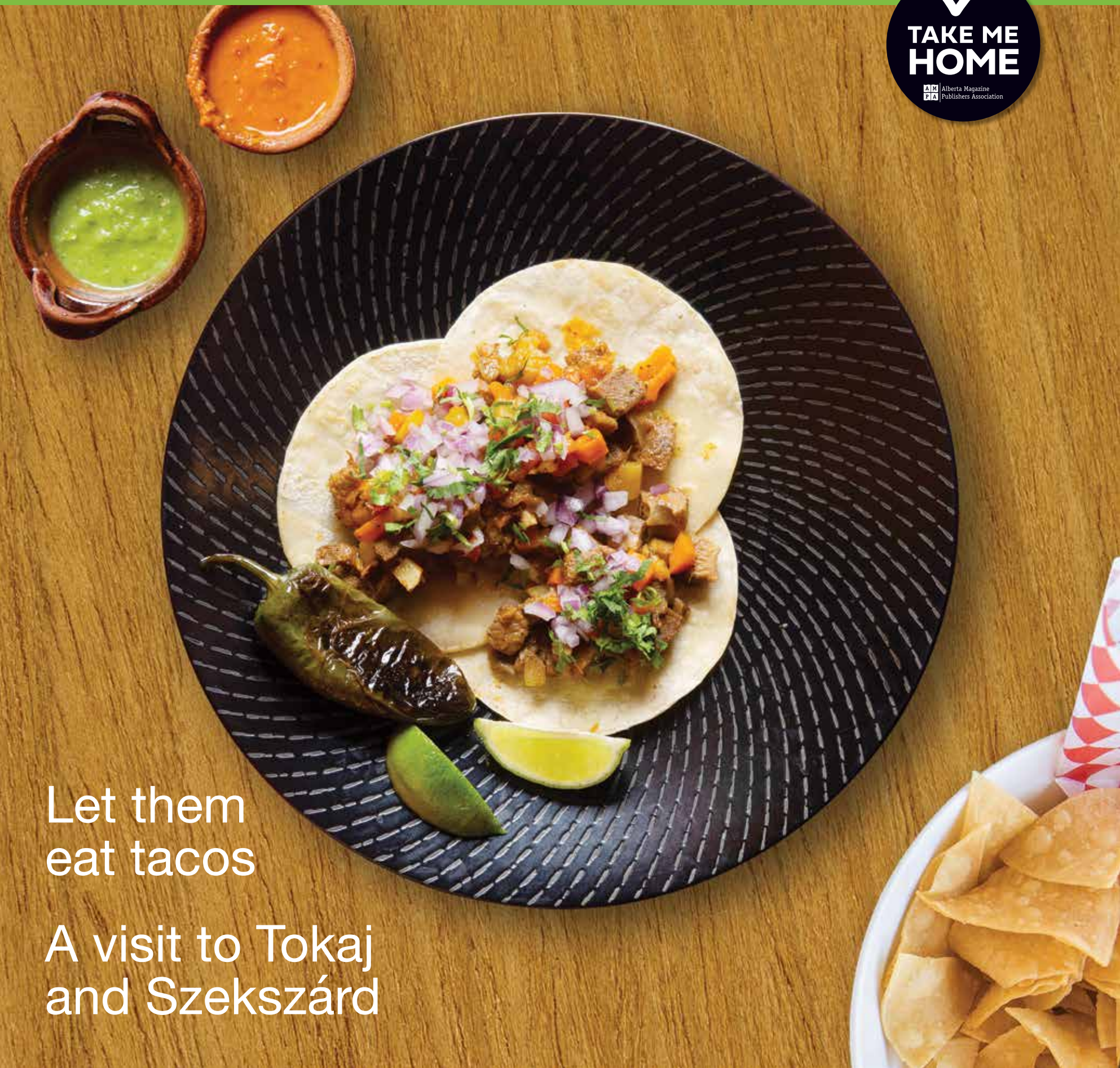


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A visit to Tokaj
and Szekszárd



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On the cover: Tacos de Lengua, 3 Amigos, Curtis Comeau Photography.



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restaurant legend abe wells is moving to victoria

Abe has long been a familiar face on the YEG restaurant scene. “I started as a bus boy at the High Level Diner,” says Abe, talking about his long and varied career. “The Sugarbowl, Café le Gare, The Red Ox Inn, some time in New York City too.” In 2000, Abe was with Maxxium Wine Agency, then it was back on the floor at Il Portico, Hardware Grill and RGE RD. For the past several years he has been with the Corso 32 Group where he is currently a manager at Uccellino. “I grinded it out, five nights a week, for a long time,” he says. Now, Abe and his wife Nicky Glitz-Wells are moving to a condo in downtown Victoria. “The stars aligned, both our sons are going to U Vic. I want to thank all my colleagues and customers. It’s nice to say goodbye when you are alive.” Abe’s last day at Uccellino is June 19.



tasty & new at 5th street food hall

Chefs Levi Biddlecombe and Robert Wick are bringing more of their delicious, flavour-packed, gloriously over-the-top style of cooking to us lucky diners at the 5th Street Food Hall (10344 105 Street, justcookkitchens.com). Tortilla Samurai is a casual Asian/Mexican joint serving tacos like the Squidward—fried calamari dusted in calamansi powder, with coconut lime caramel sauce, salsa verde aioli and street slaw. No EGGscuses is all about creative breakfast sandwiches on Friday,

Saturday and Sunday mornings. Try the Miss Chi, with a sunny side egg, house-made American cheese, kimchi slaw, bulgogi pickled onion and orange aioli. Giddy up! Burgers more your thing? Backstairs Burger offers the custom Evander Kane Burger, with 30 per cent of sales to the Stollery.

experience live fire cooking with peter zukiwski

Peter Zukiwski’s Pitt County Barbecue has teamed up with the Old Red Barn to offer Farm to Flame—a series of multi-course dinners cooked over fire, accompanied by how-tos and cocktails. On Thursday nights from June to October, learn to cook delicious local bounty prepared on several different grills popularized by Argentine chef Francis Mallmann. Or, sit back and enjoy the view. The Old Red Barn, on a working dairy farm near Leduc, is a beautiful place to enjoy a summer night accompanied by fire-cooked dishes. Tix: \$185+, theoldredbarn.ca/farm-to-flame



Andrew Marston photo

new continental treat downtown

The former Hardware Grill space downtown is now the second location of the Continental Treat (9698 Jasper Avenue, ctfinebistro.com). The entirely gluten-free menu features their toothsome dill pickle soup (a perennial on the Tomato Top100) and classic Hungarian goulash and schnitzel. The extensive beer list includes six different gluten-free beers. Open daily for lunch and dinner. New this spring is the speedy prix fixe, pre-theatre menu available from 4-6:30pm. Expect three courses (soup or salad, main and dessert) to be served within an hour, \$40.

