking equals youth empowerment

Chef and baker Kelsey Johnson (Duchess Bake Shop and Café Linnea) joined the Trinity Youth Project in mid-summer. "I was looking for something different, but I still loved cooking.

I am always interested in community."

Program director Clark Hardy had been teaching youth to bake using his grandmother's bun dough recipe. Kelsey is now teaching various doughs and techniques and expanding the offerings to scones, muffins, dense chocolatey brownies, foccacia, banana bread, palmiers and cookies along with the dinner and cinnamon buns and custom cakes such as pumpkin cheesecake and apple walnut bundt cake.

Through the program, now called TypTop Bakery, youth learn valuable skills which will help them find employment. "It feels right," says Kelsey. "It's all the things that I love. It's funny how things work out—a year ago I had a restaurant with 38 employees. Now I'm in a church basement. Exactly where I should be." Find TypTop baking at Grizzlar Coffee & Records, Lui-Chi's Coffee, or order online at edmonton.anglican.ca. Monthly subscriptions are available too.



From the top: the definitive story of craft beer in Alberta; chef Kelsey Johnson punching down bun dough; made-in-Alberta Japanese whisky; Nadia and Sarah's cookbook memoir; Arden Tse and Eric Hansen say goodbye.

### food is love

Sisters Nadia Carinella and Sara Marghella wanted to make a cookbook they could give to their kids to celebrate their beloved nonna Rosaria Franco. "We always loved going there," says Sarah. "There were no toys at nonna's house. Instead we would make biscotti and *taralli* as if the dough was playdoh, using the pizza cutter to make different shapes. We know now that was her way to keep us busy.

"Her greatest skill was putting a whole meal together with three ingredients. She taught us to think, 'what do I have in my fridge?' and to make dinner from that. She taught us that Italian cooking is using your local ingredients. That's what nonna did and that's what tasted good."

*Nonna Said* celebrates strong women, adept in the kitchen and firm in the understanding that food is love. "She inspired us through her stories, her faith and her love of life and food. The recipe that reminds me the most of nonna is the ricotta gnocchi," says Nadia. "It was more to appease my dad, who thought potato was too heavy." Find at the Italian Centre Shops. *Nonna Said*, ATavolaYYC, \$20.

### good bye and thank you to prairie noodle

Arden Tse made the difficult decision to close five-year-old noodle shop Prairie Noodle. "I wanted to open a resto to bring people together, but we can't do that anymore. Delivery is not why we got in the biz," says Arden. "It wasn't one big thing, it was many things. We were too small to reopen for sit-down dining. Employee morale, losing Liam took the wind out of our sails. There was too much stress operating with a skeleton crew and the mental fatigue of wondering what's next. We didn't qualify for the rent subsidy and our lease was up for renewal, so we thought it best to shut down permanently. These past few days we've had a real validation that we created something that mattered, that we made a difference."

"Making the decision was the hard part," says Eric Hansen, exec chef. "The anticipation of having to tell the staff we had since the beginning. We were hanging on to keep people employed. Now I'm helping everybody get other jobs. I've never shut down a restaurant before. Opened many, so this is something new."

Prairie Noodle was a cheerful spot with a great vibe and really delicious food. It's tough to say goodbye and knowing that we will be saying so long to many more independents over the next while doesn't make it any easier. Thank you, Arden and Eric and all the Prairie Noodle folks, for what you gave us. 🍷



# MEUWLY'S

## HOLIDAY MENU

This delicious menu by Meuwly's chef Roger Letourneau features rich, hearty, old world flavours and techniques chef learned while cooking in Belgium.

Chef has designed the menu for four people, or two with leftovers. Every step builds flavour in the dish and some of the menu could be done in advance. Start prepping the roast a few days before. You could slice vegetables, steam potatoes, fry lardons, bake pears and make the streusel in the morning. You will be rewarded by the time spent, shopping, prepping and cooking. One thing for sure—buy the very best Alberta pork you can find at a local butcher.

To drink? Begin with fine bubbles and charcuterie from Meuwly's. Pair the sweet flavours in the menu with wine with some residual sugar or red fruit and good acidity as the dishes are rich—Mosel Riesling, Kadarki, Cru Beaujolais, or a northern Italian red. Or, follow Roger's lead and drink beer.

### Pork Roast

*Two techniques to build flavour and a crispy crust—applying the salt and gin mixture a few days before cooking, then rubbing the roast with sugar and spices after the initial cooking. This will keep the crust flavourful and crispy and the meat juicy.*

#### A few days before

- 4 lbs top butt or shoulder roast
- 1.5 % salt, by weight of roast (if you don't have a kitchen scale, count 1T salt per every 2.5 lbs (add a tsp extra if using coarse salt))
- 4 oz Strathcona Spirits Barrel Aged gin

A few days before the meal, rub the roast with the salt and gin mixture. Leave out for an hour or two to absorb, then rub all over with olive oil and place back in the fridge.

#### Day of

Approximately 2 hours before cooking the roast, remove from the fridge and pat dry very well to ensure a good sear.

- Coating
- Dijon mustard
  - brown sugar, pepper,
  - gin spices (juniper, anise, angelica, coriander, cassia dried orange peel, crushed or cracked)

Preheat the oven to 300°F.

Place the roast (uncoated) in the oven on a wire rack if possible. If there is no rack, throw some carrots or sliced potatoes into the roasting pan for the roast to sit on to lift it up off of the pan. Roast until the internal temperature is 145°F.

Once at the desired temperature, take out of the oven and let rest at room temperature for 20 minutes. (Keep in mind that the resting time will bring you up another 10°F, and you are putting it back in the oven in the next step).

Turn the oven up to 350°F while the roast is resting. Mix the brown sugar and spices together. Taste and adjust according to the amount of spices desired. Once the meat has rested 20 minutes, coat the roast with the mustard all around, followed by the spice and sugar mixture. Coating the roast with the mustard first allows the sugar mixture to stay in place. Place the coated roast back in the oven.

Once there is nice caramelization on the outside (roughly 20-30 minutes) take the roast out and let it rest for 10 minutes in a warm spot (not covered, as that would create steam and wreck the coating.)

Slice right before serving.

### Tartiflette

*A cheese and potato gratin originating from the Savoie region where potato is referred to as tartifle, giving the name to the dish. It calls for a cheese called reblochon, from reblocher, meaning to milk a second time, resulting in more cream in the milk.*

- 500 g Reblochon, Delice de Jura, Taleggio or aged raclette cheese, whole piece
- 1.2 kg potatoes, small variety
- 200 g Meuwly's pancetta, peti salé or thick bacon (cut into a small dice) to make lardons
- 1 med onion, sliced
- 8 T butter
- 2 T crème fraîche
- 100 ml dry white wine, (Roger suggests wine from Aprement in the Savoie, or, you could use any dry, higher-acid white)
- olive oil as needed

Gently cook potatoes in salted simmering water. Do not boil the potatoes too hard as they will crack and become waterlogged. Remove cooked potatoes from the water and cool. Cut them into quarters or eights if possible. Salt if needed and reserve.

While the potatoes are cooking, place the lardons in a pan and fry until just crispy. Do not overcook. Drain on paper towel and reserve.

Meanwhile, heat the butter in a pan and sweat the onions gently. Once translucent, season with salt and reserve.

In a casserole dish, place one layer of potatoes followed by a good dousing of olive oil, then half the onions and lardons. Add another layer of potatoes then the remaining onions, lardons and crème fraîche (spread evenly over top.) Slice the cheese in half horizontally so it's as wide as possible, placing over the casserole to cover. Lastly, pour the wine over top.

Put into a preheated oven at 430°F (400°F in a convection oven) and cook until the top is caramelized. (Aim for a nice golden brown on top—too much and the cheese will overcook and split.) The shape of the cheese should be retained.

