



Splicing the Mainbrace

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Editors' Notes

The Farmer's Almanac is predicting an Atlantic Canadian Winter that is colder than normal with more snow than normal. Some might characterize this as an old fashioned winter, the sort that we remember fondly from our growing up years. The less romantic among us will curse the shoveling duties and extra heating costs that the forecast implies.

To be realistic, of course, the winter will be what the winter will be. Alas, we don't get much choice (which probably avoids a lot of argument about what the winter should be). We do, however, get to decide how we will respond to the weather.

Our favourite response to cold and snow is a fireplace and several glasses of red wine. A second option would be a meal out with friends at a fine restaurant. A third choice would be a celebratory bottle or two of sparkling for any occasion that can be made to present itself. And then there is Well, you get the idea.

So as the cold and snow moves in let us agree to make the best we can of it by sharing our joy (or dismay) with friends. And don't forget that licensees particularly appreciate our patronage when travel is difficult and too many customers succumb to the urge to stay at home.

Happy holiday!

In this issue:

Editors' Notes	1
Holiday Treats	1
Stocking Stuffers / Party Fare	3
Stan on Wine	4
Appetizer Recipes	4
Food, Wine and Health	5
Paimpec sur Vins	5
Beaujolais Nouveau	6
Mulled Wine	6

Holiday Treats – Sparkling Wines

Sparkling wines really do not need a special occasion or, put differently, every occasion is special with sparkling wine. But the next few months offer lots of occasions. So here are our suggestions for any or all of Christmas, Kwanzaa, Chanukah, New Year's Eve, Valentine's Day (or whatever takes your fancy):

Jodoïn Mousseux Rosé (Pink-peachy colour with nice visible fizzing bubbles...light, fresh nose with a hint of yeast...lovely sweet/dry body, expertly balanced...dry apple skins to finish, nice sparkling mouthfeel, a delight! Available in New Brunswick.)

Castellblanch Brut Zero (Made from a blend of 30% Macabeo, 60% Parellada, and 10% Xarel.lo, this sparkling wine is well-balanced, with fruity tastes, light body and fresh palate. A fine example of the Spanish cava style. A wine to quaff by itself or to mix in any drink that calls for a sparkling wine. Serve well chilled. Available in Nova Scotia.)

Bouvet-Ladubay Brut (Using the méthode traditionnelle on grapes grown in vineyards where Chenin grapes were being cultivated well before the Roman conquest of Gaul, Bouvet-Ladubay produces one of the great sparkling wines of France. Available in Nova Scotia.)

Segura Viudas Reserva Heredad (67% Macabeo, 33% Parellada. Straw yellow in colour, with a full delicate taste. It has power, character and delicacy. Best served at 8-9°C. This is a sparkling wine for special occasions. Its pewter-based bottle makes it an attractive presentation wine or gift. Available in Nova Scotia.)

Segura Viudas Lavit Rosado Brut (Made from 80% Trepát, 10% Monastrell, and 10% Garnacha, this wine presents an attractive pale strawberry colour, bright and transparent. Abundant bubbles, fine and constant that form a thin crown. Fruity aromas of youthful raspberry, currant and grenadine. In the mouth it is fresh with a good presence of fruits. It is light and has a sweet touch that spreads in the palate. Available in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.)



Holiday Treats – Still Wines

Special occasions call for special wines. Here are some suggestions:

Batasiolo Barolo (100% Nebbiolo in its subvarieties of Michet, Lampia and Rosé. The colour is deep ruby-garnet red that turns brick red with age. The nose is ethereal, intense, with notes of spices and dried fruits. Offers great finesse on the nose and palate, which is dry, full-bodied, imposing-yet-elegant, austere-but-velvety. Available in New Brunswick.)

J. Lohr Riverstone Estate Chardonnay (Aromas of exotic fruits complemented by a buttery toasted oak bouquet with hints of cinnamon, clove, and vanilla. Pear and apple flavours abound, balanced with butterscotch and vanilla nuances. The wine is a complex, well-rounded, luscious mouthful that offers a soft and lingering finish. Available in Newfoundland, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia.)