vino jelly gourmet wine jellies

“I am a wine lover and I like to cook,” says Victor Peña of Vino Jelly Gourmet (vinojellygourmet.ca) in Fort McMurray. In 2019 the mechanical engineer created a formula for exceptional wine jellies which truly emphasize wine’s flavours. “We use only Canadian wines and the jellies are 100 per cent wine, with no added fruit.” Vino Jelly Gourmet come in Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Rosé. The jellies are versatile—at home on a cheese board for sure, but also in a dressing (especially a dressing made with the Chardonnay jelly for a salad with goat cheese and strawberries). Or use as a glaze for meat—pork, ham, chicken or wild game. “Many of our customers are hunters and they like the nice wine taste for smoking meats,” says Victor. Find Vino Jelly Gourmet at Paddy’s Cheese and the Italian Centre Shops in Edmonton, and in Calgary at Lina’s, Italian Centre Shop, Springbank Cheese, European Market and Sunterra.



aga wajda-plytta is a total mom entrepreneur

Aga Wajda-Plytta, of Edmonton-based Goods Goods Co. (goodgoodsco.ca) is a semi-finalist in Canada’s Total Mom Pitch, a start-up competition and business summit for entrepreneurs who are also moms. The 100 (out of over 700 applicants) semi-finalists participate in a three-week entrepreneurship acceleration program and compete for a top five finish and the \$30,000 grand prize. Winners all round. “I applied as a woman in business, in a decision-making role, as I haven’t been exposed to many other women in business,” says Aga. “I look forward to the opportunity to meet and work with other women in the program who are successful in their business.”



Top left: Abe Wells in his youth, top right: Levi Biddlecomb’s Miss Chi sandwich; centre: Peter Zukiwski, Pitt County Barbecue with Melissa and Matt Schur, Old Red Barn; above right: Aga Wajda-Plytta; at right Vino Jelly Gourmet jellies.

Wines of Character and Grace

Visiting Tokaj and the Heimann family in Szekszárd

Words and photos by Mary Bailey



How to understand a wine area? Start in the vineyard. We are at the top of the Szent Tamás vineyard with Zoltán Kovács of Royal Tokaji.

Tokaj is in the north of Hungary, bordering Slovakia, close to Ukraine. The wines have been known for millennia. The vineyards cluster around four wine villages, including Mád, where we are. (Similar to Burgundy vineyards, organized around villages and the vineyard is classified, not the owner. In Tokaj, like Burgundy, classified vineyards can have more than one owner.) These vineyards were awarded cru status in the 1700's, based on their sweet wine producing capacity.

By the end the 19th century Tokaj was the most expensive wine in the world. Post WW2 it was a different story. Tokaj became the source of high volume, low quality wine destined for Russia.

“During the Communist era we lost a generation of knowledge and practises,” says Zoltán, while he points out first growths Betsek and Nyúlászó, shimmering in the morning haze.

Royal Tokaji was formed early in the post-Communist era by 62 vineyard owners and investors led by British wine writer Hugh Johnson. Their goal was simple, but not easy: bring back the glory to these vineyards and to Tokaj.

“From 1947, when the Soviets established here, a lot of things changed. All Soviet countries relied on mass production,” says Zoltán; “they needed to be able to move large tractors between the vines. Now, of course, we don't need that— all the grapes are hand-picked.

“Single vineyards are Royal Tokaji's strongest asset—55 per cent of our total planted area is in first growths. Our oldest vineyards are being renovated now—we are

looking for less yield per plant for better quality. We kept 50 per cent of the old vines and planted in between rows to increase density.” Which means less fruit, but riper berries for when botrytis arrives in the fall.

Three grapes dominate Tokaj's plantings. Furmint, with its razor-like acidity, affinity for botrytis and beautiful minerality, is distantly related to Chardonnay and Riesling. Thick-skinned, aromatic Hárslevelű (linden leaf), also has racy acidity, and lovely, evanescent green notes. Super aromatic, reminiscent of orange blossom and tropical fruit, Sárga Muskotály is Hungarian for Muscat Blanc à Petits Grains. About 10 per cent of Tokaj's grape harvest, with fresh acidity and floral notes.

Zoltán continues to show us what makes the terroir of Tokaj unique. “From the Great Hungarian Plain, the good weather and winds. That helps with the drying of the berries,” says Zoltán. “The Zemplén Mountains protect from the north and provide the oak for barrels. We have a continental climate, but drier—we have three times less precipitation than Bordeaux and less disease pressure.

“Our biggest issue is the starling,” says Zoltán. “If close to the forest, we have a second pruning of the green shoots done by the deer. And during harvest, the wild boars are harvesting too.”

The area is volcanic, the soils high in mineral content. The humidity of the Bodrog and Tisza rivers create the mists which encourage botrytis (noble rot) to thrive, and the volcanic tufa creates the vast cellars found in the area. The characteristic mossy fungus found in the cellars is unique to Tokaj.

Botrytis created Tokaj's most revered wine styles, the Aszú and Essencia. Essentially, berries get affected by botrytis, which dries them out, increasing the ratio of sugar to liquid. The grapes are picked when fully shrivelled, little nuggets of flavour. Several passes through the vineyards are required to fully harvest aszú (what the shrivelled berries are called, also the name of the wine they make). “We finish harvest for dry wines in September when we only harvest ripe bunches,” says Zoltán. “We select, then leave the grapes that are starting to shrivel on the vine. It's a long harvest period and labour intensive.”

Aszú berries have so much residual sugar, it's tough to start a fermentation. Tokaj producers solve that problem by using a fermenting must. There are regulations (one kilo of aszú berries to make no more than 2.2 liters of Aszú wine) and *puttony* (a bucket of a certain size) is no longer used as a measurement, residual sugar is. (A minimum of 120 grams per liter is required). In the cellar at Royal, we watch while aszú berries are macerated in small tubs by foot (wearing rubber boots).

Essencia (only aszú berries) the rare, top-of-the-pyramid wine, ferments away for years, reaching only three to four per cent alcohol. You can hardly even call it wine. We taste the 2008, bottled in 2016. It's insane, a trip really, fresh, with cucumber and green leaf notes nestled among the rich stone fruit. Extraordinary. Zoltán tells us the fashion in Michelin-starred restaurants is to serve Essencia by the crystal spoonful. With 468.8, grams of sugar per litre, the amazing thing is—it doesn't seem all that sweet. It's that sensational balance.

Please see “Wines” on following page



Facing page: in the cellar at Royal Tokaji. From left: Zoltán Kovács in the Szent Tamás vineyard; royal doors at Royal Tokaji; macerating aszú berries at Royal Tokaji.

Wines

Continued from previous page

Those most expensive wines of the 19th century were always lusciously sweet. This is the style that made Tokaj famous. Today, there is a different challenge.

“Now we are trying to find the dry of Tokaj. To find the best vineyards, like the third growth Úrágya, to produce the best quality dry Furmint,” says Zoltán.

At Zsirai Winery

I had tasted and studied Tokaj in WSET, knew it was a quality region but perhaps wasn't paying much attention since. Not until Christina Masciangelo (Salivate Wine) brought in Zsirai. A modern wine family making delicious wines. And when Christina said, ‘do you want to go to Hungary,’ I bought a ticket and packed.

So, a novice then. My experience with Tokaj was limited, but no one says it better than Hugh Johnson: “Perfect wine need no explanation, however exotic it may be. The rules are the same: it smells inviting, invigorates your mouth as it comes in, expands into new dimensions as you hold it on your tongue and lingers sweetly after you swallow.”

