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2022

# THE TOMATO

food & drink



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AM Alberta Magazine  
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Harvest  
Recipes  
Farmers  
of Invention







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On the cover: autumn's harvest, Jessica Musslewhite Art & Photography, [jmusslewhite.com](http://jmusslewhite.com)



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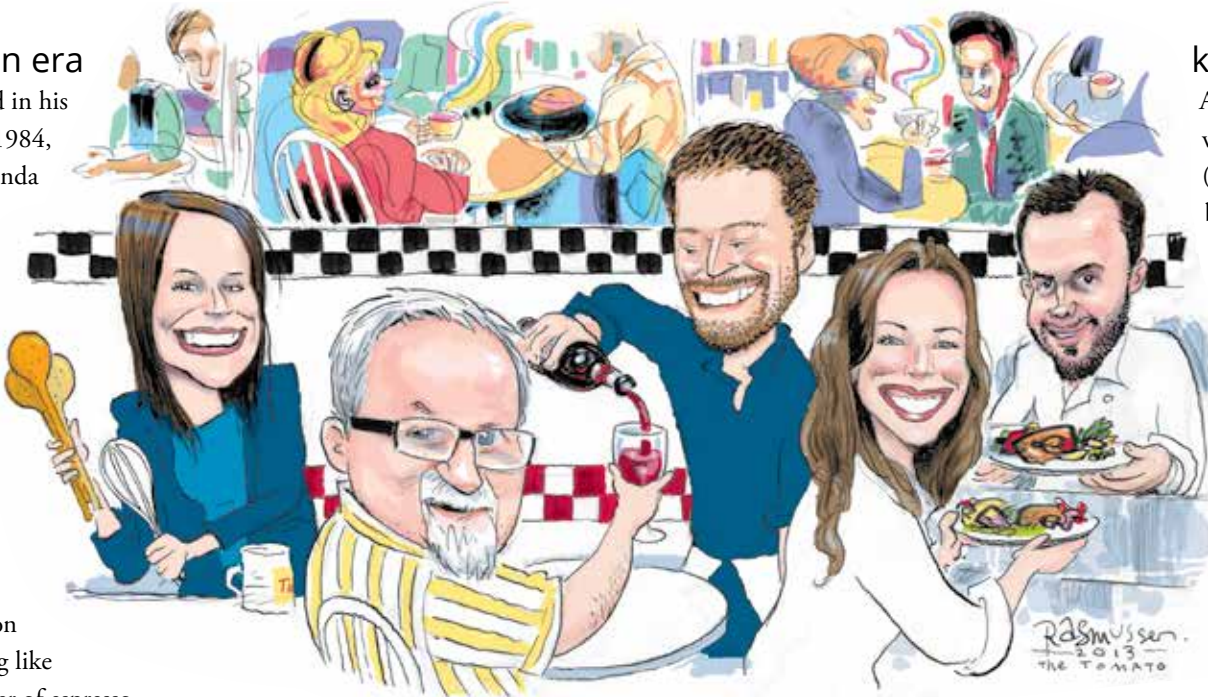
end of an era

Adriano Zenari died in his sleep August 5. In 1984, Adriano and Glenda

Zenari opened their kitchen shop in the brand-new Manulife Tower, creating in one moment a new way to shop, dine and enjoy life in our city. Adriano had left academia to build the revolutionary café and gourmet shop with his wife Glenda. Revolutionary? Edmonton had never seen anything like

it. It doubled the number of espresso machines in the city. (Mimmo's Bar Italia, next to the northside Italian Centre Shop, had the other.) The energetic proprietors and the vibrant shop they created was the hub of everything food related: guest chefs, cookbook signings, high-end kitchen equipment and the best in Italian design. This was where you bought an espresso machine or compared French and Italian extra-virgin olive oils. This was where a generation or two of aspiring cooks learned what crostini was. This was where Edmonton grew up, culinarily speaking.

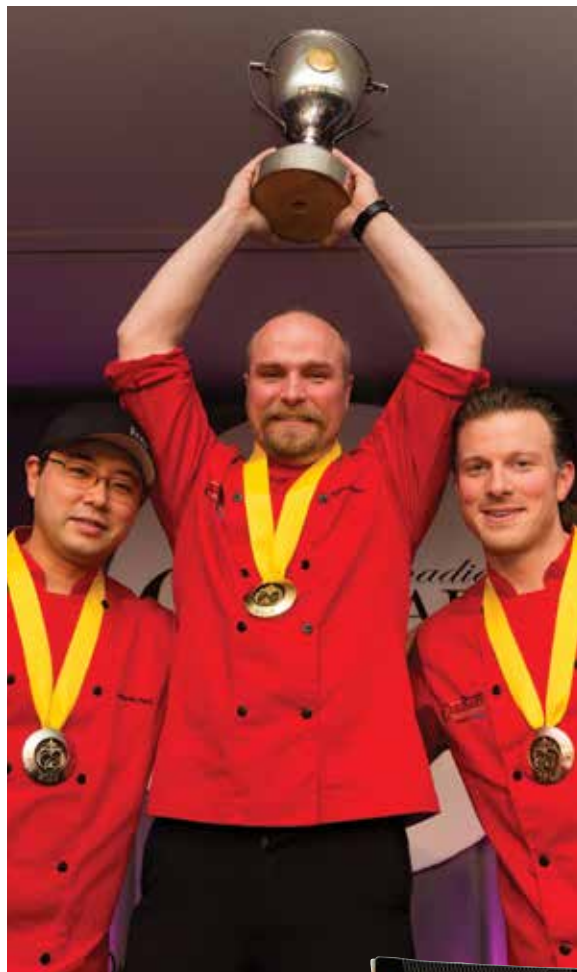
For 35 years it was the also the place to have a delicious snack or quick lunch and a glass of Prosecco with Adriano. The Thursday night dinners in the bar outside the shop became legendary. Adriano was a character—witty, smart, gregarious, irascible. We will miss him. Zenari's created the space and the spark. It made the idea of a career in food possible for so many. And, we're happy to say, his kids have followed. Dalla Tavola Zenari in Rice Howard Way with its relaxed and welcoming vibe is Zenaris 2.0. See Daniela Zenari's story on page 20.



kitchen party is back!

After a Pandemic delay the wonderful Great Kitchen Party (formerly Gold Medal Plates) is back at the Edmonton Convention Centre, Thursday, October 27. The event raises money for youth, \$17 million in the past 16 years. A new beneficiary this year is SpiritNorth, an organization that improves the health and well-being of Indigenous youth. As well, a local food charity (not yet announced) will be supported via a draw on competition night. Special musical guest is Bill Henderson of Chilliwack.

Edmonton competing chefs are Serge Belair, Edmonton Convention Centre; Levi Biddlecomb, Backstairs Burger; Myles Fedun, Meuwly's; Holly Holt, She Cooks; Lindsay Porter, The Common; Doreen Prei, Glasshouse Kitchen | Bar; Medi Tabtoud, Vivo; Elisa Zenari, Dalla Tavola Zenari. The winners of each regional competition meet in Ottawa in February for the title of Canadian Culinary Champion. It's always a fun night. For details, contact edmonton@greatkitchenparty.com.



Yuri Akuney photo

new beginnings

Frank and Andrea Olson are closing the wonderful Canteen (10522 124 Street, 780-485-6125, canteenyeg.ca). These superb restaurateurs cared for us for 25 years at the Red Ox Inn and another ten at Canteen. We're happy to report that Canteen is open until September 18 AND the Olson's are opening a new spot in Crestwood next year. "It's in the old Blackbird space, in the Crestwood Shopping Centre," says Frank. "A simple and comfortable modern interior with a decent amount of seats—Land Faculty and Retrofit Design are doing the work."

The menu? "Breakfast things and baked goods to go, shared plates and smaller dishes and yes, weekend brunch. Dave and Anne Jackson, our good friends who had the Wired Cup, will do the morning coffee. We've talked about that space for years and years, the patio is amazing. We're really happy to be in Crestwood, so many of our customer are there." Opening spring 2023. 🍷

Top: The scene at Zenari's immortalized by Gerry Rasmussen (that's Adriano in yellow stripes). Middle: flashback to 2015 when Edmonton top chef Ryan O'Flynn was named Canadian Culinary Champion. He is flanked by silver medalist Antonio Park (Montreal) on the left, and bronze medal winner Kristian Eligh (Vancouver) on the right. Bottom: the delectable, if a bit quirky, booze-inspired popcorn from Eatable.

it's eatable

Eatable, the small-batch gourmet popcorn created by Charlene and Vince Li in 2019, is now available here. Bella Casa stocks several flavours of this fun Canadian-made snack fashioned from air-popped, whole-grain Ontario corn infused with wine, spirits and cocktails. We loved the Pop the Salt & Tequila flavour with Añejo tequila-infused caramel and zesty lemon salt. Whisky on the Pops has a rich, Scotch whisky-infused caramel with subtly sweet and smoky notes. Pop the Champagne is with decadent white chocolate, delish. \$12, each. Bella Casa, 9646 142 Street, bellacasadcl.com.