### Beer-braised Endive

*This is a traditional dish made in Holland and Belgium that uses caramelization and a couple other techniques to bring out the sweetness of this vegetable, counterbalancing the bitterness. If you're averse to the bitterness of the endive, you can cut out the root before serving. Immediately before serving, add your strips of raw endive and toss them in the sauce.*

- 4-8 Belgian endive
- brown sugar, to coat
- 8 T butter
- Orval, Rochefort 8 or Trappist beer
- malt vinegar to taste
- salt to taste
- anise-flavoured spices or chicory root, optional, ground

Reserve one or two of the endive to serve raw. Cut them in half lengthwise, then into quarters. Slice them vertically into long thin stripes and reserve for garnishing the dish.

Cut the rest of them vertically so the root is still intact on both sides and you have two flat pieces from each endive.

Heat a pan that has enough surface area for all of the spears to lay flat-side down. Toss endive in a handful of sugar to coat. Melt the butter in the pan and place your endive face down in the butter and let it slowly caramelize in the pan for 15-20 minutes. Add more sugar depending on your taste. At this point salt the endive on both sides and flip them over and start caramelizing the other side. If you need more butter or sugar add it at this point. Once the round side is caramelized add your beer (add enough so the endive is half-covered, allowing the tops to retain their texture from caramelization.) Add the spices and simmer until the beer has reduced by half. Adjust your seasoning to taste with salt, brown sugar and malt vinegar.



## Roasted Vegetable Salad

*This salad is easy to make and you can use any vegetables you want as long as you keep in mind the cooking times of the vegetables. For example, if you have really large carrots and your parsnips are small, consider halving or quartering the carrots prior to roasting.*

- 2 lrg carrots, whole
- 2 lrg parsnips, whole
- 1 sml cabbage, sliced thick
- ½ jar Meuwly's pickled golden beets or carrots
- salt to taste
- olive oil as needed
- sherry vinegar to taste
- 1 bunch parsley
- 1 bunch chives or green onions

Pre-heat oven 350°F.

Wash the vegetables and remove excess water. Place into a bowl with olive oil and salt and toss well. Be careful not to break the cabbage, keep the root intact. Once your vegetables are well-coated, place them in a deep baking tray or ceramic dish and cover tightly with aluminum foil. Place in the oven and cook for 30 minutes. At this point check your vegetables for doneness. The trick is to have vegetables that are soft enough to absorb a vinaigrette but not soft enough to turn into a mash—strive for *al dente* on the root vegetables and just cooked through for the cabbage.

Cool and reserve roasting liquid (if not too burnt) from the pan. Cut the cooked vegetables into bite size pieces. You could do diamond cuts or paysanne or cut them at an angle. Cut your pickled vegetables into small dice as they will be part of the vinaigrette. Chiffonade or rough chop the parsley leaves and finely cut the chives. Reserve.

Combine parsley stems with sherry vinegar, roasting liquid and salt in a blender. Make sure it tastes fairly acidic and well-seasoned. Next, blend olive oil into this mixture to make a vinaigrette. Taste again and adjust seasoning. Mix the vinaigrette with the pickled vegetables, chopped parsley, and chives.

When you're ready to serve, toss your vegetables in this dressing.

## Salt-Baked Pears with Streusel Topping

*Salt intensifies the sweetness and peariness.*

- 2 lrg fresh pears (1 half/person is a nice serving size)
- coarse sea salt, as needed

Poire Williams eau de vie or pear liqueur (optional)

Pre-heat oven to 350°F.

Line a small cake pan (something with tall sides) with aluminium foil. Spread enough salt to cover the surface of the pan, about half an inch deep.

Cut the pears in half lengthwise and place skin-side down into the pan, pressing down lightly so the salt forms a bed around it. Drizzle the cut sides of the pears with a small amount of spirit if desired. Bake for about 30 minutes, until tender. (A paring knife should just slide through easily, but the pears should still be holding their shape.)

Remove from the oven and allow to cool slightly. They can be re-warmed in a 325°F oven just before serving if needed.

Serve warm, with a scoop of Little Bear French vanilla gelato in the hollowed-out part, garnish with a tart fruit sauce such as our Citrus and Ginger Cranberry Sauce, or the North 49 Haskap topping and have with a small glass of Poire Williams.

If you prefer a more savoury dessert, serve with a wedge of room-temperature Camembert.

## Streusel Topping

*For a bit of crunch, garnish with a quick streusel topping. Here's one adapted from the King Arthur Flour cookbook. It can be made ahead.*

- 50 g flour
- 50 g brown sugar
- 25 g rolled oats
- 25 g chopped hazelnuts
- pinch of salt (add salt to your desired taste—remember the pears will be well seasoned!)
- hefty pinch cinnamon (1/8 t)
- pinch fresh orange zest
- 50 g unsalted butter

Preheat oven to 325°F. Combine dry ingredients and mix thoroughly. Work the butter in with your hands until the texture resembles small crumbs. Spread this on a parchment-lined baking sheet and bake at 325°F until golden (about 10-15 minutes) stirring every 5 minutes.

Transfer to a room-temperature tray to cool down so it doesn't keep cooking on the hot baking sheet.

Serve at room temperature. Extra streusel can be frozen and sprinkled on ice cream or yogurt. 🍌



Photo Massimo Vitali



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# W.I.N.E.S

## FROM THE RICH UNCLE & THE CASH-STRAPPED FRIEND, 2020 EDITION

We asked the folks that know, live and breathe wine in their daily lives—the wine shop folks, the importers, the reps and the chefs—what they would love to see under the tree from their pal with more style than money and the generous rellie who loves to share.



.....  
**Patrick Saurette,  
The Marc**

**Cash-strapped friend**

**2019 Joseph Drouhin Macon-Villages (Burgundy, France) \$20**

Caution: this wine is so delicious it will not last long in your glass. Crisp acidity, apple freshness and the buzz of exquisite minerality coupled with a long finish adds up to over deliver. Serve with grilled seafood or, like in my house, white cheddar popcorn and a good game of cribbage.

**Rich Uncle**

**2016 Bruno Rocca Barbaresco Rabajà (Piedmont, Italy) \$115**

This compelling Nebbiolo wine delivers every time. Classically austere, a nose of dark fruit, cherry and spice and a palate that surprises with

warm, elegant plum and cherry notes and a delicious minerality ziggling around the tannic structure expected of this long-lived wine. This wine is only elevated with food; pair with beef tartare and some Parmigiana Reggiano or drink with homemade pizza while watching *My Brilliant Friend* with that someone special.



.....  
**Christina Masciangelo,  
Salivate Consulting**

**Cash-strapped Friend**

**2018 Zsirai Múza Kadarka (Villány, Hungary) \$24**

I've got Hungary on my mind this season with the arrival of some exciting new Hungarian wines. This unique red is made from the Kadarka grape and is reminiscent of a great Gamay (think Beaujolais). Its light palate and ripe, fruity flavours and mouth-watering freshness make it a very versatile food wine. Turkey with cranberry sauce? Perfect! Cheese and charcuterie? Definitely! Chicken, salmon, and vegetarian fare? Absolutely! The Zsirai family is a small, high quality producer and we, in Alberta, are the first in North America to receive their wines. How cool is that.

**Rich Uncle**

**2009 Zsirai Aszú 6 Puttonyos (Tokaj, Hungary) 500ml, \$75**

The Zsirai winery is based in the best-known Hungarian wine region, Tokaj, famous for its sweet, age-worthy wines. The holiday season is a perfect occasion to indulge in these rare, sweet nectars.



Pair it with fruit-based desserts that complement its intense fruitiness or with pungent cheeses that contrast to its luscious sweetness. Tokaji Aszú is a late harvested wine in which the grapes have been affected by the *botrytis* mold known affectionately as noble rot. This mold concentrates the flavours in the grape giving a honeyed nuance. It is aged a minimum of two years in barrel and puttonyos refers to the level of sweetness of the wine, the more puttonyos, the richer, more concentrated and sweeter the wine. Hint: If you have a child or grandchild with this birth year, this is a cool gift to put away until they come of age.





**Daniel Costa,  
Corso 32 Group**

**Cash-strapped friend**

**2018 Schola Sarmenti Critèra**

**Salento IGT Primitivo  
(Puglia, Italy) \$26**

After tasting Schola Sarmenti at Vin Italy I realized how great Primitivo can be. The temperature wine is served at is always important, but Primitivo should be given a little extra attention, serve at 15-20 degrees to capture all it has to offer. The Critèra has huge depth—dark, ripe fruits on the palate with notes of liquorice and bitter coffee on the finish. Try a slowly-simmered lamb ragu scented with a little cinnamon and cloves or a simple chargrilled steak to with this delicious wine.