We drive to Mád from Budapest to meet Máté Csanaky, the genial export director and Kata Zsirai, head winemaker. Máté is married to Petra, Kata's sister, pregnant with their second child and at home.

They tuck us into the guest house by the winery.



Above: Kata, Christina and Máté at Zsirai; below left: Zoltán Heimann Sr. in the spectacular vaulted cellars at Heimann; right: Zoltán Heimann Jr. eating unharvested Kadarka in the vineyard.

“My father wanted a break from regular business. We bought our first vineyard in 2005,” says Kata. Kata and Petra carried on after their father's death in 2011. Now, they cultivate 13 acres of vineyards, strategic about where and what they buy, including a land swap for .7-ha in Szent Tamás as well as parcels in Úrágya, (God's bed) Nyúlászó and Betsék. They are most excited about Középhegy, a northwestern vineyard of Mád. They have 6.2-ha there—30-50-year-old vines, 65 per cent Furmint, 25 per cent Hárslevelű, 10 per cent Sárga Muskotály. The new plantings are organic—the direction the family is moving in.

Kata and Máté take us to almost every parcel. We gaze at the view, taste here, walk among the vines there. On the last day, we pick aszú. Or attempt to. Kata shows us how to choose the right berries. It's all in the feel. About 45 minutes later I have picked, a quarter of a pail? (But they were all perfectly shrivelled.) We taste wines from the other regions where they make wine, Villány and Somló. We taste new wines, old wines, wines not yet bottled. We taste the blends for the new sparkling wine. It was total immersion. And we loved it.

I ask Máté what he thinks is the soul of Zsirai. “Our first objective is to show every vintage's identity and to make the best wines possible for that particular vintage. And of course, the main objective is to build the rep for

Hungarian wines, especially for dry Tokaj because the dry is not that well known. Change the narrative.”

It's the character of these wines—the minerality, the complexity and their transparency—that helps a novice understand the region. The family's commitment to expressing terroir starts in the vineyard—the sustainable-moving-to-organic approach allows the individual sites to shine. The actions in the winery have the same goal, the pristine hand-picked grapes undergo minimal interference, starting with



spontaneous fermentation with ambient yeast. The result? Beautiful, practically hand-made wines.

Before we leave Tokaj we visit Grand Tokaj. Now owned by the Tokaj-Hegyalja University Foundation, it operates 67-ha of vineyards and purchases grapes from more than 1,000 small producers. Károly Áts, 2012 Winemaker of the Year, acclaimed for his 100-point Tokaji Essencia, is the chief oenologist. Ongoing educational and quality improvements in the vineyards coupled with winemaking talent foretell a rosy future for Grand Tokaj. Export director Zoltán Szabó, takes us through the spectacular cellar—spooky, flickery, filled with barrels and ancient bottles of wine with passages branching off. The air is fresh, a product of the mossy fungus on the walls. It's the largest in Tokaj, five kilometres, two stories—you can imagine what it was like when they were lit by candles. Maybe not, it was built 25 years ago out of series of 400 year-old rock mines. Grand Tokaj produces affordable wines that are a terrific introduction to the flavours of the region.

On to the Szekszárd region

Szekszárd is completely different from Tokaj. Primarily a red wine region, it has different soils and grapes. It's best known in Canada for Bikaver, or the Bull's Blood blend.

Máté had suggested Christina take a look at Szekszárd winemaker Zoltán Heimann Jr., a childhood friend. Máté dropped Christina and I off in this fairy-tale-pretty region, all hill and dale, bordered by the Transdanubian hills on one side and the Great Hungarian Plain on the other.

Heimann is a well-respected Szekszárd producer best known for elegant Bordeaux-style wines aged in oak. Zoltán and Ágnes Heimann built the business from the Communist era (.8-ha parcel owned by his father) to a 25-ha estate. Trained as economists, Ágnes left her job and went to oenology school to become the family winemaker.

Zoltán Jr (Zoli) took over the estate in 2016 with a different approach. His mission? To raise awareness of the native grapes, Kadarka and Kékfrankos (Blaufränkisch). Zoli has an extensive wine education, at Geisenheim, Montpellier, Bordeaux and Udine and work in Australia. He describes the new approach as we walk among vines and taste wines on the tailgate.

“The bigger shift—to emphasize the ferment first and the aromatics and not so much the aging,” says Zoli. “We age some of the wine in amphorae. It's like using old wood, but cleaner and more pristine, with the right porosity. My mother is still involved—the grape selection, fermentation control. We taste once a day together and she makes the last decision, the final blending.

“Kadarka is self-explanatory. You don't have to be an aficionado to understand and enjoy it. The grape itself is tasty, juicy and fruit forward,” says Zoli, as we nibble on second harvest bunches left on the vine. “I would like to keep this red fruit character and show it as simply as possible. It's charming and requires only restraint, not too much ripeness.

“Kadarka had lost its importance. We started a clonal selection in 2005 (from 30 clones found in older vineyards). My mother was making micro vinifications in trash cans. We planted the seven clones we liked the best and saw a huge jump in quality.

“Kékfrankos has depth and interest, but it needs some restraint to keep it fruit and terroir forward. Spontaneous fermentation adds richness to the aromatics, with more fragile aromas—green spices, herbal notes. Whole berry fermentation also adds layers of interest.”

As we walk through the parcels Zoltán Jr describes their different characteristics. “These vineyards have similar soil. We have the loess (sand, loam and silt mixture) over brown clay with red streaks. The vineyards that face the plain warm up much more quickly, but the lightness and aromatics comes from the more protected vineyards, which we pick two-three weeks later.”

“This young fellow broke all the rules—spontaneous fermentation, no preservatives, risky,” says Zoltán Sr. The result? “There is a certainty in the wines, excitement. They are alive, with many dimensions; we always open these bottles first.

“New generation, his job is to make the quality. We always try to support him,” says Zoltán Sr. “We found the beauty of giving over.”

Please see “Wines” on page 14

PRO TIPS FOR BEING A COOL NEIGHBOUR



1. Introduce yourself! If you can't name your neighbours, you've got some work to do. Knowing who you live next to is a great way to build a strong community.



2. Roll up your sleeves! If you see your neighbour out in their yard doing spring cleaning, head over and offer to lend a hand. You may even get to share a tasty beverage with a new friend.



3. Find out your neighbour's favourite beverage. That way, you can stock up at Sherbrooke before inviting them over.



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The Taste of Spring: recipes featuring the flavours of the season

Time to ease off the root veg. Instead, enjoy the fresh spring flavours of asparagus, radishes, ramps and strawberries.

Grilled Strawberry Rhubarb Sangria

A delightful drink for brunch—tastes like spring. Since we won't see local field strawberries until the summer, we are huge fans of Sunterra's Acme greenhouse-grown Duchess strawberries right now. Grilling some of the fruit lends extra depth of flavour to the sangria. A few tips: use vanilla paste or even vanilla extract if you don't have a vanilla bean (so expensive now!). Find lemon verbena and rhubarb at the farmers' markets if you don't have in your garden. The syrup is best made the day before you plan to use. Adapted from a recipe in Food & Wine.