# HARVEST RECIPES

**Is fall the best time to cook?** Warm days, crisp nights. With the slow start to the season we are still seeing green and yellow beans, kale and tomatoes in the markets and in our gardens, and beets, cauliflower and new potatoes are coming on. We have recipes from local chefs and cooks including a duck recipe for a Finnish holiday, and fall cookery from international chefs too. **Time to get back in the kitchen.**

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## North Indian-style Braised Beets

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*An easy and delicious way to use up those later season tomatoes and new beets. By Damini Mohan, Mini Kitchen.*

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2 med	beets (diced)
2 med	tomatoes (diced)
4-6 cloves	garlic
	salt to taste
	neutral oil
	cumin
	lime or lemon juice

In a pan, heat oil, add cumin and garlic and sauté.

Add the tomatoes, beets and sea salt, sauté.

Add 1 cup of water, put a lid on the pan and simmer for 30 minutes.

Once the water has evaporated and beets are soft, add lime or lemon juice to finish. Serve with roti or rice.

Serves 4-6 depending on size of the beets.

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## Seared Cauliflower with Gremolata

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*"I love this dish, it's superfast to make after a busy workday and leaves me feeling nourished. Fresh, yet hearty and comforting."—chef Lindsay James, Darling Wine Bar*

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1 head	cauliflower
1 T	neutral oil
2 T	butter
	salt
½ bunch	parsley
1	lemon, juiced and zested
2-3 T	olive oil
	Grana Padano
3-4	hazelnuts, peeled and toasted
	kosher salt and fresh-cracked black pepper

Preheat oven to 425°F.

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Remove leaves and bottom stem (roughly ½-inch) of the cauliflower. Place cauliflower stem side up and slice vertically through the centre of the stem. Trim off outer florets, leaving two 1½-inch steaks. Reserve florets for another use. Lay both pieces of cauliflower flat. Drizzle with neutral oil and salt generously.

Heat a cast iron pan to medium-high heat. Meanwhile, while the pan is heating, finely chop the parsley. In a small bowl add parsley, lemon juice, zest and olive oil to make the gremolata. Season with ½-t salt. Set aside. Place the cauliflower steaks oil side down into the cast iron pan. Allow to sear for 1-2 minutes then put the pan in the oven for 4 minutes to further cooking. Remove the pan from the oven and place back onto a medium burner. Flip the cauliflower over and add the butter to the pan. The butter will begin melt and foam. At this point spoon the butter all over the cauliflower steaks. Once the butter begins to brown, remove the pan from the heat and continue to spoon the butter over the cauliflower for 30 seconds.

Remove the cauliflower from the pan and put on a plate. Spoon over 2-3 T of the gremolata. Using a fine grater or a micro plane, grate a generous amount of the cheese all over the cauliflower. Next, grate over 1-2 toasted hazelnuts. Finish with black pepper.

Serves 2.

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## Squash, Ricotta and Thyme Tart

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*"We make this tart throughout the year in our cooking classes. It's also delicious with tomatoes, melted leeks, wilted greens or grilled zucchini if you don't have any squash handy."—Kaelin Whittaker, Awn Kitchen.*

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### Herbed Ricotta

1 tub	ricotta (500g)
3-4 T	chopped herbs (parsley, rosemary, thyme, sage)
	zest of 1 lemon

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1 t	salt
	a good grind of black pepper

Mix the ricotta with the chopped herbs, lemon zest, salt and pepper. Taste and adjust the seasoning if needed.

### Squash

1	delicata squash, halved and cut into ¼-inch moons
1-2 T	olive oil
	salt and pepper

Place the squash slices in a bowl and toss with the olive oil. Season. Roast in a preheated oven (400°F) for 10-12 minutes until tender, but not beginning to colour. Allow to cool.

### For the Tart

1 pkg	(500g) all-butter puff pastry
4-6 leaves	sage, chopped
1 T	olive oil
2 T	freshly grated Parmesan
	fresh-cracked black pepper
	egg wash (prepared by whisking a whole egg with ¼-tsp salt)

Roll the puff pastry into a rectangle 12 x 18 inches, trim the edges. Spread the ricotta out over the base of the pastry, leaving an inch around the outside of the pastry rectangle free of ricotta. Top with the roasted squash pieces. Bring in the edges of the tart as you would for a galette. Top with the sage leaves and a drizzle of olive oil. Brush the edges with the egg wash and sprinkle with parmesan cheese and pepper. Place in a preheated oven (400°F) for 10-15 minutes until the pastry is golden.

Serves 8-12 as an appetizer or 6-8 as a starter.

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## Duck Breast with Squash Risotto and Cranberry Sauce

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*"Our chef wrote wrote this recipe for Mortensaften, the Danish harvest festival, which is celebrated on November 10. Here*

*is the story: there was a soldier Martin of Tours who became a monk. Being very pious, he was appointed to be the next bishop. As he didn't want the job, preferring isolation over company, he hid in a goose pen to try and avoid detection. The geese cackled and gave him away. When he became bishop, he declared that on every November 10 goose was to be served at every meal. In modern Denmark they usually serve duck because it's smaller."—Stephanie Moore, Three Vikings*  
*"You can make the cranberry sauce the day before. The duck doesn't take very long so do that last. Find duck breasts at Popowich Meat Company."—chef Dustin Cooknell, Three Vikings*

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### Cranberry Sauce

2 c	cranberries (fresh or frozen)
1 c	orange juice
2 T	brown sugar
2 pods	star anise
1 stick	cinnamon
	dash salt and pepper

Combine all the ingredients in a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Simmer for about 10 minutes until cranberries have popped and sauce is thickened. Set aside.

### Squash Risotto

1 L + 1 c	vegetable stock (salted)
2 c	carnaroli or arborio rice
2 c	diced acorn squash
1 c	diced yellow onion
¼ c	diced carrot
3 cloves	garlic, finely chopped
½ c	(1 stick, or ¼ lb) butter
2	bay leaves
½ c	dry white wine
1½-2 t	salt
1½-2 t	pepper
½ c	grated Parmesan

In a medium saucepan heat 1 litre of vegetable stock until hot but not boiling. Keep hot on low heat.

Sauté the rice with the squash, onion, carrot and garlic in butter on medium-





low heat for about 10 minutes until the rice is toasted and onions are translucent. Stir in the bay leaves and white wine for a few minutes until the wine is absorbed and the pan is deglazed. Add hot stock to rice mixture, one to two cups at a time, and stir until liquid is absorbed. Sprinkle with salt and pepper every time you add stock. This should take about 25 minutes. Remove rice mixture from heat and reserve.

### Duck Breast

- 4 duck breasts (with fat)
- salt and pepper

Score fat of the duck breast in a cross hatch. Be sure not to cut fully through the fat. Place all duck breasts fat-side down in a large pan over low heat for about 10 to 12 minutes to render as much fat as possible from the breasts. Pour the fat off and keep for future recipes.

Turn up the heat to medium-high and sear the fat for 3 to 4 minutes until crisp and a deep brown. Season the flesh well. Flip the breasts and cook for another 60 to 90 seconds until browned and you have reached medium rare doneness. Remove from heat and allow to rest for 10 minutes.

To serve: Finish the risotto while the duck is resting. Heat the remaining cup of stock in medium saucepan until hot but not boiling. Return the rice mixture to medium-low heat and add the heated stock. Stir until absorbed. Remove bay leaves and stir in Parmesan cheese to finish.

To serve: scoop risotto into your favourite fall harvest bowl and arrange the duck breast, sliced on a bias, over the risotto. Spoon the cranberry sauce over top and garnish with microgreens.

Serves 4.

### Roast Potatoes with Creamed Spinach

*This simple, sort of hasselback potato dish is made extra luxurious with cream.*

*“New potatoes will roast to a fudgy texture, like little balls of gnocchi. Score them deeply, toast-rack style, and they will crisp nicely too.” –Nigel Slater*

- 4-6 new potatoes depending on size
- 5 T olive oil
- 1 lg bunch spinach
- ¾ c double cream
- 3 T grated Parmesan
- salt and pepper
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 T butter
- 2 T flaked almonds
- handful pea shoots (optional)

Pre-heat the oven to 400°F. Wash the potatoes, place each one flat on a chopping board, then score them deeply with a knife at about ¼-inch or a bit less intervals, taking care not to cut right through to the chopping board. Toss them in the olive oil, making sure it gets between the slices, then place the potatoes in a roasting tin in a single layer. Bake for 45 minutes until they are golden and fudgy. (I like to turn them over halfway through.)

Wash the spinach, put the leaves and a thin film of water into a large saucepan, cover tightly with a lid, and place over a moderate heat until they start to relax and turn bright green. Remove, refresh in a colander under cold running water, then squeeze the leaves with your hands, pressing out most of the water. Roughly chop the spinach, then return to the empty pan. Add the cream and grated cheese and season. Warm gently.

Please see “Harvest” on following page.



## Harvest

Continued from previous page

Peel and finely slice the garlic. Melt the butter in a shallow pan, add the garlic and cook until golden and lightly crisp. Remove and set aside.

