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www.herbalmagic.ca

Ontario icewines are worth trying

What is ice wine, why is it so expensive and should I try it? Excellent questions.

Ice wine is a sweet wine made by pressing frozen grapes, usually of the Riesling or Vidal variety. Under Vintners Quality Alliance Ontario quality standards, the grapes must be frozen on the vine, harvested at a temperature of at least -8 degrees Celsius and pressed when they are still frozen.

Icewine is fairly expensive since it takes approximately 3.5 kilograms of grapes to produce a 375 ml bottle of icewine. The same amount of grapes would produce six or seven times as much regular table wine. Normal grapes are about 75% water. When frozen grapes are pressed, the water, in the form of ice crystals, is left behind. A small amount of pure juice with a high concentration of sugar is extracted, from which the icewine is produced.

Another factor in the cost is that wine makers take huge financial risks by leaving grapes on the vine after the usual fall harvest. In addition

What's cookin'?

Lori and Gerry Kentner



to being more difficult to get, frozen grapes are prey to hungry birds, animals, weather, and other hazards while they are left on the vine.

Given all of that, should you try some? Absolutely! Ontario Icewines are capturing gold medals in international competitions and have been for quite some time. There are about 45 different Ontario wineries that produce icewine. Many fine restaurants are now selling it by the glass as well as by the bottle—so sample some at your next meal out, or, by a bottle to take home.

Here are some tips on serving icewine: Icewine is not simply a dessert wine; it can be used quite nicely to pair with paté or foie gras as a starter. Serve icewine in a traditional white wine glass to fully enjoy the rich, full bouquet.

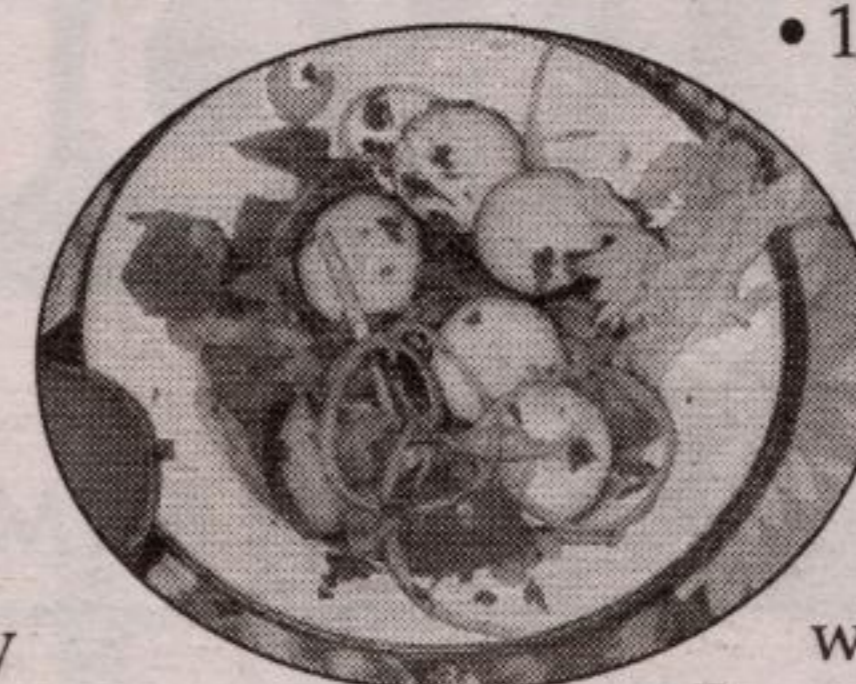
If serving icewine with dessert, choose a dessert that is not too sweet—fruit based desserts such as cobblers, cheesecakes or pies are complimented nicely by the uniquely sweet taste of the icewine.

Have fun and keep cooking!

Tomato, Red Onion and Zucchini Salad

Ingredients

- 6 small zucchini, sliced
- 4 medium tomatoes, cut in chunks
- 2 small red onions, sliced and separated into rings
- 2 stalks celery, sliced
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley



- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- pepper

Method

Combine all the five vegetables. In a separate bowl, combine everything except the oil. Then, while whisking, add the oil slowly.

Pour dressing over the vegetables and mix.

Allow the salad to rest at least one hour or overnight. Add pepper before serving. Garnish with celery leaves.

Dressing

- 2 tbsp red or white wine vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp dry mustard

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