**Rich Uncle  
2015 Sandrone  
Le Vigne Barolo  
(Piedmont, Italy) \$145**

My son Gennaro was born in 2015 and aging wines from his birth year is something I value deeply. Sandrone is one of my

favourite producers and was at the top of my list of Barolos to find. Thankfully 2015 was a great year for Barolo and I am expecting the patience will pay off. I am so happy to have a few aging in my cellar for Gennaro (and I) to enjoy in the future. I dream about serving it with *tjarin* pasta, butter and fresh white truffles.

**Dianna Funnell,  
Sherbrooke Liquor**

**Cash-strapped friend**

**2016 Powers Merlot  
(Washington State, USA) \$23**

It's 94 per cent Merlot, three per cent Malbec and three per cent Syrah. I love it because it reeks of blackberry, cedarwood and Bing cherry. The palate follows through on those rich aromas with a round herbaceous attack of blackberry and spice that lingers on in the remarkable finish.

Great on its own or with grilled steaks, burgers or chili.



**Rich Uncle**

**2017 Château Calon-Ségur  
(Bordeaux, France) \$175**

I love it because it's a classic Bordeaux, perhaps the oldest property in Saint-Estèphe dating back to 1147. It's always been a powerfully tannic wine, but this vintage is plush, with slightly softer tannins and more juicy fruit and inviting spice than ever before. Decant up to four hours before drinking. From the northernmost vineyard in the Médoc, Calon-Ségur has an intriguing terroir of gravel, clay, sand and limestone. Primarily Cabernet at 76 per cent with 13 per cent Merlot, 9 per cent Cabernet Franc and 2 per cent Petit Verdot. Best served with roasted meats, stews and hearty dishes.



**Rob Filipchuk,  
The Glass Monkey**

**Cash-strapped Friend  
2019 White Cliff Sauvignon Blanc  
(Marlborough, New Zealand) \$19**

I went though many bottles of this inexpensive, delightful Sauv Blanc at the lake this past summer. Super fresh and crisp with a perfect balance of citrus alongside tropical fruit. Great acidity, balance and length, especially for a wine at this price point.

**Rich Uncle  
2007 Domaine de la  
Romanée-Conti, La Tâche  
(Burgundy, France) \$3,500**

Sigh. Maybe one day! This is a wine on my bucket list. Notes from *The Robb Report* —'Perhaps the most magnificent vineyard in Burgundy, this property produces Pinot Noir that has the potential to age for decades. This exuberant vintage possesses concentrated flavors of sweet ripe cherry, saddle leather, Asian spices, and granite. The 2007 is a rare luxury not to be missed.'



**Barb and Susan  
Giacomin,  
Wine Quest Wine  
Importers**

**Cash-strapped Friend  
2018 Tenuta Sant'Anna  
Bianco di Lison (Veneto,  
Italy) \$17**

A delightful white made with consultation by Italy's top winemaker Riccardo Cotarella, using Sauvignon Blanc and Tai Classico (formerly called Tocai). There's something luxurious about its effortless, uncomplicated pleasurability, pure fruit flavours and genial texture. With notes of apples and pear, some grass and soft mineral, it's also so pleasing for its non-aggressive, but lively freshness. Perfect to enjoy on its own, but super food friendly too.



**Rich Uncle  
2015 Costa Arènte,  
Amarone della Valpolicella  
DOCG (Veneto, Italy) \$92**

Times like these deserve tried and true classic comforts, like Amarone! Serious layers of flavours and complexity with the warmth and ease of soothing texture and tastes. Think rich figs and raisins, menthol, licorice, black cherry, cocoa, and kirsch. With an array of well-knit flavours comes an array of top reviews, including 94 points from the International Wine Challenge. It's just what everyone needs now.



**Paulette Scott, Pacific  
Cash-strapped Friend  
2016 CVNE Viña Real Crianza  
(Rioja, Spain), \$20**

There is so much to like, deliciously aromatic, forest fruits, blackberries and wild cranberries, intermingling with black licorice, vanilla and nutmeg. Approachable, with depth and complexity that's remarkable for its price point.



Please see "Wines" on next page



## Wines

Continued from previous page



### Rich Uncle

**2015 Henschke Hill of Grace (Eden Valley, Australia) \$1100**

Produced only in the best vintages. Amazing complexity, fragrant, with blackberries and exotic five spice exude from the glass. Rich and lush with elegant structure. A collector's dream wine, best rewarded if left for 10-20 years. Limited availability in Alberta wine boutiques.

### Juanita and Kelsey Roos, Color de Vino

#### Cash-strapped Friend

**Azimut Cava Brut Nature Rosato (Penedes, Spain) \$25**

Bubbles, bubbles, bubbles—always a great gift idea for every budget. We love this bone-dry rosato Cava from Cellers de Can Suriol with no added sugar, fermented using indigenous yeast (versus a commercial yeast option) and yes, it's natural and organic. It boasts a complex and intense aroma of mature white peaches and juicy pears. The palate is soft and elegant. Specially recommended for toasts, celebrations, and light meals.

### Rich Uncle

**2008 Ridge Monte Bello Cabernet Sauvignon (Santa Cruz, California, USA) \$625**

Cult classic and best gift ever! This could be considered an American first growth (if there was such a classification). Every vintage is a different assemblage of Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. Incredible complexity and ageability. This is one for the cellar and a splendid gift for the collector of unicorns.



### Stacey-Jo Strombecky, Renaissance Wine Merchants

#### Cash-strapped friend

**2019 Ma Terre Rosé, Coteaux d'Aix-en-Provence (Provence, France) \$23**

When I look back at where most of my 2020 wine budget went, it most certainly was on rosé. Pleasant and refreshing, the wines of Provence always find a spot in my fridge year-round. Ma Terre Rosé has lovely bright acidity and splendid high toned citrus and red fruit notes. It is a natural companion for lighter meals and appetizers, but I adore a delicate rosé like this with roasted vegetable dishes like ratatouille or a great stir fry or a big dinner salad. (It also pairs great with a bubble bath and leave-me-alone.)



### Rich Uncle

**2018 Bouchard Père et Fils Meursault (Burgundy, France) \$80**

Meursault offers the drinker so many unique qualities—bracing tension, a level of smoky minerality that only marly limestone can give you, and a stunning array of flavours, with a palate that is rich and full-flavoured without being heavy. The nearly 300-year old estate of Bouchard Père et Fils has consistently shown up as a favourite producer of this village's wine for many years of my career. Vibrant and intense, but still a model of finesse, this Meursault can age many years. Pairing with most proteins will work, with an ideal being veal sweetbreads or a beautiful poultry in cream sauce; but this beauty will not overpower more delicate flavours like poached fish.



### Nicole De Angelis, Galileo Imports

#### 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 in this rosso.

### Rich Uncle

**2016 Avignonesi Desiderio Merlot Cortona (Tuscany, Italy), \$60**

Rich and dark ruby with a slight garnet shimmer, very dense bouquet, concentrated and inviting, with dark chocolate and lots of blackberry. Intensive dark berry fruit notes on the palate, fine-grained tannins, subtle mineral tones. Avignonesi is one of Tuscany's most respected producers in the Montepulciano area, with wines that consistently win kudos worldwide. All of their vineyards are biodynamically farmed.



### Valerie Walker, Iberian Tastes

#### Cash-strapped Friend

**2019 Flower and the Bee Treixadura (La Flor y la Abeja) (Ribeiro, Spain) \$25**

Bright acidity greets you as you splash this obscure Spanish varietal across your front palate. Twinkles of white pepper and stone fruit marry the slight viscosity to create a harmonious mouth feel. Organic.



### Rich Uncle

**2015 La Mula Tinto de Toro, (Toro, Spain) \$150**

Sexy and strong, with rambunctious tannins, this sassy bad boy (100 per cent Tempranillo) will not disappoint. Delicious dark fruit awaits you after a generous decant, coaxing you back for more. Believe me, this will be one of your favourite long-term tenants residing in your wine cellar.