Toast the almonds in a dry pan till fragrant and lightly browned.

Spoon the spinach sauce onto plates and add the roast potatoes, almonds and crisp garlic. Scatter a few pea shoots over the top if you wish.

Serves 4-6.

## Kale, Hazelnut and Bresaola Salad

*Kale has been prolific this year and it's becoming easier to find B.C. hazelnuts, so creamy and delicious. Bresaola is so lean and tasty but any high-quality charcuterie will do—speck, serrano, prosciutto. This is a good main course salad or make for a fancy lunch.*

2	shallots, sliced into rounds
2 t	vegetable oil
1 bunch	kale, large stalks removed, leaves roughly torn
4-6 slices	bresaola
3 stalks	celery, thinly sliced on an angle
	shaved Manchego (or Parm Reggiano) cheese, to serve
2 t	whole hazelnuts, skinned
½ t	vegetable oil
	good pinch of sweet smoked paprika

### Dressing

2 T	sherry vinegar
2 T	extra virgin olive oil
2 t	Dijon mustard
2 T	raisins
	salt and pepper

In a large bowl, whisk the vinegar, oil, mustard and some seasoning together to make the dressing, then tip in the raisins and leave to soak. Rub the kale all over with vegetable oil. Season.

Heat oven to 375°F. Toss the shallots with 1t oil on a large baking pan. Separate the rings a little as you turn them in the oil. Roast for 10 mins, stirring halfway, until starting to soften and turn golden here and there.

Remove the shallot tray from the oven, mix in the kale, then return the tray to the oven.

Toss the hazelnuts with oil and paprika and put on a pan on the shelf below the

kale/shallot mixture. Roast for 7 mins, giving the kale a turn halfway through, until crisp in some places, wilted in others.

Arrange the bresaola on serving plates. Toss the kale, shallots and celery with the dressing, mound on top and scatter hazelnuts and cheese over, if using.

Serves 4-6.

## Brad Smoliak's Classic Green Bean Casserole with Wild Mushroom Sauce

*A Thanksgiving favourite for all the right reasons.*

2 lb green beans, washed

To blanch beans bring 4 L of water to a rolling boil, add 1 T kosher salt and blanch beans (or any vegetables) for 3-4 minutes, or until tender crisp. Immediately plunge into ice water to stop the cooking, then drain until ready to use, (up to 2 days ahead).

### Wild Mushroom Sauce

½ c	butter
1 c	chopped onion/shallot
2 c	sliced wild mushrooms, mixed
¼ c	white wine
2 c	whipping cream
1 c	mushroom liquid
	kosher salt and cracked black pepper
1 t	parsley or chives, chopped

Heat a heavy saucepan over medium high heat and melt the butter. Add the onions/shallots and cook until light golden brown. Add the mushrooms, season with salt and pepper and cook for another 5 minutes, or until there are little brown bits on the bottom of the pan. Add the wine to de-glaze, stir to loosen any bits. Add the whipping cream and mushroom liquid and cook for another 15 minutes, or until reduced by half. Adjust seasoning and add the parsley or chives.

### Bread Crumb Topping

1 c	breadcrumbs (use gluten-free crumbs if desired)
¼ c	melted butter

Toss breadcrumbs and butter together.

To assemble: Place the green beans on the bottom of a greased baking dish, add the mushroom sauce, then cover with breadcrumbs. Bake in a pre-heated 400°F degree oven for 20 minutes or until bubbling.

Serves 6-8.

## Late Summer Quick Pickled Veg

*This is a riff on Smitten Kitchen's sandwich slaw, a quick pickle that will keep in the fridge for a few weeks, but it won't last that long. Use a mix of firm fresh veg—red, orange and yellow peppers, green or yellow beans, or snap peas if yours came on late, carrots and cukes. Add a few thinly sliced jalapeño for a little heat if you like. Radishes have a tendency to make everything pink, so maybe not those and cabbage is optional. Makes a terrific afternoon snack or have with eggs.*

4-5 c julienned (about the size of a matchstick) firm, raw vegetables

### Pickling mixture

1 c	distilled white vinegar
4 T	sugar
2 T	kosher salt
2 T	yellow mustard seeds
1 c	cold water

Heat the vinegar, sugar, salt and mustard seeds to a simmer in a small, non-reactive pot over moderate heat, stirring only until sugar and salt dissolve. Stir in the water and let cool to lukewarm.

Divide vegetables between clean jars (two 1 litre jars, no need to sterilize as it's a quick pickle). Pour the vinegar mixture over vegetables and refrigerate until needed. Make sure the liquid is covering all the vegetables. They will be lightly pickled in an hour and will get more pickled as they sit. The recipe can be halved easily if you don't want a lot of pickle sitting in your fridge.

## Sprouts with Brown Butter and Gochujang

*Tons of umami in this little bit sweet, little bit spicy dish. I love buying sprouts on the stalk at the farmers' market. Easy to halve the recipe if you are not feeding a crowd. By recipe developer Peter Som.*

1 stalk	Brussels sprouts (about 3-5 cups)
1 T	extra-virgin olive oil
	kosher salt, fresh-cracked black pepper
½ c	coarsely chopped walnuts (optional)
4 T	unsalted butter
⅓ c	gochujang (Korean hot pepper paste, find at H Mart)
2 T	pure maple syrup
2	scallions, thinly sliced, divided

zest of ½ lemon

flaky sea salt

Place rimmed baking sheets in upper and lower thirds of oven; preheat oven to 500°F. Toss Brussels sprouts with oil in a large bowl to coat; season with kosher salt and pepper. Carefully (baking sheets will be hot!) divide the sprouts between baking sheets and spread out in a single layer; reserve bowl. Roast, rotating baking sheets top to bottom and front to back halfway through, until the sprouts are charred in spots and tender, 16-18 minutes.

Meanwhile, if using walnuts, toast in a dry medium skillet over medium heat, tossing often, until fragrant and slightly darkened, about 4 minutes. Transfer to a small bowl and let cool.

Cook the butter in a small saucepan over medium-low heat, swirling occasionally, until milk solids are a deep amber color and butter smells very nutty, 5-8 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in the gochujang paste and maple syrup. Season with kosher salt and pepper.

Combine Brussels sprouts, half of walnuts, and half of scallions in reserved bowl; add brown butter mixture and toss to coat. Transfer to a platter and scatter remaining walnuts and scallions over. Finely grate lemon zest over and sprinkle with sea salt.

Serves 6.

## Paula Wolfort's Chicken in Red Wine Vinegar

*Cookbook author Paula Wolfort's chicken in red wine vinegar sounds impossible. Instead, it's a hearty dish made with economical chicken thighs and pantry ingredients.*

14 T	red wine vinegar
½ c	chicken broth
1 T	honey
1 T	tomato paste
2 T	butter
8 lg	chicken thighs, trimmed
	kosher salt and fresh-cracked black pepper
4 cloves	garlic, thinly sliced
3 lg	shallots, thinly sliced
¾ c	dry white wine
2 T	crème fraîche (or sour cream)
3 T	chopped tarragon

In a medium saucepan, bring the vinegar, broth, honey and tomato paste to a boil, stirring well. Simmer the vinegar sauce until reduced to ½-cup (about half).



Heat the butter in a large, heavy skillet. Season the chicken thighs and add half of them to the skillet, skin side down. Cook over moderate heat, turning once, until browned. Transfer to a plate. Repeat with the remaining thighs.

Add the garlic and shallots to the skillet and cook over low heat for 5 minutes. Add the wine; boil until reduced to ¼ cup. Add the vinegar sauce and bring to a simmer.

Return the chicken to the skillet, skin side up. Cover and simmer over low heat until cooked through, about 20 minutes. Transfer the chicken to plates.

Add the crème fraîche to the skillet and boil for 3 minutes. Add the tarragon and season with salt and pepper. Pour the sauce over the chicken and serve.

Serves 4-6.

## Squash Muffins

*You know those delicious roasted ½ Acorn squash dripping in butter and brown sugar your Mum used to make for Thanksgiving dinner? These taste kind of like that. From Bon Appetit.*

- 2 lg eggs
- 10 T (1¼ sticks) butter, melted
- ⅔ c buttermilk
- 2 t grated peeled ginger
- ⅔ c + 2 T light brown sugar, packed
- 2 c flour
- 2 t baking powder
- ¼ t baking soda
- 1 t ground cinnamon
- 1 t kosher salt
- 2 c peeled squash or fresh pumpkin, grated (on large holes of box grater)
- ¾ c unsweetened shredded coconut
- ¾ c coarsely chopped pecans or walnuts
- ¾ c raisins (optional)

Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a standard 12-cup muffin pan with liners. Whisk eggs, butter, buttermilk, ginger, and ⅔ cup brown sugar in a medium bowl. Whisk the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt in a large bowl. Mix the egg mixture into the dry ingredients with a wooden spoon or rubber spatula until just combined. Mix in squash, coconut, pecans and raisins, if using. Do not overmix.

Divide batter among muffin cups, filling to the brim (about ½ cup batter per muffin). Sprinkle the remaining brown sugar on top.