½ c	light brown sugar
½ c	dry white wine, such as Sauvignon Blanc
1 container	Sunterra Duchess strawberries, hulled
1¼ c	coarsely-chopped rhubarb (about 2 large stalks), plus six 4-inch grilled stalks for garnish (optional)
1 2-inch piece	vanilla bean, split lengthwise (use vanilla extract or if don't have a vanilla bean)
1 sprig	lemon verbena or lemon thyme, or mint, plus more for garnish
6	wooden skewers, soaked in water
1 bottle	(750 ml) cava or any other dry sparkling wine, chilled

In a small pot, combine the sugar and white wine with ½ cup of water and bring to a simmer, stirring, until the sugar dissolves. Dice 4 of the strawberries and add them to the syrup along with the chopped rhubarb and the vanilla bean. Simmer until the rhubarb is tender, about 20 minutes. (The rhubarb should have transferred most of its colour to the syrup.) Transfer the syrup to a heatproof bowl and add a sprig of lemon verbena. Let cool, then refrigerate until cooled completely, about 45 minutes. Strain the syrup through a fine sieve set over a bowl, pressing on the solids. Discard the solids in the compost.

Light a grill. Thread the remaining strawberries on the skewers and grill over moderately high heat until lightly charred, about 5 minutes. Let cool completely, then cut the strawberries in half lengthwise.



In a pitcher, combine the rhubarb syrup with half of the grilled strawberries and the sparkling wine. Serve the sangria over ice, garnished with the remaining grilled strawberries, lemon verbena sprigs and grilled rhubarb stalks, if using.

Serves 6.

Ramp Goddess Dressing

A riff on the delicious green goddess dressing, Edmonton Kitchen Party Gold Medal-winning chef Davina Moraiko's recipe highlights spring ramps. "This dressing is good for greens, vegetables and fish. I enjoy it as a dip for potato chips too," says Davina.

2 bunch	medium-sized ramps (aprox. 8-10)
1 bunch	flat leaf parsley
½ lg	lemon (zest and juice)
1 c	drained yogurt or sour cream
1 T	grainy mustard
1 T	honey
1 T	iced cider vinegar
2 T	first-pressed canola oil
	salt and pepper to taste

Finely chop the ramps (greens and bulbs) and parsley, or blitz in a food processor. Place in a bowl and mix in the remaining ingredients until smooth. If you enjoy a thinner

consistency, add cold water to thin out the dressing.

Makes about 3 cups.

Roasted Radish Hummus

"Radishes are super delicious and underutilized; they aren't just for salad toppings. Roast the radishes up and let them shine. Their earthy pepper flavor becomes less pungent and more well-rounded with sweet notes. I promise you will be pleasantly surprised." —Bri Campbell, former Three Viking's chef, now at the Cattail Crossing Golf and Winter Club.

1 lb	fresh radish
1 T	olive oil
1 t	salt and pepper
1 can	(540 mL) chickpeas
1 can	(398 mL) butter beans
2 cloves	garlic
125 ml	olive oil
1	lemon (juice and zest)
2	ice cubes
1 T	salt

Pre-heat oven to 400°F.

Combine fresh radishes with first amount of olive oil, salt, and pepper.

Place on parchment-lined baking tray and into the heated oven. Let roast for 60 minutes.

Once radishes are done, take them out of the oven and transfer to a bowl and place in the fridge to cool.

While the radishes are cooling, scale out the rest of the ingredients.

Rinse and wash the chickpeas and butter beans well. Place in a food processor bowl with the remaining 125 ml olive oil, garlic lemon juice and the roasted radishes. Blend until everything comes together but still a little chunky. This is when you can go ahead and add in the 2 ice cubes. Adding ice cubes will keep the temperature from getting too warm and helps in creating that extra creamy texture. Season with salt, taste and make sure it's to your liking.

Serve with grilled sourdough, or fresh pita chips. Garnish with fresh radish, nuts, fruits, mint and olive oil.

Serves 4 to 6.



Spencer Gatt photo

Chive and Fromage Blanc Tartine with Fresh Radish

"This recipe is as easy as it gets and allows great ingredients to shine," –Lindsay James, Darling Wine Bar. Find Fleur Jaune cheeses at Meuwly's.

¾ c	Fleur Jaune Fromage Blanc (could also use goat cheese)
1 T	chives, chopped
¼ t	salt
2 pieces	sourdough bread (I love Brio)
	thinly shaved radish
	Maldon salt
	additional garnishes such as pickled red onion, fresh pickled dill, more chives

In a small bowl combine the fromage blanc, chives and salt. Toast the sourdough to your liking. Generously cover the toasted sourdough in the cheese mixture. Garnish with thinly-sliced radish and Maldon salt and additional garnishes if you wish.

Makes 2 tartines.

Frittata with Asparagus, Goat Cheese and Herbs

"All winter long I look forward to Edgar Farms Asparagus (grown near Innisfail). Its appearance heralds the start of the growing season, and I use it prolifically at home and in my classes at Get Cooking too. It's as perfect in pastas,

risottos and omelettes as it is in this easy oven-baked frittata. Frittatas can be adapted to the season by changing up the filling based on what's available locally. Perfect for brunch, lunch or supper," –Kathryn Joel, Get Cooking.

12	eggs
200 ml	whipping cream
	salt and pepper, to taste
3	shallots, thinly sliced
	extra virgin olive oil
1 bunch	thin asparagus stalks
2 lg handfuls	fresh herbs of choice (we love tarragon and chives in this recipe or use basil, parsley or lemon balm)
100 g	goat's cheese, crumbled
¼ c	grated Parmesan, or Gruyère or cheddar

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Grease a gratin dish (approximately 13" x 9") with butter and set aside.

Snap the woody ends off the asparagus, if necessary. (If you are using fresh local asparagus such as Edgar's there is no need.) Slice into 1-cm pieces, on the diagonal. Reserve the tips.

Heat a wide frying pan over medium high heat; add a generous glug of olive oil.

Add the shallots, season with salt and cook for a minute or two until softened. Add the sliced asparagus stalks (not the tips) and cook briefly, seasoning to taste. Remove from the heat. When cool, toss with the cheese and arrange in the prepared gratin dish.

In a bowl, whisk together the eggs and cream and season to taste with salt and pepper. Mix the herbs into the eggs and pour the mixture over the asparagus and cheese. Finish with the grated cheese, then the asparagus tips.

Bake for 15-20 minutes in the pre-heated oven, until set but still moist.

Rest for a few minutes at room temperature, then serve.

Serves 6.

Auntie Lil's Rhubarb Pie

"This is a pie best made with fresh rhubarb. We use short crust pastry, but it would be good with a basic pie pastry as well. You could make one large tart or 12 individual ones. A dollop of whipped cream is always nice," –Kaelin Whittaker, Awn Kitchen.