.....  
**Garneau Block  
Wine Imports**

**Cash-strapped  
Friend**  
**Old Westminster  
Piquette NV  
(Maryland, USA)  
375ml can, \$11**

Not just a summer drink. This easy-going Piquette at 6 per cent ABV is a crusher while I'm doing all my baking. I love the nose of gummy bears and grapefruit peel. It's not every day that you get natural wines (or piquettes) from Maryland and it's truly a joy to drink something made with such deliberate care and minimal intervention.

**Rich Uncle  
2018 Domaine  
Duseigneur**

**Catarina Châteauneuf-du-Pape  
(Rhône Valley, France) \$60**

Getting a beautiful CDP is hardly going to cause any complaints, especially when it's from Bernard Duseigneur. Bernard proudly grows his grapes following organic and biodynamic practices. The vines are 60 years old on average and a delicious blend of Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre and Cinsault. It's fruity and fresh, and you can drink it now, or cellar it for 5-10 years. Super elegant and pairs easily with that turkey (or tofury) you'll be having.



.....  
**Tara Smith,  
Boudreau Wines  
(formerly Hicks  
Fine Wines)**

**Cash-strapped  
Friend**  
**2019 La Playa  
Chardonnay  
(Colchagua Valley,  
Chile) \$19**

Chile is still a great wine region to visit for value and varietally correct wines. This



unoaked fresh Chard with loads of fresh green apples and a hint of creaminess is easily a palate and crowd pleaser (not that we're spending any time in crowds these days). This was my don't-want-to-think-about-it wine this summer.

**Rich Uncle  
Billecart  
Salmon Extra  
Brut NV 1.5L  
(Champagne,  
France) \$124**

I love anything with bubbles, and when it's party sized—even better! This zero dosage blend of the three Champagne varietals (Pinot Meunier, Pinot Noir, and Chardonnay) is approachable with toasted nuts and citrus curd flavours. There's great acidity and minerality that keeps it fresh and thirst quenching. A perfect cocktail hour wine.

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

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2018 Paul Jaboulet Aîné Parallèle  
45 Organic White Blend (Rhône  
Valley, France) \$19**

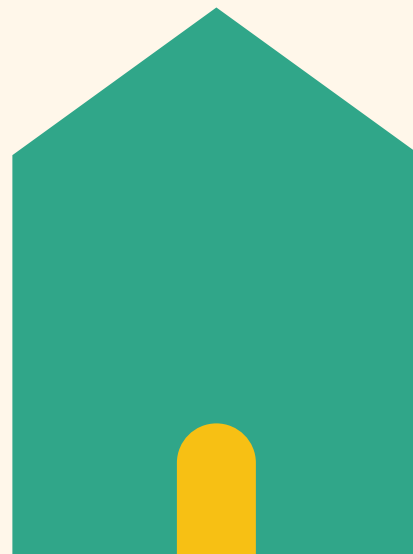
The super-iconic Paul Jaboulet Aîné, the producers of the very special occasion Hermitage La Chapelle from the Rhône, also make incredibly tasty and complex organic wines that are an amazing value. The Parallèle 45 line-up also includes a red and a rosé but it is the white I can't get enough of. With less than 10 per cent of the wine produced in the Rhône being white it is a real treat to find such a well-made, excellent value option. Wonderful rounded



Please see "Wines" on on page 17.

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corso32group.com



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## Beer Guy

### Strange brew

*Coo loo coo coo, coo coo coo coo!*  
So went the call of the hosers,  
Bob and Doug McKenzie.

Bob and Doug were the creation of two Ontario boys, Rick Moranis (Bob) and Dave Thomas (Doug), but Edmonton is their birthplace and spiritual home. Don't believe it? Take off, eh? SCTV, including almost all of Bob and Doug's segments, was filmed in Edmonton from 1980-1982. A personal favourite bit is John Candy as Johnny LaRue, speaking a drunken Christmas Eve soliloquy in the bitter cold outside "the Red Ox Inn, formerly the Beef and Booze."

Four decades later much has changed. The Red Ox Inn is one of the best restaurants in Canada. Martin Scorsese is making a documentary about SCTV, to air on Netflix. SCTV alumni Catherine O'Hara and Eugene Levy have conquered the world with Schitt's Creek. Bob and Doug were honoured with a statue in downtown Edmonton in March.

And Edmonton has moved beyond hoser beer. Two breweries opened recently focussed on esoteric, complex, funky and sour beer—beer Bob and Doug would undoubtedly call strange brew. We're talking mixed fermentation or mixed culture beer. These beers are made with a mixed basket of microorganisms—wild yeast like *Brettanomyces* and bacteria like *Pediococcus* and *Lactobacillus*. The mixed culture evolves over time, meaning no two batches of beer are exactly the same. It's exciting, tight-rope beer-making, not for the faint of heart.

The Monolith is Greg Zeschuk's entry into this nerve-wracking niche, a much-anticipated sour beer brewery a few blocks from his award-winning Blind Enthusiasm brewery and Biera restaurant. At The Monolith, high-flying head brewer Doug Checknita uses traditional methods like spontaneous fermentation in a high-tech, modern

space to make outstanding 21st century beer. People lined up to get a bottle of their first release, A Measure of Patience, in December 2019.

Trial & Ale is a brand new sour beer boutique brewery and a labour of love for co-founders Ryan and Jeff (we are honouring their request not to use their full names). Ryan gets his love of earthy, funky and acidic beers from living and studying in Belgium when he was young. As he told me, "Not a lot of people as a teenager get to taste their way through dubbels, lambics, wits and geuzes." True that! To make the eccentric beers they love, Trial & Ale focus on diversity—brewing wort (beer before fermentation) in-house or outsourcing it from local breweries, cultivating

a diverse mixture of yeast and bacteria over the years, fermenting in oak barrels and finally, carefully blending. As Ryan puts it, "At the end of the day, we're artisanal blenders." The magic is in the blending and time. This style of beer-making requires a lot of patience as barrel aging and

fermentation can't be rushed. Ryan and Jeff support themselves with outside income activities, meaning they have the ability to wait the time required to ensure quality and consistency from blend to blend. "With a barrel program, you really need the flexibility to say 'give it another month'," notes Ryan.

We've come a long way in Edmonton from the Bob and Doug days. But I asked Ryan, is there really a market for these sophisticated but difficult beers here? He replied, "Yes! We believe in Alberta. The love we've received humbles us. We see a vibrant and strong beer scene that we hope to be a lasting part of. And Alberta retailers are the best in the world, I'm convinced of this. Our retailers are incredible and that will ensure that word gets out about why good beer is good." Beauty, eh?



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Peter Bailey

## Strange brew six pack

Quirky, unique beers to splurge on at holiday time. Go ahead, you're worth it.



### Trial & Ale Separated to a Degree, Edmonton

Trial & Ale's first release, a mixed fermentation sour ale that went through a four stage fermentation cycle. A layered, complex but subtle beer—soft, rounded, dank, earthy with a bit of funk and fruit. Trial & Ale notes the “upfront lactic sourness soon gives way to a retronasal grapefruit olfaction that delights.” Shorter: it's good.

### Blind Enthusiasm/The Monolith Substantially Complete, Edmonton

The Monolith's second release is a mixed fermentation beer that was fermented using a house blend of microorganisms in French oak barrels for one year and then bottle-conditioned for seven months. It's assertively tart but approachable, with a solid citrus fruit character.



### Odd Company Gin and Funk Juice, Edmonton

We spent many a lovely summer evening at the Odd Company pandemic patio, which extended into the traffic lane on 121 Street. We hope they keep the patio going all winter long! Gin and Funk Juice is a quirky beer, made through a 12-month fermentation with Brettanomyces culture and adding Saskatoon berries and gin botanicals. Funky and fruit-forward.

### Blindman 5th Anniversary Belgian Dark Strong, Lacombe

Every fall Blindman shoots for the moon and brews a big 'boozy Belgian' ale for their anniversary. This is a strong (9.6 per cent ABV) Belgian dark ale, tasting of dried fruit, black licorice and chocolate. A perfect holiday fireside sipper.