Bake muffins, rotating pan halfway through, until golden brown and a tester inserted into the center comes out clean about 30–32 minutes. Let cool in the pan 5 minutes, then transfer muffins to a wire rack and let cool completely.

Makes 12 muffins.

## Chocolate and Cherry Brownies

*The Evans (or Juliet) cherries are terrific this year. If you are not so fortunate to have a cherry tree in your back yard, B.C. cherries will do fine.*

- ¾ c unsalted butter, melted
- 2 T vegetable oil
- 1 c granulated sugar
- ¾ c light brown sugar
- 3 lg eggs
- ½ t kosher salt
- 1 c all-purpose flour
- ¾ c cocoa powder
- 4 oz semi-sweet chocolate roughly chopped
- 1 c pitted sour cherries, roughly chopped

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Line an 8x8-inch baking pan with parchment paper or foil (or grease the pan).

Sift the flour and cocoa powder into a bowl. In a larger bowl mix the melted butter, oil and sugars. Whisk to combine. Add the salt and whisk in one egg at a time. Whisk vigorously for one full minute.

Gently but thoroughly fold the flour mixture into the egg mixture.

Add the chocolate and cherries (do not overmix) then pour into the prepared pan.

Bake in the center rack for 40-50 minutes. Use a knife or toothpick to check for doneness. These are fudgy brownies so the centre may seem a bit underdone, they will firm up when cooled. Cool for at least one hour before cutting. 🍪

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# ISLAND WINE

MARY BAILEY

It's been a few years since I've wandered around vineyards on Vancouver Island. Tasting Averill Creek with the winemaker Brent Rowland earlier in the year piqued my curiosity, as did all the activity. People selling! People buying! What is going on over there? Key to the growing interest—the emphasis on sustainability and the exciting wines people are making. The island is the place to be.

## **Averill Creek Vineyard, Mt. Prevost:**

**Andy Johnson, owner, Brent Rowland, winemaker**

Andy Johnson has been called a visionary. He was one of the first to see the potential of Cowichan Valley Pinot. “And put my money on it,” he says. “There were a few people making Pinot then, Richard at Alderlea, Blue Grouse and Venturi-Schultz. Blue Grouse made an amazing Pinot in 1996. The 2006 was even better.

“It was tough to get the Vancouver wine market to believe we can grow grapes on Vancouver Island. Now I can prove it.”

Andy is passionate about a sub-appellation for Mt. Prevost. “The south slopes of Mt. Prevost are some of the best in the valley.”



Averill Creek's winemaker Brent Rowland.

I asked Andy what's missing. “A sparkling wine house,” he says. “We can make really good sparkling wines with great flavour. Beautiful ripe flavour at 15 Brix.”

Let's hope Andy is right. He has a good track record.

Brent Rowland is kind of a force of nature. Big ideas emerge in a rapid patter as we talk about grapes, vines and making wine in this unique cool climate. As we walk with Dave (vineyard dog) and Elliot (winery dog) Brent bends down to show the soil layers. “We have sandy loam, which is good for ripening but not concentration and we have clay, which is good for retention. This was a termination point for a glacier so we have different stones and rocks. The mix makes for excellent soil for vineyards.”

He is an experienced winemaker (24 international harvests) who is exactly where he wants to be.

“Phase one. Andy knew he could make great wine here and did his due diligence—went around with a geologist, dug soil pits. Confident for Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris and hedged his bets with Foch and Guwurz. Bold move; rip off a side of a mountain in drunken Duncan. He had to prove you could grow quality grapes on the island,” says Brent.

“Now we're in phase two. Now it's a game of inches, the big leaps have already been made. The project is the same—showcase the region.”

Brent is all in on Mt. Prevost Pinot. “I have yet to taste a dead Pinot, even the first Averill vintage, 2004, is still alive. The 2018, my first year, is the best bottle I ever made and it will outlive me.

The secret to great wine here is the hang time. When we don't have rain in the fall, the grapes hang for a long time, building flavours, not sugar. The Estate Pinot 2020 is a classic example. The electric acidity.

“We're not trying to emulate another region, we want something original and real. What do the grapes from this site taste like? To show that, I'm as hands off as I can be. No yeast, no enzymes, no nutrients, unfiltered, unfined, sometimes sulphur when necessary. I'm doing it because I think it makes better wine. Pragmatic, not dogmatic. I call it neo-classical because we're making wines like they did 1000 years ago, but using all the tools and science we have today.

“Cooler climates can't make big rich opulent wines. I'm leaning into what we do well here—perfume, poise, tension, nuance, elegance—the prettiness.”

He is an unabashed fan of whole-cluster fermentation. “My heroes are whole-bunch people—Dujac, Cristom, By Farr, Escarpment. I've done five harvests with Gary Farr and made wine at Dujac. It's about the fermentation

kinetics. If you destem, you have a cap that has to be punched down, or pumped over to make it move. Leave the stems and you have a matrix for heat and gas exchange. The stems are the pathway.”

Along with these spectacular Pinots, Brent has created a new group of wines called Jou. There is no lack of technique in these wines, they are the opposite of wine by recipe. The Jou White, for example, was foot stomped, fermented at a higher temperature and aged in older oak. “No sulphur, nothing but grapes. You can make quality wine naturally, that's not just for the nerds.” The wines are often blends, the vintage we're tasting is Gris, Gewurztraminer and Chardonnay, and he doesn't put that on the label. “They don't really matter,” he says, “it creates an expectation that the wine should taste a certain way. It should taste like Jou.”

The result? Versatile wine with lovely acidity. Tons of flavour, mouth-filling but not heavy.

*Averill Creek is available at better wine shops and restaurants in Alberta, [averillcreek.ca](http://averillcreek.ca).*

## **Emandare Vineyard, Duncan:**

**Mike and Robin Nierychlo,**

While talking with Mike Nierychlo on the phone I am immediately reminded of a large Labrador puppy. His excitement and enthusiasm jumps through the phone. They won't be there when I am, so I arrange to rent the guest house. I wander the vineyard with Terry Trapmill, their semi-retired vine guy.

“I started making wine with my brother-in-law, also Mike, in 2006,” says Mike. “We would call wineries and ask, ‘would you sell us some grapes?’ People got to know us as Mike and Mike who get in their shorts and start crushing grapes in the back of the van.

“In 2013 we stumbled on this 15-year-old vineyard, where we could be a family-run winery, under 10 acres, under 3000 cases. Perfect location.

“We had to restore the vineyards and erect the winery; lots of friends and family helped us. We are fully organic, no till, dry farm, lots of wildflowers. I am jacked up about biodiversity—microbes and mycelium. If the dirt's alive, the wine is alive.

“Eight years and two babies later, I have to say this, we're succeeding. It's given us the living we have and our wine sells out.”

*Find Emandare at Vancouver and Van Isle restaurants, [emandarevineyard.com](http://emandarevineyard.com).*





Julie, Zachary and Vino in front of old Bacchus vines at Alderlea.

**Alderlea Vineyards, Duncan:  
Julie Powell and Zachary Brown**

Roger and Nancy Dosman opened Alderlea in 1998. They were sustainable from the get-go and Julie and Zachary have continued in that vein.

“We’re aligned in our philosophy in many ways,” says Julie. “No tilling, we use a lot of compost and seeded clover. We took Roger’s foundation of sustainability and are taking it to the next level. We get a lot of rain here, if you are no till you can get a tractor in early.”

The Dosmans had planted 35 varieties including Bacchus, Foch and Pinot Noir, now 28 years old. Merlot too. “We wouldn’t have planted that, but in a good year when it ripens, it’s amazing.”

They are one of only three Van Isle growers of Sauvignon Blanc, but they consider themselves more focused on reds. “My thing is red blends,” says Zach. “They require confidence and knowing your fruit and your vineyards. Gotta commit and be brave.”

“We had corporate careers for 20 years and a winemaking hobby. We looked at Blue Grouse, we looked at property in the Okanagan, we thought about France, but we kept coming back to an island vineyard,” says Julie.

There are plans to grow to 3000 cases and build a new winery building. Making wine and maintaining a vineyard is not an easy way to make a living. The vibe is one of steely determination and they are making it work.

*Find the wines at [alderlea.ca](http://alderlea.ca).*

**Rathjen Cellars, Saanich Peninsula:  
Mike Rathjen**

Down island, the other half of Mike and Mike ended up starting Rathjen Cellars, a small vineyard and winery in Central Saanich. Brent spoke highly of them, but alas a visit didn’t work out. Visit if you can, [rathjencellars.com](http://rathjencellars.com).

**Kutatás Wines, Salt Spring Island:  
Mira Tusz and Daniel Dragert**

Fans of country roads love Salt Spring, as they wind and dip between farms and paddocks. It seems right that one of the most exciting west coast wine projects is happening on this verdant island.

Daniel’s interest in wine began when he took an elective in wine science at UBC. He went on to Lincoln (the NZ wine school). Mira (who grew up in Edmonton) took viticulture at Washington State and has a degree in microbiology.