2 T	butter, melted
1 c	brown sugar
1	egg
1 T	cream
2 T	flour
2 c	rhubarb, chopped into 1cm cubes

Whisk the butter, brown sugar, egg, cream and flour together. Place the 2 cups of rhubarb into the base of a baked pie shell, and cover with the sugar mixture. Bake in a preheated oven (425°F) for 10 minutes, turn the oven down to 350°F and bake for a further 20–25 minutes.

Makes 1 pie.

Alberta Springtime Morning Glory Muffins (vegan)

"I love this recipe. It is very easy, loaded with healthy plant-based ingredients and is a great way to enjoy rhubarb, gooseberries and strawberries for breakfast. It also uses many ingredients that are true to Alberta in the spring and early summer months. Enjoy on their own or with a spread of jam for extra sweetness," –chef Holly Holt, She Cooks.

2 c	chopped rhubarb
1 c	chopped strawberries (the Sunterra strawberries are lovely and available year-round)
1 c	gooseberries
4 T	ground flax seed + 4 T water
1½ c	all-purpose flour (or GF substitute)
1 c	quick oats
1½ t	baking soda
1½ t	baking powder
3 t	cinnamon
¾ t	salt
½ c	mixed seeds, sunflower and pumpkin
1 c	grated carrot
1 c	grated zucchini
3 t	vanilla
½ c	maple syrup
½ c	oil (canola or sunflower)
1 c	oat milk

Add the rhubarb, gooseberries, and strawberries into a saucepot. Cook on low heat on the stovetop until a chunky jam like consistency (this can take about 2 hours). If you want to speed up the process, add a few tablespoons of sugar and cook on medium heat but mix often to ensure it doesn't burn. This can be done ahead of time and kept in the fridge.

Preheat oven to 425°F and grease a 12-cup muffin tin with cooking oil spray or line with cupcake liners and lightly spray them with oil.

In a small bowl mix the ground flax and water and let sit for at least 3 minutes (this creates a flax "egg" and will bind your batter).

In a large bowl, add and mix flour, oats, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon and salt.

Add grated carrots, zucchini and seeds to the dry mixture and combine.


In a separate bowl mix the oil, oat milk, vanilla, flax mixture and the cooked fruit mixture. Mix until combined but do not overmix.

Evenly divide batter between muffin cups. Bake for 5 minutes. Reduce heat to 350°F. Continue to bake for 20-22 minutes or until toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Serve slightly warm or room temperature.

Makes 12 muffins. 🍌

Uccellino



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Wine Maven



The **Black Tot Finest Caribbean** is a nod to the Naval rum tradition and the most accessible Black Tot rum in price and availability. The blend of Barbados, Guyana and high ester Jamaican pot still rum is aged in ex-bourbon casks. The result? A supremely drinkable rum—warm, spicy rather than sweet, with the chocolate, toffee, black pepper and dried mango notes freshened by orange citrus and lime leaf. Black Tot refers to the last time sailors were given a daily rum ration—July 31, 1970 for British sailors and March 30, 1972 for Canada’s Royal Navy—the end of a naval tradition that began in 1771. “Navy rum was always a multi-county blend. Their main concern was finding four million gallons of rum per year,” said Black Tot educator, Mitch Wilson in a colourful Zoom presentation.

Here are the new gins in town by **Cambridge Distillery**, co-founded by William Lowe, master distiller and master of wine. The **Japanese Gin** translates the flavours of sansho pepper, toasted white sesame and shisho leaf with beautiful subtlety. Light and elegant, with long-lasting flavours. Drink neat or in a delicate Japanese martini. Find at Chateau Louis and Liquor Select. The **Cambridge Dry** features lovely rose, basil and rosemary, with lemon verbena freshness and a classic juniper core,



equally at home in a Negroni, G&T or martini. At Bar Bricco, Chateau Louis, Liquor Select and Vines in Riverbend. The **Truffle Gin** made with white Alba truffles is crazy. The spectacular nose along with complex earthy, vegetal, juniper and mushroomy notes is radical. A contemplative gin, ideal as a digestive. Find at Campbell Liquor, Chateau Louis, Color de Vino, Crestwood, Century Park Cellars, Devines, Glenora, Sommelier Select and the Whisky Drop.



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New this spring is Spanish producer **De Moya**. Founder Yves Laurijssens and his winemaking team looked for old, almost forgotten, vineyards at altitude to explore the native varietals of Valencia—Bobal,

Monastrell and Merseguera. The Bobal makes silky-textured, fruity (think raspberry, black cherries), pleasurable wines, with fresh acidity. De Moya has two on offer, the Maria and Justina, as well as the Gloria Monastrell and Tibó Rosado, which we will be drinking all summer. The Tibo Mersegruera is a blend with 20 per cent Muscat à Petits Grains and tastes delicious with seafood. These wines are terrific value too, coming in under \$25. Find at Boudreau Wines, City Cellars, Color de Vino, Sherbrooke and other fine wine shops.

Mary Bailey



Lionel Trudel photo

Darryl Brooker, Okanagan Crush Pad.

Talking with wine legend **Darryl Brooker** about his recent move to Okanagan Crush Pad became a master class in smoke taint. “None of us had worked with smoke taint before 2015,” he said. “Now we are aware of it and it’s been a steep learning curve. We discovered it absorbs through the leaf, then deposits into the skin and grapes. Every variety takes up the smoke in a different way. It depends on the style of the wine too. White wine and rose are not affected. You have to treat the wines differently—less contact with lees, less time on skins. A Pinot Noir couldn’t handle it, but bigger more robust wines can.”

“Not everyone can detect smoke taint, there is a sensory threshold, and now there are tests for it and specialized equipment. As well, smoke taint is bound and doesn’t express itself until three or four months have passed.”

His final word on the vintage? “Tough season all round, but I’m quite impressed with the wines.”



Benjamin Peng-I Lin saw an opportunity. His experience with LCRB and setting up private wine shops in Vancouver has led to a terrific wine shop called **Sommelier Select** (2041 163 Street SW, 587-498-1168, sommelierselect.ca) in the new southwest Glenriding neighbourhood.

It’s a cute shop with a lot of variety, ranging from everyday wines and spirits and a cellar space for finds. Ben is easygoing, with a service ethos. “I carry what people want,” he says. “The usual suspects are first, the destination items are next. We don’t always get to buy the special stuff all the time. And we have a great selection of Alberta craft beer and cider.” 🍷

Benjamin Peng I-Lin, Sommelier Select

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Wines

Continued from page 9

The Wines

Expect to find regional wines under \$30 and single vineyard wines under \$50. Great value for the quality. The sweet are more, depending on rarity, quality and level of sweetness.

Tokaji Dry Wines

1. 2019 Royal Tokaji Furmint

Structured, a little flinty, very attractive, textured. Will age beautifully.

2. 2017 Zsirai Furmint

Refreshing, complex, lovely resinous green notes.

3. 2017 Zsirai Betsek Furmint

Structured, with a beautiful seam of acidity. Steely minerality, smoky, yellow fruits, peach, suitable for ageing.

4. 2017 Zsirai Hárslevelű

Floral, pretty, beautiful acidity, the mineral note is in the right key.

5. 2018 Zsirai Szent Tamás Hárslevelű

Very fresh, floral nose, appealing stone fruit and Asian pear, with striking minerality.