### Snake Lake Lushed Up Farmhouse Ale, Sylvan Lake

Brew master Octavio Pauley and his team pulled out the stops on this refreshing ale. Hand crushed Muscat grapes were allowed to ferment and then added to mixed fermentation farmhouse ale. This mixture was aged for 20 months then blended with sour blonde ale (which had been aged for 18 months). A delicious, complex, layered beer.



### Grain Bin Opus Pink Guava Berliner Weiss, Grande Prairie

“In the depths of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer,” -Albert Camus. Keep the spirit of summer alive with this delightful fruity, low alcohol (3 per cent ABV) Berliner Weiss. Tart and refreshing, this 1.5 litre magnum can sit on the holiday dinner table as a wine or champagne alternative. 🍷

*On the first day of Christmas Peter Bailey's true love gave to him: a beer. He's on Twitter and Instagram as @Libarbarian.*



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# Home for the Holidays

Gifts to help brighten your (potential) solitude.

One thing is for sure, we will be spending more time at home this year than ever before. Let's take care of each other with some delicious things to eat, drink and pass the time.

## From your kitchen, sort of

We love comestibles that save time in the kitchen but taste as though you made them yourself.



### Trufflula Cashew Cheese

This fermented cashew nut food is savoury, complex in flavour, absolutely delightful.

In Original and Prairie Herb (with herbs from

Chickadee Farm) and made right here in Edmonton by raw food chef Allison Landin. Ideal on a cheese board. Find at Earth's General Store, Food in the Nud, Good Goods Co, Meuwly's, \$20.

### Belazu Truffle and Artichoke Pesto

Piemontese summer truffles, aged Parmigiano and artichokes. Stir into mashed potatoes, top crostini, or mix with breadcrumbs to stuff mushrooms. Creamy and rich. Find at Careit Urban Deli and the Italian Centre Shops South and West, \$10.



### Paisley Notebook Spice Blends

Okanagan-based Aman Dosanj knows her way around Okanagan ingredients and the flavours of her

heritage. Her unique

spice blends,

the Malabar

(star anise,

fennel, cinnamon)

the Kadhai (fennel,

coriander, cumin, chile)

and the top-secret Royal

Blend are now available

here. Find at Meuwly's,

paisleynotebook.com,

\$11-\$12.



### Joe and Seph's Prosecco Caramel Sauce

This luscious caramel sauce is made with double cream, butter and five per cent Prosecco. Delicious drizzled over fruit, or a brownie. Find at Bella Casa, Italian Centre Shops South and West, Twig in Camrose, \$13.



### Hive Honey by Hive Gourmet

These delightful unpasteurised Ontario honeys come in an easy-to-drizzle format in three flavours. The Hive Been Smoking has a distinct smoky flavour; the Hive Been Cured salted honey is infused with sea salt—who doesn't love sweet and salty? The Hive on Fire honey possesses a spicy hot kick from fresh chilies. Find at Bon Ton Bakery, all Italian Centre Shops, Homes & Cottages, Maven & Grace, \$14.

### Bite of Brazil Dulce de Leche

This indulgent confection is a sweet oozy treat. Dollop on ice cream or yogurt, add to your shortbread recipe or make *alfajores*. Originally from South America, Bite of Brazil in downtown Edmonton makes it in convenient jars. Find at Bite of Brazil, Good Goods Co, \$8.



### Herbologie Spice Mixes

We love what Solstice, a delicious blend of Alberta dill, Turkish silk chili, Icelandic kelp, does for roast sweet potatoes. Keep a jar on hand to amp up potatoes or popcorn, salad dressings or soups. Or make your own blends with Herbologie's top-quality spices such as turmeric, sumac, or nigella seeds. Find at Awn Kitchen, Culina to Go, Good Goods Co, Herbologie.ca, Meuwly's, \$17.50/\$14 refill.



William Gluth \ Gloopth Photography



### Coffee klatch

#### Verduijns Fine Biscuits

Enjoy the flavour of the season with the cranberry cookies or go savoury with the waffle-style black pepper

and sea salt cracker, each crisp and buttery. Both are available at the Italian Centre Shop South, the black pepper at Cavern and Maven & Grace, \$5.

#### MILLER'S DAMSEL charcoal

Handbaked wafers made from 100% unbleached stoneground wholemeal flour, milled in England.



#### Miller's Damsel Charcoal Crackers

This crisp black cracker looks gorgeous on the cheese board. Serve with pâté or the Belazu truffled artichoke pesto, or with runny triple creams. At Cavern, \$7.





### Embossed Rolling Pin

Indulge the baker in your life with an embossed rolling pin to make beautiful cookies. Tips: Keep your dough cold, don't overwork the dough and keep the flour nearby for best results. This elegant flower-patterned one is by Danesco, at Zocalo, \$25.



### Stoneware Cups

These lovely hand-made cups from Portugal have a dipped glaze design inspired by ocean waves lapping the beach. In two sizes, suitable for espresso, cappuccino, London Fog, or for individual hors d'oeuvres or dipping sauces. Dishwasher, microwave and oven safe. Find at Zocalo, Heart of the Home, \$10-\$18 each.

### For movie night Fireworks Popping Corn

This popping corn is just delicious, fresh and flavourful and pops up beautifully in an air popper or on the stove in your Whirley Pop. Choose from High Mountain Midnight (blue kernel with a robust flavour) and Harvest, a blend of medium blue, red and classic yellow kernels. Find at Bella Casa, all Italian Centre Shops, Heart of the Home, \$10 each.

### Kind Ice Cream in large format tubs

Kind Ice Cream needs one week's notice to make you a 4.2L (about 9 pints) tub of their high-quality ice cream in any flavour they have on the menu, \$60 plus a \$5 deposit for the pail.



### Split Tree Rhubarb and Elderflower Cordial

Make a cocktail or add to a warm punch for sipping on movie night. Find at Bon Ton Bakery, Fresons Fort Sask., Homes & Cottages, Italian Centre Shops South and West, Maven & Grace, \$14.

### For ginger lovers Bittermilk hand-crafted Cocktail Mixer

Bittermilk makes several tasty cocktail mixes (we love a Paloma made with the charred grapefruit) but this one has the Christmas spirit. The #7 Gingerbread Old Fashioned Mix is made just for the season with orange peel, cinchona bark and fresh ginger juice. Each mix contains a bittering agent, a sweetener and an acid to ensure a balanced cocktail; the egg nog and old-fashioned recipes on the bottle are the bomb. Find at Bon Ton Bakery, Italian Centre Shops South and West, Twig in Camrose, \$23.

### Gimber Peruvian Ginger

This is a highly concentrated ginger condiment/juice made with Peruvian ginger, fresh lemon juice, herbs and spices. Use for cocktails, add to soda or hot water for a refreshing pick-me-up or use in cooking and baking. Find at Bon Ton Bakery, Fresons Fort Sask., Homes & Cottages, Italian Centre South, Maven & Grace, \$26-40.



### For long winter nights Cavallini & Company Puzzles

Time for some new puzzles as we bet you have finished all the tattered old ones from the attic. Keep the family occupied with these beautiful 1000-piece puzzles with vintage look. In either Herbarium or Bee theme, at Zocalo, \$24.



### Eau Claire Rupert's Whisky

This new bottling from Turner Valley's Eau Claire Distillery is a warm hug on a winter's night. It's quality whisky, not chill-filtered, with all-natural colour, no caramel added. It's warm and fruity flavours—hint of hot chocolate and nuts, dried fruit and nutmeg, just right for cold weather sipping. And it comes with a cheeky Eau Claire label, this one adorned with a moose in a frock coat. Find at Boudreau Wine and Spirits, Color de Vino, Sherbrooke, Whisky Drop, other fine shops, \$40.



### Fraser Fir Candles by Thymes

Enjoy the fresh and subtle scent of a winter forest with sandalwood and cedar notes. Never cloying or sweet. There are room sprays, diffusers, mists, handwash and cleaners too. Find at Bella Casa, \$20-\$50.