Daniel had been the winemaker at Averill Creek from 2008-2017. Mira’s first vintage there was in 2013. “We really enjoyed working at Averill Creek, phenomenal fruit,” says Mira.

When they decided to go out on their own; “we wanted coastal for the phenomenal Pinot Noir potential we had seen in the Cowichan Valley,” says Mira. “It’s the cooler climate styles of Pinot we are passionate about. We were looking in Cowichan, North Saanich and the Gulf Islands. We wanted something that was versatile for sparkling too.”

The place they did buy had been for sale for five years. “Our licence required that we buy a vineyard property with a

winery in order to keep the Kutatás label. Topographically, it’s a good place to be due to the high mountains beside us. There are lots of meso climates on Salt Spring.”

They also farm vineyards in North Saanich overlooking Pat Bay, where they grow primarily Pinot Noir.

Their philosophy is simple—grow fruit that doesn’t need a lot of work in the winery. Doesn’t need acidification or sugar or enzymes. They are looking for pure expressions, especially when it comes to Pinot Noir. “After many years of trial and error in viticulture, we now realize what’s most important to produce the high-quality fruit we are looking for.”

“There were a lot of varieties we hadn’t expected to work with, like Madeleine Angevine, Zweigelt, Reichensteiner; we had to do a lot of work in the vineyards.”

They continue to modify the vineyards. “The Ortega, Angevine and Sylvaner won’t have long life with us. We are more passionate about the Noir, Gris and Chard potential for the island. We expected the Chard to be for sparkling, but we have been ripening to 23, 24 Brix.” They are grafting over, ripping some vines out, bringing in young plants and layering (angling a cane into the soil) where the mother plant provides everything the new vine needs.

In the meantime, they make an easy-drinking, just-off-dry blend from Angevine and Reichensteiner called Viz. Although they use spontaneous fermentation everywhere else, they use selected wine yeast for this wine. “Comforting to know we have one fermenter that is guaranteed,” says Mira.

Like other Vancouver Island wineries they have Blattner (Valentin Blattner is a Swiss viticulturalist specializing in hybrids) varieties Petite Milo and Sauvignette. “They require less hand work but they aren’t for us—the sugars accumulate too quickly while acids decrease. They don’t really fit with our philosophy

to grow fruit that allows us to be more hands off in the winery.”

In the meantime, enter orange wine. “We start with a carbonic maceration to help the acid metabolize, then ferment on the stems for three weeks, which adds potassium and provides balance on the palate.” They are fun wines, super drinkable, not aggressive, nice textures and balance. Unfined, unfiltered and not meant for cellaring.

As fun as these are, they are convinced the future is in Pinot Noir. “We make Pinot only in vintages when the grapes are almost raisins which increases the ratio of skin to juice.”

We taste the Pinots in tank. They are spectacular.

*Kutatás wines are not available in Alberta yet. Visit them on Saturdays at the winery or look for them in west coast restaurants and wine shops. [kutataswines.com](http://kutataswines.com).*

Fall is a great time to visit wineries on Vancouver and Salt Spring islands. Check the web sites for tasting room hours and appointments. 🍷

*Mary Bailey, DipWSET visited the islands in May.*



Mira Tusz and Daniel Dragert, Kutatás Wines.



# Farmers of invention

*James Vriend and Jenny Birkenbosch of Sundog Organic Farm change the way they farm their 16 certified organic acres.*

Mary Bailey

*James Vriend and Jenny Birkenbosch are smart, experienced farmers with generations of farming knowhow in their backgrounds. Yet, two years ago, they wondered if they should continue farming. Too much water had overwhelmed the top-notch sandy loam of their Sturgeon River Valley farm. Would we lose their delicious vegetables? Seeing how they have adapted to changing conditions on their farm not only provides perspective, it gives us hope. Their perseverance is a beautiful thing.*

“In 2019 and 2020 we had a lot of water,” says Jenny, “and if we thought 2019 was bad, 2020 was wild.” Jenny gestures at the beds nearby. “Where we are standing? We couldn’t even get to it last year. It was a slough, and totally covered in weeds.”

“Our soils had been depleted of minerals due to all the water,” said James. “We could tell by the kinds of weeds, and the amount of weeds. The vegetables weren’t growing and were losing value.”

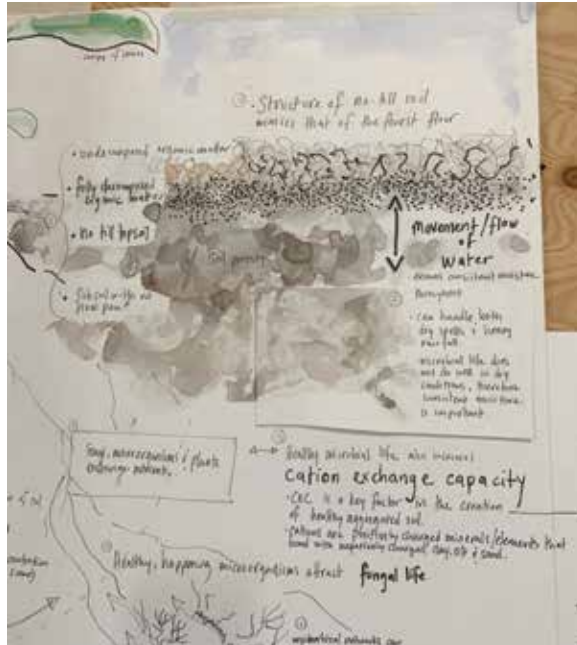
“We didn’t know how we could recover it. That summer we were in crisis management, then we started actively looking for solutions. It was a matter of—are we going to keep farming? Or are we going to do this,” says Jenny.

“At first we thought we’d use tile drainage. A lot of farmers do this to recover wet boggy land, especially on large farms,” she says. “It’s quite disruptive and we just didn’t feel like we were getting anywhere, or that it was the right solution.”

They learned they would have to change a fundamental way of doing things. Organic farms have relied on tilling the land to break up hard soils and weeds. But, the practice frees up stored carbon, breaks up soil structure and contributes to erosion. Many conventional farms are no till: using herbicides to remove weeds and fertilizers to replace what’s lost. That wasn’t an option for Sundog.



Cabbage and clover in the new no-till beds.



Jenny, a painter, made a visual aid to explain no till.

Yet, they weren’t sure how to make no till work for their larger organic market garden. “If you have a small farm, things are simpler, but we have a big farm and we need it to produce,” says Jenny. “What we first learned about no till was from farmers in warmer climates, who plant a cover crop first every year. Our season isn’t long enough.

“Then we found out about Richard Perkins, a proponent of no till, who farms at a similar latitude in Sweden. And we looked at what Oxton Organics in England was doing. By going no till, they were able to shrink the size of the farm they are managing with the same yield,” says Jenny.

“What I like about Richard Perkin’s method was less weeding,” says James. “Our weed pressure had become tremendous. As soils become depleted of carbon, weeds become a serious problem. Annual weeds are adapted to soil that is low in carbon and love to grow where there has been a disturbance—weeds are encouraged through tilling.”

They experimented with how the beds might look and work, before landing on a new structure of six-foot wide permanent beds with a thick (four inches) layer of compost with raised paths on either side planted with a cover crop.

“It’s a new start. The thick layer of mulch (compost) suppresses weeds and creates a substrate that can hold moisture but also drains moisture,” says Jenny.

“We’ve learned that the mycorrhizal fungi is the key to great soil. You do not want to disturb it by tilling as you lose the microorganisms and the aggregate which

allows drainage and oxygen flow. We’ve discovered that each plant has its own planet of interconnected life. All those living things under the soil is what makes it a really effective carbon sink, not just the green stuff up top.”

“We plant a crop of fava beans and oats just to get roots in the beds, as roots in the ground colonize the soil. Over a several-year cycle, we will transplant, then seed into the beds,” says James.

The other key to a no-till organic system is what happens to the cover crop. They don’t till it in, nor do they till or remove crop residue. Rather, it stays on top of the soil and is slowly incorporated into the soil.

A company in Morinville is supplying the compost, 450 tons so far, a fraction of what they’ll need to complete the project.

“The cover crop on the paths is clover—not too large, not too invasive, also fixes nitrogen. We planted peas where there was open ground. We planted grasses and alfalfa in the headlands and plan to increase diversity by planting shrubs and trees. It’s beneficial to create wind barriers to slow air movement because the earth breathes, releasing carbon dioxide every day. The barriers keep that air where it needs to be, to be taken up by the plants,” says Jenny.

What’s the benefit of no till? Jenny lists them off; carbon sequestration, better crops, less weeds. “The no-till beds are ready sooner in the season. We can plant so much earlier. That lengthens the season. As soon as the snow is off we can plant, we don’t need them to dry up. It’s less muddy. People picking in the no till after a rain have a completely different harvesting experience,” says James.

“We’re learning from other farmers, there is a global network of no-till market gardeners, people are writing



Harvested onions curing.



books. And we're sharing info too, taking pictures, documenting things that are relevant for the people around here. More and more farms are experimenting with this kind of farming," Jenny says.