6. 2019 Zsirai Jufark Somló

Pronounced *yufark*, which means sheep's tail. Somló is also volcanic, giving the wine tons of minerality, with racy acidity and notes of rhubarb.

7. 2018 Zsirai Olaszrizling

Called Welschriesling in Austria, is the most widely planted white grape in Hungary, from Somló, and quality can rival a great Furmint. Loads of extract and refreshing acidity.

Tokaji Sweet Wines

8. 2017 Royal Tokaji Aszú Gold Label

Refined, with beautiful fresh acidity, all the botrytis character in depth—orange zest, lime, stone fruit—yellow peach. super long finish.

9. 2015 Grand Tokaji Szamordni

Sweet apricot and white peach notes with citrus and vanilla. The sprightly acidity keeps it fresh.

10. 2019 Zsirai Szamorodni

Beautifully complex aromatics, thrilling acidity, well-integrated sweetness and a finish that goes on for minutes. Similar to German Auslese.

11. 2017 Zsirai Fordítás

The wine is made from a second pressing of aszú berries. Lush with pronounced botrytis character. A bit less sweet than Aszú, easier to pair. A gorgeous seam of acidity keeps things fresh.

12. 2016 Zsirai Aszú 6 Puttonyos

Heady in the best way possible way. Very low production, extremely fresh, lots of lemon curd in the flavours. Drink with a large chunk of a fine blue cheese.



Red Wines

13. 2020 Zsirai Kékfrankos, Villány

Loads of berry fruit, bright, medium bodied, deeply coloured.

14. Heimann SXRd

Easy drinking Kékfrankos blend from Heimann Sr. Lots of red fruit, doesn't take itself too seriously.

Wines 15-20 are made by Heimann and Fiai (son).

15. 2019 Szekszárdi Kékfrankos

Slightly grippy tannins, aromatic, with cherry, plum, spice, earth and subtle citrus, lime.

16. 2019 Bati Kereszt Kékfrankos

Well-integrated fruit, softish tannins, medium bodied, long finish.

17. 2019 Baranya-völgy Kékfrankos

Gorgeous cherry fruit, spicy, soft finish. Needs more time.

18. 2019 Szívem Kékfrankos

A small climat in the Baranya-völgy vineyard where the vines are 50 years old. Gorgeous tannins, rich roundness with generosity and opulence. Szívem means my heart, a precious vineyard.

19. 2021 Szekszárd Kadarka

Pale garnet, primary red fruit, cherries, red plum, leaf, subtle herbs, light bodied, balanced acidity, medium finish.

20. 2020 Porkoláb-völgy Kadarka

Vibrant, very attractive, elegant with fresh cranberry and cherry flavours with a firmer tannin structure. 🍷

Find at Color de Vino, Prestige Wines and other fine wine shops. Not every wine in every shop.

Mary Bailey, editor of The Tomato food & drink, WSET Diploma holder and bubblehead, is looking forward to the Zsirai sparkling wine.



11

12



13

14

15

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Let them eat

TACOS

Words and photos by Curtis Comeau



Tacos de Lengua, 3 Amigos

Like many of you, I took up cooking as a hobby over the past two years. One of the areas I focused on was how to make different street-style tacos. I ended up sourcing ingredients locally—El Mercado corn tortillas, La Patrona taco sauces and fresh ingredients like pork shoulder and beef cuts from Acme or Real Deal Meats.

However, I realized that, generally, you have to make a lot when making tacos. It's time consuming, and you end up with a lot of taco filling. When making barbacoa, you can't just make enough for four or six tacos; it's more like five pounds of beef. So, you end up pretty much eating barbacoa for lunch and dinner seven nights a week.

While making street tacos at home is fun, sometimes you just want to eat four freshly made tacos and go on about your day. Now I have learned to balance my street taco-making addiction in favour of skipping the mess and choose to eat out at some of Edmonton's best taco joints for specialty tacos.

Tacos de Lengua (beef/bison tongue), 3 Amigos

Let's face it; some cuts of meat are challenging to get and trickier to cook. Tasty lengua tacos are made with traditionally seasoned beef tongue braised over a long period. However, bison tongue is becoming more popular in Canada. Making lengua at home is fraught

with challenges; tongue is hard to find and high skills are needed to braise it to perfection. And beef tongues are massive. Do you want to be eating lengua tongue all week long? Being an amateur cook, tackling braising a beef tongue is too outside the box for me. It's best to head over to 3 Amigos and let them serve you an order of three perfectly cooked lengua tacos.

Al Pastor Tacos, Huma

Al pastor means shepherd style, slow-roasting ancho-marinated pork on a vertical spit. Once cooked, pieces are shaved off the spit and served on a corn tortilla with cilantro, onions and grilled pineapple. Vertical



Al Pastor tacos, Huma

spit-roasting pork for the pastor at home, while not impossible, is not an easy feat. I know, I tried, so now, when I feel like hearty authentic El Pastor tacos, Huma is my stop.

Pescado Tacos, Calle Mexico

Fish tacos are often one of the most ordered items from a Mexican restaurant. After a few attempts, I understand that making fish tacos at home is messy and time-consuming. Deep frying an excellent fresh cut of fish is fine, but the cleaning up is not so much fun. Calle Mexico makes a beautiful pescado tacos trio; deep-fried cod topped with chipotle mayo, lettuce and pico de gallo salsa. “Our fish tacos are 100 per cent gluten-free, we don’t use flour to batter our cod, and of course, the tortillas are 100 per cent corn,” says owner Juan Talango. When I want to skip the mess, I visit Calle Mexico.

Vegetarian (vegan) tacos, Frida Urban Taqueria

I am not a vegetarian, but at times I do want to eat a

little cleaner, so when I crave tacos and want someone who knows how to make vegetables taste amazing and in taco form, Frida is my stop. They have four vegetarian tacos to choose from—*papas con frijoles*, *camote*, *calabaza* and *champinion*. My personal favourites are the camote—sweet potatoes and kale with a salsa verde. All the vegetarian tacos come with the option of adding queso fresco.

Carnitas, Argyll Foods

Carnitas are my absolute favourite taco. Originally from Michoacán, they are now a savoury staple across Mexico. However, I also learned that they are made by braising a heavily marbled section of pork shoulder, and if you want more flavour, add 12 oz bacon while braising the shoulder. Yeah, braise a fatty cut of meat with more fat. No wonder carnitas are simply incredible. To avoid eating five pounds of savoury meat every day because one is left with so much meat, I decided it’s best to eat carnitas out rather than making them at home.



Pescado tacos, Calle Mexico



Vegetarian tacos, Frida Urban Taqueria



Carnitas, Argyll Foods

The taco counter in the back of Argyll Foods has become my go-to when I want grab ’n go carnitas. Theirs are on a corn tortilla with diced white onion and cilantro with a wedge of lime. Simple, classic and take-out only. They serve just enough that when they run out for the day, that’s it. If you plan on visiting Argyll Foods on a Saturday, make sure you get there no later than midday because this hidden taco counter is well known in the Edmonton Latin community, and they do run out if you wait too long. 🍌

Curtis Comeau has contributed photography to The Tomato since the beginning. He has discovered cooking is also an art form: “when it comes to my cooking skills, I consider myself a less talented and much less refined Jackson Pollock.”