Please see "Gift Guide" on next page.



## Gift Guide

Continued from previous page



### **We want candy** **Lakrids by Bulow** **Holiday Collection**

As the heart of Lakrids is its high-quality, handmade boiled liquorice, and sometimes there is chocolate and a candy coating too. Each liquorice lover will find their own Lakrids to love, whether it be the salty, the sweet, the red or the passion fruit. New is the holiday collection—limited-edition Classic Salt and Caramel and the gold Raspberry and Chocolate. Find at Careit Urban Deli, Homes & Cottages, Italian Centre South and North, Maven & Grace, Twig in Camrose, \$15-45.

### **Sugar Sin** **Gourmet Gummies**

The adult gummy, infused with sparkling wine and covered in fizzy sugar crystals, is the candy of choice for women between the ages of 18-85. Gluten free, vegan and fun. Find at Bella Casa, Bon Ton Bakery, all Italian Centre Shops, Homes & Cottages, Twig in Camrose, \$13.

### **Edible and imbibable kits** **Corso at Home Pasta Kits**

High-quality, house-made ingredients, meticulous instructions, it's like having the Corso 32 chefs in your home for one night. Order by Monday noon for Friday or Saturday pick up. There is also a substantial list of pantry items such as their delish whipped ricotta, *olio santo*, focaccia bread and frozen pastas and sauces. Various prices. Or, the Corso Wine club. A curated monthly selection, ranging from \$71 to \$112 per month. Find at corso32group.com.

### **Mojo's JoJo Pickles Cranberry Trio Box**

The flavours of the season, delivered. Rev up your roast beast with a chunky bourbon cranberry sauce, smear the not too sweet cranberry ketchup on a turkey burger and make a delicious cocktail with the zesty cranberry shrub (drinking vinegar). Find at [mojojopickles.com](http://mojojopickles.com), \$40.

### **The Marc's French Picnic for Two**

Order the Marc's French picnic—with country style pâté, rilette, Serrano ham, marinated olives, seed loaf and crackers—as a break from all the holiday flavours. Find at [themarc.ca](http://themarc.ca), \$42.

### **For the cheese lover** **The Cavern Cheese Club**

Cavern's monthly subscription delivery offers a selection of delectable cheeses at perfect ripeness for three, six, or 12-month installments. Just Cheese in small (four cheeses) or large (five-seven cheeses) or Cheese and Charcuterie (five cheeses, two meats). Personalize or let the cheesemongers surprize you. Cavern is also offering four new picnics this season, ideal for at home or for a winter picnic—gourmet grilled cheese, raclette, baked camembert or brie and fondue. Details in store.

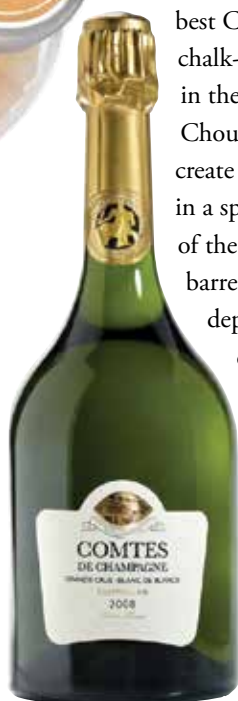
### **For the wine lover** **The Color de Vino Advent Calendar**

Picture a personally-selected 12 bottle gift set for those who love wine. Start to build a collection, put some special bottles away, or enjoy them all this season. Find at Color de Vino, \$350-\$750.

### **Liquid gold**

#### **Taittinger 2008 Comtes de Champagne** **Blanc des Blanc**

The prestige cuvée from Taittinger, 100 per cent Chardonnay, is made only in the best years, and 2008 is considered to be the best Champagne vintage in decades. The chalk-heavy soil found south of Epernay in the grands crus of Cramant, Avize, Chouilly, Oger and Mesnil-sur-Oger create ideal growing conditions, especially in a spectacular vintage. Five per cent of the blend is aged in new French oak barrels which brings a roundness and depth to the wine. Vibrant, fresh, complex, with notes of lemon meringue and subtle toast, minerality and that exquisite reverberating finish. Drink now or cellar for a decade or two. Yes, you can age vintage Champagne. Find at better wine shops, \$350.



### **Taylor Fladgate Port Selections**

Portugal's premier Port house possesses top-notch vineyards in the heart of the Douro Valley and an extensive stock of wines aging in Gaia.

#### **Single Harvest 1970**

Every year, Taylor's releases a 50-year-old single harvest port from years not declared a vintage but of that quality, a great buy for vintage Port lovers. Decant and enjoy the classic pairing of Port and Stilton or have with a delicious aged Canadian cheddar after dinner over a games board, \$275.



### **Historic Limited Edition Tawny**

Taylor's resurrected this style for their 325th anniversary. A lovely Tawny, with a bit of grip from well-integrated tannins and sweet fruit cake flavours. The bottle, called the chestnut, is a reproduction of those popular in the early 1700s, \$58.

### **Taylor Fladgate Tawny Ports Gift Set**

Blends from 10 years to 40, the wines get mellow and richer in flavour with less red fruit and more nutty spicy notes as the wines get older. Serve slightly chilled with cheeses, walnuts and dried fruit and with crème brûlée, fruit cake and good conversation. Or, make a cocktail—with their lower alcohol and spicy, woody, fruit notes, Tawny Ports are terrific in cocktails. Find at better wine shops, four 375 ml bottles, \$92. 🍷

*Not all items available in all shops.  
Where to buy is accurate at time of printing.*



## Wines

Continued from page 11

texture and lots of tropical fruit and floral aromatics without being overtly rich. This is a lovely wine for enjoying on its own or with food, total versatility.



**Rich Uncle**  
**2016 Matthiasson**  
**Napa Valley Cabernet**  
**Sauvignon**  
**(California, USA)**  
**\$125**

Alberta has long had a love affair with California wine, it is by far the most popular region in the province. Now one of the most beloved producers in the new California wave is available in Alberta, yay! Steve Matthiasson expresses the unique terroir of California with

a deft hand showcasing the structure and aromatics of Cabernet Sauvignon without overwhelming the fruit with unnecessary oak or manipulated wine making. The nose and the palate showcase lots of red fruit, bramble and

blackcurrant with the classic Cabernet indicators of leather and graphite. Wine is an agricultural product—a fact we can occasionally forget—but not so with this wine, it's as if we are communing with the vineyard.



**Michael Fregren,**  
**Artisan Wines**  
**Cash-strapped**  
**Friend**  
**2018 Grano a**  
**Grano Paso Robles**  
**Cabernet Sauvignon**  
**(California, USA) \$25**

Here is something new from California that won't break your bank.

Grano a Grano makes a full-bodied Cab Sauv with overtones of raspberry, plums

and black fruit with dark chocolate overtones. No need to over-think this one, just crack it open and have at it.



**Rich Uncle**  
**2015 Caves Vidigal**  
**Brutalis (Lisboa,**  
**Portugal) \$75**

For those of us who like a good old-fashioned powerhouse red. A blend of Alicante Bouschet (one of only a few red-fleshed grapes) and Cabernet Sauvignon, this brute could take all comers at the bike racks after school, if you know what I mean. The label is Caves Vidigal's take on the Old West Wanted Posters.

**Dave Gordon and**  
**Michael Lefebvre,**  
**Whisky Drop**

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2019 Château la**  
**Croix des Pins Les**  
**3 Villages Ventoux**  
**(Rhône Valley,**  
**France) \$24**

The Vermentino and Marsanne bring exotic notes and the Grenache and

Rousanne bring fruity notes and bod to this organic and well-priced charmer.



**Rich Uncle**  
**2018 Dark Matter**  
**Limitless Cabernet**  
**(Howell Mountain,**  
**California, USA)**  
**\$280**

A beautiful Cabernet from the Mondavi sisters, bright cherry fruits and perfume backed by high altitude attitude.



**Joe Gurba,**  
**Vino al Vino**

**Cash-strapped Friend**  
**2019 Emandare**  
**Vineyards Grapple**  
**(Cowichan Valley,**  
**Vancouver Island),**  
**650ml, \$16**

Want something crispy, crushable, and homegrown? This hybrid of cider and wine is an inventive representation of Canadian terroir.