They are well into a five-year plan, with one quarter of the farm's fields becoming no-till beds every year. Three plots for winter storage crops, like carrots and potatoes, which have to be dug up when harvested, remain on a green manure rotation to restore nutrients.

"So much of what we're doing is experiential, you have to go through it and respond, continual learning and growth. It's exciting and daunting too." says Jenny.

"What have we seen so far this year? Our yield is much higher, we have fewer weeds so far, that's encouraging. We can continue doing business, and they appear

to have more nutritional value," says James.

"The other part is about a healthy environment. Tilling is a major activity that releases carbon into the atmosphere. We can keep carbon in the soil with the use of cover crops and not tilling."

"Learning to build these beds and seeing good results has given us hope," says Jenny. "The last few years have been so tough emotionally, seeing things work out and finding a way forward that makes a lot of sense, it's healing.

"Our kids saw us not have a good time farming. We want them to see that's not how it has to be."

Find Sundog at the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market. Sign up for their farm box at [sundogorganicfarm.ca](http://sundogorganicfarm.ca).

*Mary Bailey is the editor of The Tomato.*

## Where to buy locally-grown certified organic food

### Grey Arrow Farm, Camrose

The Forstbauer family offer a CSA, online store and single parent scholarships, [greyarrowfarm.ca](http://greyarrowfarm.ca).

### Peas on Earth, Edmonton

Eric and Ruby Chen's market garden was founded in 2000. Find at the Bountiful, Old Strathcona (OSFM) and St. Albert markets, Amaranth and the Grapevine Deli in St. Albert and via the Organic Box, [peasonearth.ca](http://peasonearth.ca).

### Reclaim Urban Farm, Pigeon Lake

Visit Reclaim's booth at the Downtown Farmers' Market, also Earth's General Store, Spud.ca, online shop, [reclaimurbanfarm.ca](http://reclaimurbanfarm.ca).

### Rock Ridge Dairy, Ponoka

The Bos family's exceptional Jersey cow and goat milks can be found at the Italian Centre Shops, Earth's General Store, Awn Kitchen, Sunterra, Amaranth in St. Albert and several Save On Foods, [rockridgedairy.com](http://rockridgedairy.com).

### Sparrow's Nest, Edmonton

Graham Sparrow has operated a CSA since 2000. I remember digging potatoes by hand in those early years. Excellent bedding plants too. Find at the OSFM, [sparroworganics.com](http://sparroworganics.com).

### Sundog Organic Farm, Gibbons

James Vriend and Jenny Birkenbosch offer an annual Farm Box (CSA) and have a booth at the OSFM, [sundogorganicfarm.ca](http://sundogorganicfarm.ca).

### Sunworks Farm, Armema

Buy Ron and Sheila Hamilton's exceptional chicken, beef and pork at the Bountiful, Downtown, OSFM and Terwillegar markets and at Blush Lane, [sunworksfarm.com](http://sunworksfarm.com).

Many local organic farm products can be found online at [Spud.ca](http://Spud.ca) and [theorganicbox.ca](http://theorganicbox.ca).

Organic Week is September 12-18. For more information visit [organicweek.ca](http://organicweek.ca).

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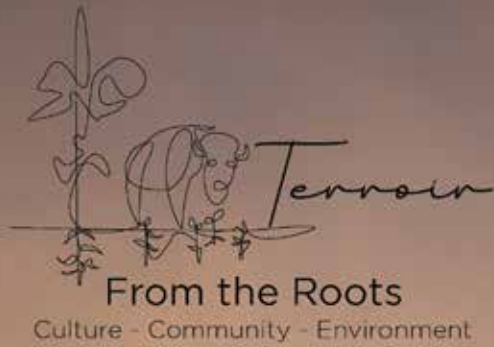


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## The Smos at Home

### Gratitude

*My husband Brad recently closed the doors to his 10-year-old business, Kitchen by Brad Smoliak, in downtown Edmonton.*

*I'm Leanne, Brad's wife of 31 years, partner, best friend and companion in the kitchen. Both of us are professionally trained cooks, although I gave it up as a career many years ago. If you had a dinner or took a class at Kitchen you may have seen the two of us occasionally working side by side. We particularly enjoyed doing cooking classes together where we would tell stories of our cooking and travel adventures. We always seemed to get ourselves into some kind of trouble. Mary, the editor of The Tomato, thought readers would want to know what we were up to, post Kitchen. —Leanne*

**Autumn is often associated with gratitude.**

For us every month is abundant with gratitude. You may know that our family has had its share of bumps. Since January 2019, Brad has spent over 500

days at the Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute. Most people would say, 'why are you grateful for this? This sounds tragic'. We are grateful because, on January 19, 2019, Brad was given a chance to live when the amazing team at the Hotel MAZ (as Brad lovingly refers to it) implanted an artificial heart, which he has been living with ever since. Is it perfect? No. Is he alive? Yes. Have there been bumps? Yes, but every time he goes back to Hotel MAZ, the incredible team gets him rocking and rolling again. Why would we not feel grateful? If we lived almost anywhere else, Brad most surely would not have survived.

Charlie Brown says; 'You only live once.' Snoopy says; 'Wrong. You only die once. You live everyday.'

These past few years have given us pause to take note of how much we have to be grateful for. We live each and every day with a new appreciation for life.

We savour every second of every moment. We appreciate the little things. We enjoy our new puppy, a girl name Stanley. We love to play in our garden.





## Leanne Smoliak

We are drinking the wines that we were saving for a special occasion. We are doing as much volunteering as we can.

One of the most gratifying projects we are involved in is David and Aimee Benjestorf's P3 Farm (Pandemic Planting Project). When the pandemic hit, David knew he needed to do something to combat the rising food security crisis amongst Edmontonians. He thought one of the solutions could be to grow food himself. David had a piece of property west of St. Albert that he always dreamt of farming on, the only problem being, he had never put a seed in the ground before. They reached out to some very helpful market gardeners that got them on their way and a huge team of volunteers planted, weeded, watered and harvested.

In the first season David and Aimee hoped to get 20,000 pounds of vegetables, with the bulk being potatoes. They exceeded that goal by a landslide, donating 95,000 pounds of 22 different vegetables. Year two exceeded that, and this year it looks like they might be ahead yet again. This project is

completely volunteer operated with David and Aimee backstopping all the costs.

We have learned so much about growing and the effort it takes. We are employing these principles in our own small garden at home. It's our goal to eat more from our small patch than from the store.

The Smos can't do as much hard lifting as some of the other volunteers at P3, but we like to take care of the others by doing what we do best—feeding people. We often bring home-baked bagels or cookies and we hosted a volunteer dinner at the farm for 120 people including 24 Ukrainian evacuee families. Smoked Alberta beef and new potatoes and vegetables harvested from the farm were on the menu.

We hope that you continue to read our column in upcoming issues of *The Tomato*. We are going to share stories of our favourite three Fs—family, friends and food. We will also be sharing a recipe or two with you, nothing complicated, just good food that brings people to the table.

### P3 Farms Potatoes with Brown Butter and Sage

*This is the ideal autumn side dish for Sunday or holiday dinner.*

8 med	Yukon gold or red potatoes, quartered
½ c	reserved potato water (may not need all of it)
¾ c	unsalted butter
8 leaves	fresh sage
½ c	whipping cream
1¼ t	kosher salt
1 t	fresh ground pepper

It is your choice whether to peel the potatoes or not. Simmer until fork tender in enough heavily salted water to cover by 1 inch. Depending on the potatoes, cook anywhere from 10-25 minutes. Drain into a colander, reserving ½-cup potato water. Put potatoes back in the pot to dry on low heat for 2 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat the butter in a sauté pan on medium heat to brown. Watch carefully, there is a difference between brown butter and burnt butter. Add sage leaves and get them nice and crispy. Take out with a slotted spoon and reserve. Mash potatoes in mixer or by hand. For fluffier potatoes, use a ricer. Mix in whipping cream, browned butter, salt and pepper until well blended. If the potatoes are too thick, use some of the reserved potato water to thin to your liking. Taste for seasoning. Turn into a serving dish and finish with crispy sage leaves.

Serves 6. 🍷

*Leanne Smoliak's greatest compliment came from her father-in-law, early in her marriage: "She's the perfect Ukrainian wife, she keeps a full fridge and a well-stocked bar."*

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## Wine Maven



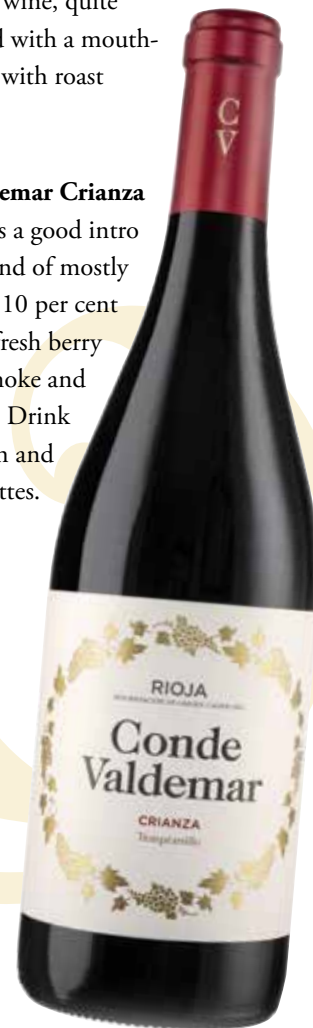
Mosel winemaker **Andreas Bender** was here for a brief visit in August. “It’s been dry and hot in the Mosel, not typical at all. It hasn’t rained in four months,” says Andreas. Most of Bender’s vines are well established and can handle heat stress. “Eight years ago, we had to replant on some terraces. Those two rows are already yellowing from the lack of water, but the older vines on either side are still in perfect shape. We will have a lower yield and a much riper harvest, don’t know about the acidity yet. If we stay with cool nights and warm days we should be ok.” The **2020 Mosel Gewurztraminer**, \$26.