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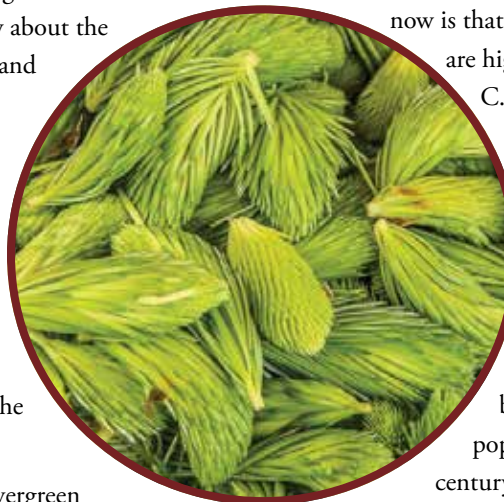
Drink local they say. Local beer with Alberta barley, hops, and water, sure. But how about adding some Alberta spruce too?

I have a majestic old, 70 foot black spruce tree in my front yard that I cherish most of the time and worry about when the gales of November come early. I haven't really considered gathering spruce needles and adding them to my beer but I do love that evergreen aroma. It would be like Christmas in a pint glass! Strange? Not really. Think about the classic west coast IPAs like Sierra Nevada Torpedo or Driftwood Fat Tug. Brewed with Cascade, Chinook, Columbus or Centennial hops, these beers have a pronounced piney aroma that for a time was a defining characteristic of craft beer. Or how about the distinctive aroma and taste of juniper in London Dry style gins? As well, the tonic water in your G&T gets its bitter taste from quinine, which is made from the bark of the cinchona tree.

Actually adding evergreen needles to beer is another level. So imagine my delight one sunny spring Sunday when I walked to nearby Irrational Brewing and found myself drinking a delicious Forager Spruce Tip Brown Ale. Irrational uses Alberta malts, American hops (Centennial), and English yeast plus local spruce tips to create an amber ale with pine and earthy notes. Irrational follows in the footsteps of other craft brewers using evergreen bits in their brews. Locally, in 2016 Alley Kat kicked off their Back Alley Brews series with Spruce Almighty, an ale brewed with 80,000 spruce tips picked in Edmonton. Alley Kat brewmaster Tim Macleod described the beer to Mack Lamoureux of the CBC: "It's sprucy, it's earthy, it's like a tree and it's delicious." In Halifax,

Garrison Brewing began brewing an annual Spruce Beer in 2010, based on an historic 18th century recipe, made with local spruce and fir tips, molasses and dates.

Garrison calls their Spruce Beer a revival of North America's oldest beer style. Certainly one can trace the roots of spruce beer back to at least the time of European contact with Indigenous peoples. In 1536 explorer Jacques Cartier and 110 men were overwintering at Stadacona (Quebec City) and almost all were dying of scurvy, which is caused by a lack of vitamin C. The local Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) people brought the ailing men a drink made from a local tree, which quickly brought them back to health. What Indigenous people knew then and what we know



now is that spruce needles are high in vitamin C. Indigenous knowledge rules! The Iroquoian spruce tea idea spread back to Europe, with low-alcohol spruce beer becoming a popular drink in 19th century England. Author

Jane Austen was a homebrewer who specialized in spruce beer, even mentioning it in her 1815 novel Emma. The British Royal Navy made sure its sailors had spruce beer to prevent scurvy, with Captain James Cook employing men on his voyages brewing spruce beer. In Canada settlers built on spruce tea by adding molasses to the recipe to enable fermentation. Brewing low alcohol spruce beer remained a rural pastime in Newfoundland, the Maritimes and especially Quebec into the 1960s. You can find artisanal *bière d'épinette* at Montreal poutine shop Paul Patates today. With spruce beer, as with IPA and porter and other out of fashion styles, today's innovative craft brewers looked to the past for inspiration, making what was old into something new.

Tree beer six pack

Six woody beers that take drinking local seriously. Most are only available seasonally, in late spring to summer.



Grain Bin Ale Spruced Up, Grande Prairie

Grain Bin Head Brewer Dalen Landis notes, “We grow and harvest the spruce tips ourselves. It’s our version of a wet-hopped beer, so we aim to brew the beer the day of or after we pick the spruce tips. Each year the beer changes as the growing seasons differ. Some years it is more ‘piney’, some almost sappy, and others a cooling menthol (or a blend of all 3).”

Canmore Brewing Sulphur Mountain Session Ale, Canmore

A refreshing après-ski beer, whether after cross-country skiing at the Canmore Nordic Centre, backcountry in Kananaskis or downhill at Sunshine. The addition of juniper and spruce tips to this light session ale brings out a hit of wintry freshness with a background of spearmint.



Tofino Spruce Tree Ale, Tofino

A sip of this golden ale brewed with local Sitka spruce tips is like some much-needed *shinrin-yoku* (forest bathing) among the ancient, giant trees of Tofino. Walk into the woods, quiet your mind, breathe deeply and ignore the rain. The spruce taste is subtle but just enough to take you to the west coast in your mind.

Three Ranges Just the Tip Spruce Tip Ale, Valemount

Three Ranges knows what they’re doing with their spruce beer. Valemount is deep inside the boreal forest (taiga)—the spruce, pine, fir and larch trees that stretch across Canada, Alaska, Russia and Scandinavia. This dark red amber ale is nicely balanced, with a bit of hop bite and subtle spruce notes.



Yukon Birch Sap Ale, Whitehorse

Yukon Brewing marks 25 years in business in 2022—congratulations to founders Bob Baxter and Alan Hansen. Bob and Alan have never been afraid to brew some unusual beers in the midnight sun. Yukon makes a Spruce Tip Pale Ale with locally harvested spruce shoots as well as this delicious Birch Sap Ale brewed with Klondike birch sap.

High Country English Pale Ale with Birch Sap, Nisku

High Country is the beer offshoot of Rig Hand Distillery. Head Brewer Angus Munro brews his English Pale Ale with Birch Sap once a year in the spring when the sap is running in local birch trees. Munro hand-harvests birch sap which replaces the brewing water, making his fruity, biscuity Pale Ale a touch sweeter. 🍷



Peter Bailey drinks shoots and leaves in Edmonton. He’s on Twitter and Instagram as @Libarbarian

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Feeding People

How getting my hands dirty has made me less picky

For most people, a ripe, juicy cherry tomato is something to covet. With its firm and glossy skin, tender flesh and burst of flavour, it's treated like a delicacy whether eaten on its own, in a salad or on a sandwich.

Unless you're me. Or, at least, unless you were me before I figured out a solution to my picky eating habit. While it might make other people salivate, the prospect of biting into a tomato used to make my gorge rise. Adjectives I'd use to describe tomatoes included wet, acidic, mushy, watery and mealy.

In fact, my brain stores a long list of unflattering adjectives for a rainbow's worth of vegetables.