Emandare combined the heirloom apples of their neighbour's 120 year-old orchard with their aromatic Siegerrebe grapes, co-fermented them in an open-top oak puncheon, then basket pressed and bottled the juice unfiltered and unfiltered to finish under crown cap like a pét-nat. Hazy, bone dry and packing a splendid array of autumnal apple notes boosted by floral aromatics and some of that farmhouse saison-like funk for nuance. At 8.5 per cent, it's a go-to with brunch or after a solid workout.

**Rich Uncle**  
**2018 William Downie**  
**Gippsland Pinot**  
**Noir (Gippsland,**  
**Australia) \$99**

Is Pinot Noir the most bewitching grape on Earth? I believe so. But, you'll need a very rich uncle to access the best examples. Or, you can venture beyond the Côte-d'Or. After a decade in Burgundy, Bill Downie returned home to Australia to become an iconic farmer and fermenter of that elusive bride, Pinot Noir. His wines are able to capture Australia's signature energy while maintaining balance and elegance. The intensity of bright red fruits and dazzling acidity give this 2018 cuvée the stamina to cellar but you can also crack in now for a riper expression. It just sings. Decant 30 minutes. Serve at 15 degrees. 🍷



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## Johwanna Alleyne, Mojo JoJo Pickles



*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.*

Johwanna Alleyne was an accomplished professional photographer when she decided to create a Slow Food canning bee in the kitchen of the Ukrainian Hall in 2010. Now Mojo JoJo Pickles is a thriving business producing delicious and savoury pickles, condiments, syrups, sauces and mixes, jellies and fruit



butters, as well as pins and patches. Find these delicious products at Meuwly's, Hawkstone and Millwoods Co-op Stores, Save-Ons across Alberta, summer farmers' markets, craft and gift shows, specialty markets, special events, several spots in B.C. and online at [mojojopickles.com](http://mojojopickles.com). Mentor and inspiration to many, we consider Johwnna a certified flavour maven.

**Hometown?**  
Montreal.

**Years making pickles**  
Nine, since 2011.

**Where would you like to live?**  
Everywhere for a little bit.

**Your favourite food and drink?**  
The older I get the more I look for a good chicken roti. I love Trinidadian food. I like a nice cocktail; I am a sucker for a Manhattan with a cherry.

**What would you be doing if you weren't in the pickle business?**  
I'd be a musician, singing and playing.

**What do you most appreciate in your friends?**  
They gotta laugh man. Like really laugh, head thrown back kind of laugh.

**Your favourite qualities in a dish?**  
Surprise.

**A pickle**  
Surprise me, take me somewhere, entertain me.

**A wine?**  
Funkiness.

**Who would be at your dream dinner table (dead or alive)?**  
The grandmothers who you had never met, Marlana, my sister friend (I have known her for 30 years), my husband, my family, my mummy.

**Who would cook?**  
I would cook. I like to make things for them.

**Current culinary obsession/exploration?**  
Fenugreek, I have really gotten into West Indian cooking during Covid.


**Meaningful/crazy cooking experience?**  
I butchered a rabbit and we made rabbit cacciatore. It made me really happy, it was a bucket list thing to do and my friends said, 'I can help you with that.' They made my dream come true.

**Mentors?**  
The same people who come to my dinner, my family.

**Favourite casual cheap and cheerful after work food**  
Cheese, cheese and jam.


**Philosophy?**  
I'm very in the now. Not nostalgic, working the plan in the moment.

**What's next?**  
Only Covid will tell. 🍷




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## Feeding People

### In the kitchen at Meals on Wheels

#### Late March was chaotic.

Meals on Wheels, the local non-profit that provides meals with social interaction, was tackling rapid changes daily. The staff, led by executive director Liz Tondou, was adjusting to the new normal on the fly, applying the strict Covid-19 health and safety protocols mandated by AHS and making new routines to fit. And they needed new volunteers. Lots of them.

That's when I heard from hospitality entrepreneur Charles Rothman. "Hey, do you know anyone who could volunteer at Meals on Wheels?" he asked. I put it out there. Then I thought, I could do that.

I became one of the volunteer kitchen helpers. We work preparing the meals to be frozen (this involves a balky contraption that seals the plastic trays); break down crates of root vegetables; chop herbs; peel potatoes and slice onions and peppers; pipe cookie dough; mop and sweep—whatever the staff asks us to do.

We enter and exit through different doors, masked; get our temperatures checked; fill out the form; then it's on to standard kitchen protocols—apron, hair net, disposable gloves. We are careful to stay six feet apart, which sometimes means a dance around the ovens.

During that first few weeks, I worked with cooks from restaurants that had been shut down due to Covid. Chef Jason Wild, one of the many cooking professionals Charles was able to recruit, showed me the fastest way to break down a box of carrots and corrected my celery chopping technique. He was a dream to work with—quick, easy-going, and a great teacher, using his experience of decades spent in professional kitchens.

Meals on Wheels started in the UK during the Blitz. The first program in

Canada was in 1963, in Brampton, Ontario, started by nurse Ruby Cuthbert. Funding comes from government, corporate sponsors and individual donors. Volunteers are vital to keeping in daily contact with clients while doing deliveries and helping in the kitchen.

"We always had a good mix of volunteers, including people with disabilities," says Lindsay Rothman, the client services and volunteer manager (and married to Charles). "These folks have so much to offer yet struggle to get a paid job. We had a few shift workers—police, firefighters, paramedics. Students looking for work, experience at Meals on Wheels looks good on a resume. And retirees. And newcomers, what better way to become integrated, you are immersed in the community.

"Now with Covid we have more working professionals, culinary professionals and students.

"The theme of Covid—helping your neighbour, or giving back, has been the silver lining in such a tough time."

Lindsay has a long history with Meals on Wheels.

"My mother volunteered in my hometown in B.C. My brother and I would go with her on her delivery route," she says. "I would have my cheek pinched and be given a Werther's. I learned the value and importance of giving back from that early time.

"Later I was the caregiver for my grandmother. She was my job, but I volunteered at Calgary Meals on Wheels. After my grandmother died six years ago I reached out to Liz and started in my role here."

"There are four of us in the client services department, where we onboard new clients, sign them up, do the billing and customer service. It's one-on-one client-focused care. Our work is





## Mary Bailey

hugely operational—there are a lot of therapeutic menus and it's important that people get the right food at the right time.

Anyone can have Meals on Wheels, it's not just the elderly. It could be people recovering from surgery, dealing with mental health issues or new mothers.

"It's about the check-in and the socialization. Many of our clients don't have supporting family. If they didn't have their delivery person, they wouldn't see anyone else that day or that week.

They look forward to the volunteer's visit. It gives them a reason to get out of bed, put on their red lipstick and do their hair. Especially if one of our cute firemen is coming to see them.

"Our volunteers make connections too. Many of the delivery volunteers have been doing it for years. One couple have been drivers since the '80's. This interaction can help clients stay in their own homes and live healthy and independent lives.

"We have had to revisit everything," says Lindsay. "We have more meals to make and more routes to drive. Now we can't come in the house. We have to call or buzz and leave it on the doorknob or on a chair. Then a volunteer calls to make sure that everything is ok."

Terry Howe is the executive chef and food and production manager at Meals on Wheels. "Most of my time is spent coordinating the staff and overseeing the production as our numbers have really increased during Covid," says Terry.

"I work closely with Laura Doyle, our production floor supervisor.

"Now we run seven days per week, with late afternoon, evenings and weekend shifts to keep up with the demand. Daily meals have increased by about 15 per cent. We are making about 800-850 more meals per week. Some of those meals go to transitional housing and to the Covid isolation centres set up by the city."

"The majority of our clientele are seniors and people who can't cook for themselves,

or have modified diets due to a health concern. And we have to make sure the quality is maintained. We do special meals that are minced and ground. AHS has strict protocols around that.

"Covid put a big wrench into everything everybody does. We received a lot of food donations early on from caterers and food suppliers who had coolers and freezers full of food," says Terry. "We went from having 12-14 volunteers to six volunteers at a time, due to social distancing. It's very fluid. We are always adapting."