Loads of lychee, nice acidity, not fat and bone dry. Drink with spicy lentils. The **2021 Dojoar Riesling**, \$26.

Drinking well now, very fresh, not sweet, but not bone dry, ideal for Thanksgiving turkey. The **2020 Mosel Pinot** (Pinot Gris and Pinot Blanc), \$26. Lovely.

Barrel fermented and aged on French, German and some American oak, the wine, quite structured, is full-bodied with a mouth-filling creaminess. Have with roast pork or pizza bianca.

The **2019 Conde Valdemar Crianza** (Rioja, Spain) \$24 is a good intro to the region. A blend of mostly Tempranillo with 10 per cent Graziano, it has fresh berry notes, subtle smoke and balanced acidity. Drink with Spanish ham and croquettes.



Two new vodkas from India: made with basmati rice, vegan, gluten free and from a zero-carbon footprint distillery. The **Smoke Lab Classic**, \$54. Smooth and clean, quite soft on the palate, super subtle, not spiritous, hints of citrus and grain. **Smoke Lab Aniseed**, \$54 the spirit is infused with aniseed—balanced flavours, subtle and fresh tasting, not sweet, not heavy. Can’t wait to taste the cocktails made with it.



Mary Bailey

**2019 Elvio Cogno, Nascetta Anas-cëtta**, \$30 (Novello, Piemonte, Italy). **Elvio Cogno** is thought to be the reason Nascetta (a grape native to Novello) still survives, bringing it back from obscurity with a first vintage in 1994. We're glad he did, it's a terrific and versatile white—aromas of citrus and beeswax, savoury notes of figs and sage with bright acidity, medium-body and long finish. Versatile, drink with fish, seafood, cheesy pastas.

**Villa Guelpa**, a small estate in Alto Piemonte, ferments and ages their wines in cement tanks and large Slavonian oak barrels. The result? Effortlessness and transparency. The **2017 Sizzano**, \$66, has pretty violet and rose notes on the nose along with berries and some spice. The tannins are ripe, yet taut and it's drinking very well right now. It's made with 70 per cent Nebbiolo along with vineyard partners Vespolina and Uve Rara. Bright complex flavours and a gorgeous long finish. Drink with braised beef on pappardelle or cheesy vegetable dishes. The **2017 Lessona**, \$91, on the other hand, is tightly-focused, a bit of a monster (I mean that in the best possible way) and needs aging or several hours decanting. Grippy tannins, tremendous concentration, a lovely bitter cherry note, a beautiful wine. Nebbiolo grown on volcanic soil, a wine for the ages. Save your best dry-aged beef for this one.



**Miss Alma Pays D'Oc IGP** (France), \$24. Solid rosé from the south of France, Cinsault and Grenache blend. Palest pink, light and fresh, crisp and dry, think pomegranate, grapefruit and some fresh peppery flavours. Just as delicious on a sunny autumn day as it is in the summer. Drink with finger foods. 🍷

*All prices are approximate, find in better wine shops.*

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## Beer Guy

### Organic beer

“No farms, no beer.” Bumper sticker at Persephone Brewing, Gibsons B.C.

Hell is a two-sailing ferry wait, broiling in the hot July sun on a 30-degree day on the tarmac at Horseshoe Bay. But as Steve Miller sang, “You know you got to go through hell before you get to heaven,” soon enough we were onboard, enjoying the cooling sea breeze off Howe Sound. Arriving at Langdale on the Sunshine Coast, it was only three minutes up the road to a little bit of heaven—Persephone Brewing’s Beer Farm.

Sitting with friends at a picnic table in the shade of a tree at Persephone one sunny afternoon, we listened to bees buzzing and children playing and took turns heading over to the tap room in the red barn nearby for flights of beer and cider. I took a few minutes to wander off and explore the farm. Persephone sits on 11 acres of land, with fields devoted to barley, hops and vegetables plus two apple orchards, an apiary and chickens. Persephone is a certified B corporation, meaning they have a triple-bottom-line (people, planet, profit) approach to operating. Bottom line for me: the beer is excellent. While Persephone’s beer is not certified organic, organic farming methods are used on the farm and sourcing off the farm focuses on organic.

Organic beer is simply beer made with organic ingredients—in particular, organic malt made from barley or other grains grown without pesticides, herbicides or synthetic fertilizer. Craft

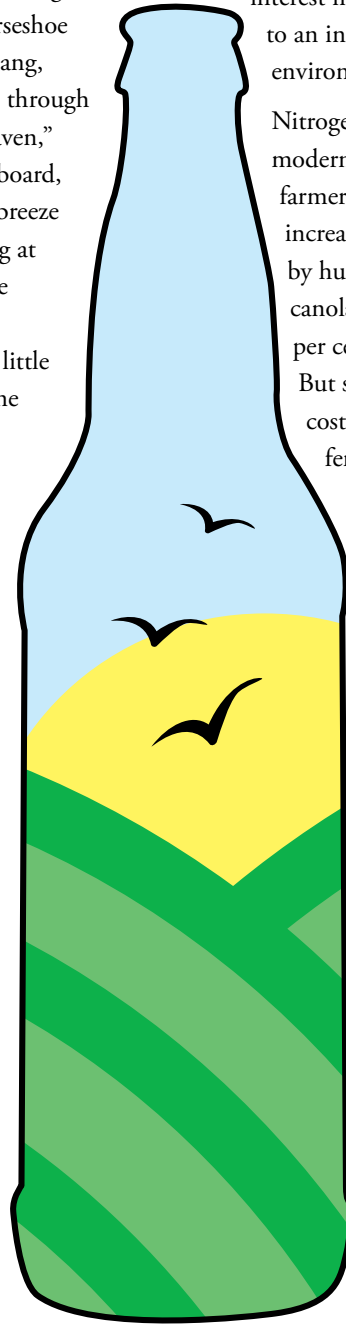
beer drinkers expect a lot of their beer—authenticity, naturalness, simplicity, fairness, local focus. So, it’s no surprise some look to organic beer as the next step. Of late, we’ve seen a growth in interest in organic beer, likely linked to an increased concern for the environment.

Nitrogen fertilizer has been a modern wonder, helping Alberta farmers feed a growing world, increasing yields for many crops by huge amounts (Canadian canola yields rose almost 60 per cent from 1990 to 2020).

But some worry about the cost of long-term heavy fertilizer use for Alberta’s other black gold—our rich, black chernozem soil. As well, nitrogen fertilizer is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions, with the Federal Government recently proposing a goal of reducing emissions from fertilizer 30 per cent by 2030.

While many farmers are unhappy about this goal, others—especially younger ones—are reinventing traditional methods and turning to organic or renewable/regenerative farming. Colby Hansen is a rancher and farmer near Westlock who is using traditional methods such

as rotational grazing and intercropping, reducing his fertilizer use by up to 50 per cent. Speaking to Mark Connolly on CBC Edmonton AM, Hansen said, “There’s lots of scepticism from conventional farmers. But farmers like me have been doing it and we’re very successful. There’s science there, it’s been proven.” Reducing emissions, sustaining healthy soil and growing great barley for Alberta craft beer: sounds like a win-win-win to me.





## Organic six pack

Certified organic beer is still few and far between, but here are six that use organic and local malt. Find at the breweries and better beer stores in Alberta.



### Persephone Dry Irish Stout, Gibsons B.C.

A sunny summer afternoon at Persephone called for the tart, lemony Berliner Weisse, but come the fall their heartier beers are great too. The Irish Stout has a roasty, espresso aroma, tasting of dark coffee and malt. Mildly bitter, dry finish with light carbonation. Try it on nitro if you can!

### Nelson Hooligan Organic Pilsner, Nelson B.C.

Nelson Brewing is the OG of organic brewing in Canada, a certified organic craft brewery since launching in Nelson, B.C. in 1991. They use mainly B.C. organic malt and are partnering with local growers on organic hops. Look for their Faceplant Winter Ale when the snow flies, but until then enjoy their take on a traditional German Pilsner—a light, golden lager with a crisp finish.



### Hawk Tail Organic Malt Lager, Rimbey AB

Hawk Tail's stylish, modern tap room overlooks prairie fields near the heart of Alberta barley central. Their Organic Malt Lager is as easy drinking as it is easy on the environment, says co-owner Chris Simeniuk. The Lager was brewed with barley from the certified organic grain farm Kettle Ridge Organics, who grew the barley using sustainable fertilizer from Replenish Nutrients.