For more than half of my life, I've wanted nothing to do with broccoli, tomatoes, onion, mushrooms, Brussels sprouts, squash, peppers, asparagus, green beans or anything resembling a vegetable or vegetable-like fruit, whether prepared by a celebrated chef or in the home kitchen of someone I loved.

Then I moved into my own apartment at 19, began to shop for my own groceries and cook all of my own meals. With a newfound sense of ownership over food preparation and the ability to see a vegetable through from raw and whole to chopped, sautéed, roasted, pan-fried or steamed, things began to change.

In my twenties, I began to forage and grow food—tomatoes, peppers, fiddleheads, garlic mustard and more—and found that anything I grew or picked myself was automatically less offensive. I could deal with the texture and acidity of a raw cherry tomato if I'd grown it myself. I could even let myself enjoy it. It was a matter of pride to eat food I'd grown or picked and, as a bonus, I noticed I liked the taste more. I still don't love mushrooms but, being able to experiment with them in my own kitchen, with my own hands, has brought me around to some varieties. And although I mostly stopped eating meat in 2018, I've since tasted the occasional bite of pork after watching someone butcher the meat or talking to the person who raised it.



Megan DeLaire

There might even be a documented scientific basis for this phenomenon. Research out of the University of Copenhagen in 2019 demonstrated that people prefer the taste of food we're familiar with, but if we know where the food comes from and how it is made, it tastes even better. For this study, researchers in Indonesia had 165 participants taste and rate nine different samples of *tempeh*—a traditional Indonesian food made from fermented soybeans. After they had sampled the *tempeh* with no context, they were taught about the ingredients used, whether they were locally grown or imported, and production methods, then asked to taste and rate the samples again.

“When the young people were told that the *tempeh* in front of them was made from local ingredients with traditional production methods, the information made the products taste significantly better,” study co-author Michael Bom Frøst said in a media release from the University of Copenhagen.

Another study published in 2020 by Danish researchers Rikke Højer, Karen Wistoft and Michael Bom Frøst, found children who had previously disliked eating fish came around to it after handling, playing with and cooking it. They theorized that handling and preparing the fish helped the children recategorize it from a perceived animal to perceived food, and also that their pride in preparing the fish themselves

promoted their acceptance of it. That study cited others by researchers in the U.S., Germany, Spain, Switzerland and elsewhere that made similar conclusions in experiments involving fruits and vegetables.

By extension, could the tactile experience of handling your own food as you grow and harvest it yield an even better outcome? Or maybe it's just that we tend to overvalue things we've put more effort into, as multiple studies, including one published in 2019 by researchers in Switzerland, Poland and the U.S. have found. People who study that phenomenon call it the Ikea effect after the furniture company's build-it-yourself model.

Whatever the explanation, the conclusion seems to be the same for me. The more I handle food before I eat it, the more I enjoy it, and this savouring of the journey versus the destination has actually helped me improve my palate to include foods I didn't enjoy previously. I take pleasure now in preparing and eating a caprese sandwich, sauteing asparagus in butter and garlic, tossing enoki mushrooms into a bowl of ramen—after peeling them from each other purely for the enjoyment of doing so—and transforming a head of cauliflower, an onion and some other ingredients into Yotam Ottolenghi's savoury cauliflower cake. I am both happier and healthier for it. 🍷

Megan DeLaire is a Canadian journalist who runs on coffee, cheese and podcasts.




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Kitchen Sink

What's new and notable

Proud of your new kitchen? Or know of one that's amazing? Let us know! Nominations for the **Tomato Kitchen Design Awards** are now open. Are you an architect, designer, builder or a do-it-yourselfer? We want to see all the kitchens—outdoor, renovated, brand new, commercial or institutional. If your kitchen was finished by December 31 last year nominate now at thetomato.ca/the-tomato-food-drink-kitchen-design-awards. The deadline for entries is May 31.

Hayloft Steak + Fish (639 Cameron Heights Drive, 780-249-0637, robertspencerhosp.com/hayloft) is open for brunch Saturday and Sunday from 10am-2pm. Highlights: four different eggs benny, including one with butter-poached lobster, the savoury brisket hash and the decadent bread pudding made with their neighbour Malina Bakery's cinnamon bun, apple compote, hazelnut streusel and bourbon caramel. Book now!

Kitchen to Go for May is available to order now on the **Kitchen by Brad** (10130 105 Street, 780-757-7704, kitchenbybrad.ca) website. The May 11 menu offers chicken stroganoff with Baba Smo's wild mushroom sauce, *nahysnyky* and honey walnut cake for dessert. May 18 is baked Italian meatballs with penne in marinara sauce, mozzarella and parmesan followed by chocolate pudding with espresso shortbread. The menu for May 25 is chicken marinated in Mediterranean herbs, bay, garlic, olive oil, sherry vinegar and roasted with dried apricots, prunes, olives and capers with blueberry crumble for dessert. Each dinner is \$25/p+ and wine can be ordered as well. Remember, \$5 from every Wednesday dinner supports the VAD program at the Maz. Friday soup and bagel lunches include savoury ham, veg with barley soup and chicken mulligatawny. Find the entire menu at kitchenbybrad.ca.

Meuwly's (10706 124 Street, 587-786-3560, meuwlys.com) has a new chef! **Myles Fedun** is a highly experienced chef who worked closely with exec chef Serge Belair at the Edmonton Convention Centre. Expect cool new offerings for lunch, special events, packages and collaborative dinners.

El Corazon (14101 West Block Drive, 780-213-9494, elcorazonyeg.com) has opened in Glenora's West Block on Stony Plain Road. The large menu features tacos and tapas as well as salads, sandwiches and six larger dishes. It's a great look with comfortable seating for lunch, snacks, cocktails and dinner. Just what the neighbourhood needed.

Awn Kitchen's (5124 122 Street, 587-469-4955, awnkitchen.com) spring and summer class schedule will be up mid-May. In the meantime, there are still a few spots left in **French Bread** on May 25, **Pastry Basics**, May 26 and learn to make cheese at **All Things Cheese** on June 3-4. Book on the website.

Boulangerie Bonjour (8608 99 Street, 780-433-5924, yvanchartrand.com) is expecting a large shipment of stellar Canadian cheeses from Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario and Prince Edward Island. Bloomy rind triple-crèmes such as **Riopelle de l'Isle**; goats cheeses; semi-firm, raw ewe's milk cheese; mountain-style cheeses; blues and washed rind cheeses. Can't wait to get our mitts on this cheese. The **Pied-de-Vent**, a farmstead cheese from the thermized milk of a single herd of Canadienne cows on the windswept Îles de la Madeleine.

Pamela Young's story, *Raising our Spirits: Cocktails in the Time of Covid* is nominated in the Feature Writing, Short category at the 2021-22 Alberta Magazine Awards. *The Tomato's* website refresh is also nominated in the Digital Project category. We are tickled pink. Congratulations to Pamela and check out our lovely new website at thetomato.ca. **The Alberta Magazine Awards** promote and celebrate the outstanding work of Alberta magazine writers and visual creators. Winners will be announced at the 2022 Alberta Magazines Conference in September in Calgary, albertamagazines.com/awards/awards-finalists. 🍷

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