Dawn Kilborn is the person the volunteers (on my shift at least) have the most contact with. She cooks the frozen meals for the takeaway program. Friendly, hardworking, always smiling, you could call Dawn the minister of culture. She sets the tone, keeps the atmosphere light and plays the tunes later in the day.

"I've been here for six years, I started as a porter," says Dawn. "Right now, we're cooking a lot of comfort food because our numbers have gone up.

"The hardest thing is to keep people apart, we are constantly moving prep tables and adjusting stations to make sure everyone is social distancing. I do miss the old days when we could have a conversation without a mask."

The caring ethos is obvious throughout the organization. Dawn talks about checking the route sheets before they go out. "Are they getting a large meal or extra sandwiches or soup? If it's their birthday I write out a birthday card. They always get a birthday cake."

Before Covid, Meals on Wheels was not on my radar. Maybe I thought when I drove by, 'what a great little social service agency we have here.'

Now, I get it. The positive impact of this great little social service agency cannot be underestimated.

If you have a few extra dollars this season or some extra time on your hands, make a donation. You'll be glad you did. [mealsonwheelsdumont.org](http://mealsonwheelsdumont.org)

*Mary Bailey is the editor of The Tomato.*

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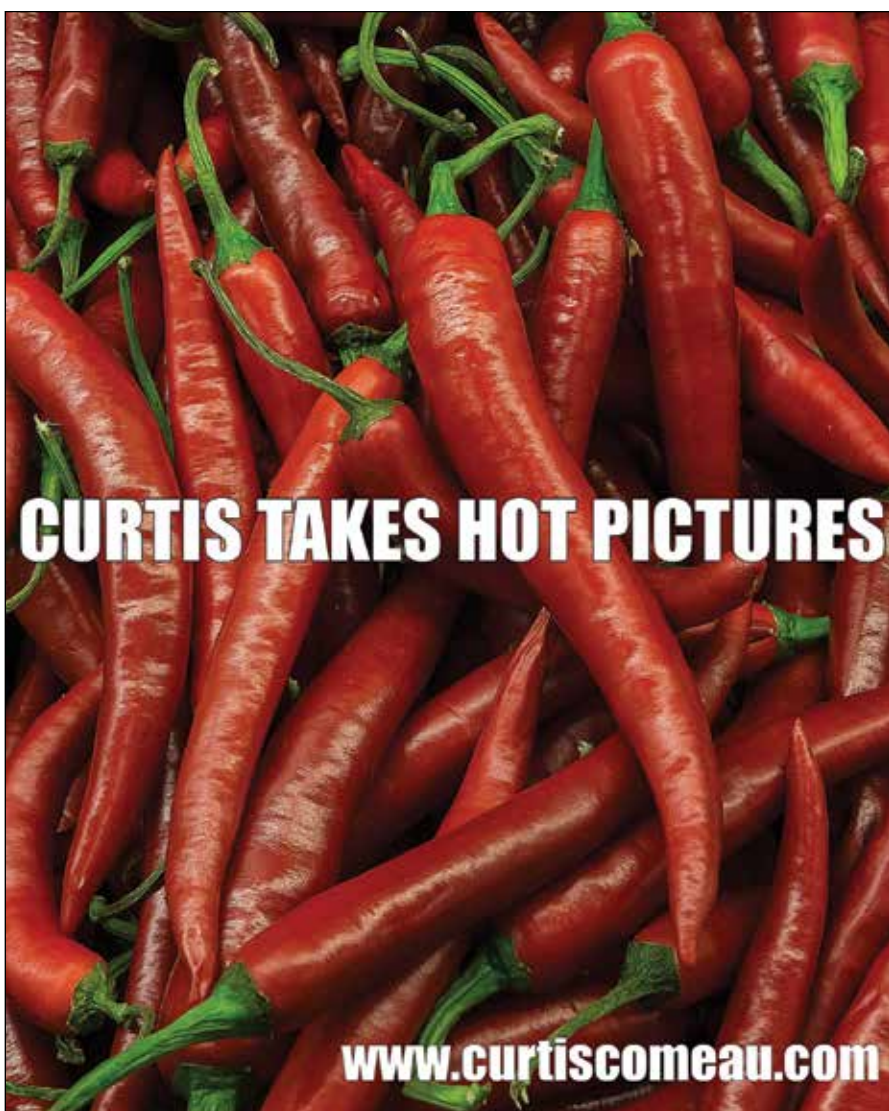
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## According to Judy

Judy Schultz

### In defence of fruitcake

**Full disclosure:** I'm here to defend that gloriously-rich and much-maligned pleasure, the Christmas fruitcake.

Nigel Slater, a British foodie whose writing I admire, devotes 15 pages in his book *The Christmas Chronicles* to a chapter called November 25, The Cake. Slater says, "As baking days go, this is as good as it gets," and he's right.

It's not just the cake, but the ritual joys that surround cake day: choosing a recipe (dark or light, tropical or Old English); the hunting and gathering of ingredients; the smell as it bakes on a dark November morning.

I love reading fruitcake recipes in old cookbooks. *The Canadian Home Cookbook* of 1877 calls it Wedding Cake and requires "one tea-cup of spices." Marie Nightingale, a distinguished Halifax food writer, collected old fruitcake recipes. One was called Pork Cake, because the first ingredient was a pound of fat salt pork. Then there was Doorstop Cake, apparently a weighty effort from a past Christmas.

My own passion for fruitcake isn't because of Christmas past. True, I enjoyed cake day with my grandmother and mother for several years, but I'm not sentimental about food. Nostalgia is an over-rated ingredient. Like cinnamon, it's best in small amounts.

Still, it is the season. Decision time is now.

**Dark or light?** I do love a dark, boozy, nut- and cherry-studded, peel-speckled, raisin-loaded cake, one with buttery crumbs that stick to my teeth. But in the interest of instant gratification, I choose to bake a light one instead, so we can whack into it as soon as it's cool enough to cut.

**The fruit:** As well as the above mentioned, I like to add currants, dates, figs and pineapple. Good fruit is expensive. Prepare to break the bank.

**The booze:** Brandy or rum is traditional, unless you're a Scot, in which case it's whisky, but I love to add a big glug of Galliano, with its natural almond

essence, or a sweet golden Tokaj Aszú; masses of fruit and sun in every drop.

**The nuts:** Walnuts, almonds and pecans. My personal favourite, called Edna's Cake, also requires coconut.

**The fat:** Use salted butter, the best you can find. It will shine through in the flavour.

**The baking:** Tahdah! It's cake day, and the whole house (okay, a small house) is filled with the warm sweet smell of the baking cake. The wafting-everywhere aroma is the great bonus of cake day.

**To ice or not to ice?** Ice it if you must, but that snow-white royal icing hardens like cement. If you value your molars, chisel it off before you bite into the cake.

**Ageing the cake:** Dark cakes beg for ageing; light cakes, not so much. But both cakes will benefit, properly wrapped and stored for anything from several weeks to months. Having just enjoyed two generous pieces of last year's cake which I found reposing in the back of the basement fridge, I repeat: let it age.

**Cutting the cake:** Go for short fat slices, with a layer of almond paste on top. Wedges (in the case of a round cake) strike me as a bad idea. Fruitcake is rich and hefty by nature and a proper wedge is always too much of a good thing. If it's discreetly slender, the edge of the wedge will be too thin and it'll fall apart before it hits the plate. Round cakes look elegant, but they're the very devil to cut. I suggest square or rectangular pans.

Truman Capote wrote one of the world's great short stories, *A Christmas Memory*, about the ritual baking of Christmas fruitcake "on a coming-of-winter morning in November." His seven-year-old self and his elderly cousin, a dotty old lady who would be forever young, stole their pecans from a neighbour's trees and traded a promise-of-cake for bootleg whisky.

It's a great yarn, available online, read by Capote himself. Treat yourself to a reading. Enjoy it with a piece of fruitcake. Have a Merry Christmas. 🍷

*Judy's fruitcakes have never been used as doorstops.*





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