### Blindman 24-2 Brown Ale, Lacombe AB

This beer has a delightful back story. The barley is grown near Red Deer, planted and harvested by a team of Percheron draft horses from 24-2 Draft Horses (plus some antique farm equipment and methods), then malted and roasted by Red Shed Malting near Penhold. The result is a roasty, toasty brown ale with subtle notes of dark fruit, chocolate and coffee.



### Siding 14 Dayliner Golden Ale, Ponoka AB

Siding 14 owners Josh and Femke Lubach are long-time barley farmers north of Ponoka who use their own malting barley to make the beers. Their Golden Ale is a light, crisp and easy drinking ale, named in honour of the passenger rail car that moved thousands of passengers between Calgary and Edmonton back in the day.



### Big Spruce Tim's IPA, Baddeck N.S.

Melanie and Jeremy White began brewing all-organic beer on 75 acres of pristine Cape Breton farmland near Baddeck in 2008. They grow their own organic hops and take care to source organic grains. Tim's IPA is an east coast take on a classic west coast IPA, hopped with organic Chinook, Simcoe and Citra hops for a piney, resinous, aromatic beer. 🍷



*Peter Bailey is made of 100 per cent organic materials. He's @Libarbarian on Twitter and Instagram.*

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## Feeding People

Daniela Zenari

### Double macchiato

**He shuffles his way to his usual seat where he can watch everything going on in the bustling caffè.**

“Hey Pops! How’s it goin’?” I say cheerfully.

“Shakey” he grumbles back in his typical fashion, “I need a coffee. Double macchiato.”

Grabbing the black handle of the portafilter (the piece that holds the ground beans in an espresso machine), I put it in the cradle of the automatic grinder and press the button for two shots of ground espresso. As the grinder whirrs I fill the milk pitcher, making it back just as the whirring stops.

A pleasant bubbling and hiss emerge from the pitcher. I make sure to keep the steam spurting wand just under the white surface, steaming the milk. This is the sweet spot for fabulous frothy foam.

With the full portafilter in one hand and the tamper in the other, I press down firmly on the freshly ground beans. The base of the tamper fits perfectly into the

cup of the portafilter and the once mini-mountain of brown grounds is flattened into a prairie. It’s a fine balance to get the perfect tamp. Too loose and the result will be weak and watery, too firm and it will burn.

“Don’t press too hard,” my father chirps in. “I know.” I reply, only half listening to his continuous commentary behind me.

Locking the portafilter into place in the espresso machine I press the start button and it hums into action. As that liquid gold starts streaming out I examine the *crema* (the creamy caramel-coloured surface of any good espresso). It should be thick enough to completely cover the black depths below (like the head of a Guinness) and stick to the side of the cup (like the legs of an Amaroni).

Satisfied with the crema I join the steamed milk with the espresso and finish it with a dollop of dense dairy.

“There’s a little too much foam,” he mumbles as he takes a sip, “but it’s okay. Yeah, good coffee bella.” ☺

*Daniela is Adriano’s youngest daughter.*



Glenda and Adriano Zenari, circa 1984. Photo courtesy Zenari family.



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CONTINUING  
EDUCATION





## restaurant buzz

The wonderful **Kitchen by Brad** closed July 3. Check out Brad and Leanne Smoliak's new column for *The Tomato* on page 14.

The **Blue Plate Diner** just off 124 Street has closed its doors as has the **Juniper Café** in Strathearn. Both victims of future construction, both are not relocating at the moment. We're sad to see two good community-focused and owner-operated restos close. Heartbroken actually.

The **Darling Wine Bar** (9612 82 Avenue, darlingrestaurant.ca) opening has been postponed again. No word yet on when it will open, we hope soon.

Lovers of classic rock and roll will feel at home at the new **Powerage Wine & Spirits** (10643 124 Street, below Irrational Brewing, such a cool building), the only late-night spot in the 124 Street area. Mezcal lovers will also feel right at home, with owner Susan McIntosh not only seeking out family-made and artisan spirits but local Mexican salts too. Expect 40 seats and casual food featuring Meuwly's, Rge Rd, Sly Fox Vegan Butchery and lots of Alberta-made spirits and beers. Check it out!

Check out **Vish** (10326 124 Street, 866-573-4326, vish.rest) the new hummus resto, an American franchise, this is the first Canadian location. The menu is ideal for hummus lovers—pita pockets, shakshuka, vegetarian shawarma and a breakfast dish.

**Awn Kitchen** (5124 122 Street, 587-469-4955, awnkitchen.com) is bringing back **Awn at Home**, delicious take home family dishes, mid-September. The coffee bar menu is expanding too—breakfast and lunch sandwiches, daily quiche, soup and salads, seasonal yogurt bowls, oats and more of the superb baking you have come to expect at Awn.

**Zocalo** (10826 95 Street, 780-428-0754, zocalo.ca) is expanding lunch offerings with hearty salads, sandwiches and new baking by James Holehouse, along with their excellent coffee. Check it out!

## cooking classes

**Get Cooking** (MacEwan Residence 104 Avenue, 780-566-2106, getcooking.ca) is adding boot camps and more online classes to their schedule this fall. New to the instructor lineup is Backstairs Burgers' **Levi Biddlecombe**, an accomplished chef who keeps things fun and interesting.

**Awn Kitchen's** (5124 122 Street, 587-469-4955, awnkitchen.com) holiday schedule will be up on the website in mid-September. Learn to make all the holiday baking and festive dishes.

The **Kitchen** at the **Stanley Milner Library** offers special cooking classes with **Zofia Trebaczkiewicz** and guest chefs. The focus is food culture—students learn in a friendly and supportive environment, at well-equipped stations. Find out more here: epl.ca/the-kitchen.

## wine tasting, happenings and events

After 15 years in Toronto the excellent **Terroir Hospitality Symposium** heads west to Calgary, September 19 and 20 at the Central Library. Find education, inspiration and conversation for food people. For details and tix, starting at \$299, terroirsymposium.com.

**Kitchen Party** is back! Edmonton's regional qualifier, one of eight across the country, is Thursday, October 27 at the Edmonton Convention Centre. The Grande Finale is in Ottawa, February 3-4, 2023. For individual and corporate invites visit greatkitchenparty.com. More info? See page 5.

Sign up for the **Charcuterie Experience** at **BreadLove Bakery** (46C St Michael Street, St, Albert, 780-569-2044, breadlove.ca), September 24, in partnership with the **Public Food Hub**. Learn about the different types of meats, cheeses and preserves and create your own board. Wine and snacks included throughout the evening. Tix, publicfoodhub.com.

Lots going on at **Bountiful Market** (3696 97 Street, 780-818-3878, bountifulmarkets.com) this fall. The **Scavenger Hunt** is on September 18, with a chance to win \$50 in market vouchers. On October 7 and 8, talented local artists paint Bountiful's seventh live mural. Enter **Bountiful's Thanksgiving Gift Basket Giveaway Contest** for a chance to win a basket full of amazing market goodies.

## product news

**Meuwly's Artisan Food Market** (10706 124 street, 587-786-3560, meuwlys.com) is collaborating with two local food businesses. The deliciously chewy, hand-rolled **Beb's Bagels** are available at Meuwly's via a Monday pop-up throughout September. Visit bebsbagels.ca to place a pre-order. Established Downtown Market vendor **Big G Foods** is moving production to Meuwly's. "After ten years of doing this out of the house, we're excited to start smoking jerky and producing sauces and rubs in a beautiful professional kitchen," says Big G.

Bring your **Henckell** knives to a sharpening clinic in October at **Bella Casa** (9646 142 Street, 780, 437-4190, bellacasadcl.com). Just in time to get cosy, save 15 per cent on all duvet covers, down and accessories October 1-15. Bella

is carrying a fun line of chocolate from Scotland called **Coco Chocolatier**, in seasonal flavours; Frankincense & Myrrh, Christmas Spice, Passion Fruit, Salted Caramel, Isle of Skye Sea Salt Dark, 80g, \$22 and 20g, \$4.50. The charming Advent Calendar is \$100.

New in the Goldbar neighbourhood is **Catch of the Week** (5036 106 Avenue, 780-705-8181, catchoftheweekedmonton.com). The family-owned business has been in farmers' markets for two decades, this is the new storefront shop. Check it out!

**Heart of the Home** (12539 102 Avenue, 780-705-4928, heartofthehomeveg.ca). New and just in time for fall decluttering is the **Joseph Joseph Cupboard Store** organization systems for spices, cookware, cutlery, gadgets and bags. Watch for the **Zwilling** super sale in September, bring up to three Zwilling knives for a complimentary knife sharpening on September 30. October happenings: **Emile Henri** is 20 per cent off, and \$1 from every purchase is donated to a local animal rescue. Bring in beds, treats, toys and food for the in-store donation bin too. Open daily, closed Labour Day and Thanksgiving Monday. 🍷

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



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