J. Lohr Seven Oaks Cabernet Sauvignon (A deep ruby colour with rich purple hues. The aromas are of blackberry and plum with a hint of blueberry, and some chocolate and toasted oak overtones. On the palate, expect berries, chocolate and smoky toasted oak. The flavours are rich and full, with a soft, supple texture and a lingering finish. Available in New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and at Bishop's Cellar in Nova Scotia.)

Sandalford Premium Shiraz (Mid-dark cherry red with classic Shiraz nose of lifted clove, nutmeg, pepper and spice. On the palate, sweet spice flavours lead to moderate tannins and nuanced oak on the finish. This is a stylish, classy wine that earned an 87 from James Halliday. Available in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.)

Sandalford Premium Cabernet Sauvignon (This wine has all of the intensity, structure and varietal flavour that is expected of a Margaret River Cabernet. The fruit is perfectly ripe and the pleasantly firm tannins suggest a few years cellaring. Available in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.)

Montessoro Amarone della Valpolicella (The 50% Corvina Veronese, 40% Rondinella, and 10% Molinara grapes are harvested in October, then dried on the trellis for 4 months (until January). Traditionally vinified with a very slow fermentation at low temperatures over a 3 to 4 month period, the wine is then aged for 4 years in Slavonian Oak casks. Deep garnet red colour with orange reflections. A strong and characteristic bouquet reminiscent of peach blossoms and raspberries. Warm, velvety and soft palate yet full bodied and well balanced. Available in Newfoundland.)

Vionta Albariño (From Rias Baixas in north-west Spain, this wine is fresh, zesty and citrusy. It has a gorgeous acidity with a variety of breakfast fruit flavors and a sumptuously smooth lingering taste. On the palate, the wine is bright and vivid with grapefruit and green apple notes, softened by a dash of Meyer lemon, which rounds out the flavors, leading to a satisfying and silky finish. Available in New Brunswick.)

Bleasdale Mulberry Tree Cabernet Sauvignon ((From Sean Wood, *Halifax Chronicle-Herald*) For such a young cab, it is surprisingly approachable, with a sweet, softly perfumed, spicy vanillin and ripe fruit bouquet. The richness barely avoids being cloying. Flavours too, are unctuously rich. It reminds me of Madeira cake. The texture is velvety, with soft tannins and a raisiny overlay. The finish is long and moderately complex, with a hint of Australian mintiness. Available in Nova Scotia.)

Bleasdale Bremerview Shiraz (This is a star performer; lots of character and all the punch and kick you expect from an Aussie Shiraz at a great price. Deep purple red in colour with a nose and palate bursting with red fruit and liquorice. Full, rich, ripe and round. Available in Nova Scotia in limited quantities.)

Cline Ancient Vines Mourvèdre (Garnet in colour with plum, black pepper and vanilla aromas; jammy blueberry and plum fruit flavors with spice and silky tannins finishing with a rich, thick mouthfeel. A very good example of this Rhône varietal and a great value. Available in Newfoundland, and, at VinArt, in Nova Scotia.)

Yvon Mau Château Preuillac (This is a Medoc Cru Bourgeois with plenty of good, ripe, concentrated blackcurrant and red fruit, perhaps a little floral hint, and good ripeness. In the mouth it is rich and has lots of red plum fruit against a background of spicy oak filling out the finish. Balance is good, and tannins are fine. Available in Newfoundland.)

Moselland Ars Vitis (Fine, fruity Riesling bouquet, well-balanced palate with hints of exotic fruit. This straight forward Qualitätswein is very crisp and refreshing. The "window bottle" packaging features

scenes from the Mosel Valley by artist and wine grower Heinz Ames, so this enjoyable wine also makes an excellent gift. Available in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia.)

Holiday Treats – Other

König Ludwig (For 700 years, the Royal House of Bavaria (Wittelsbach family) has maintained the highest standards for beer. It was King Ludwig who developed and passed the Bavarian Purity Law of 1516 which remains to this day the quality standard for German beers (ONLY hops, malt and water permitted as ingredients.) This top quality beer is brewed from the finest Hallertau aroma hops, malt from selected wheat, and the brewery's own specially-cultured pure yeast strain. The beer is golden in colour and naturally cloudy since it is unfiltered. It is well-balanced and malty with aromas of apples and bananas. Available in Nova Scotia.)

Matusalem Gran Reserva Cuban Tradition Rum (Originally produced over 130 years ago in Santiago de Cuba and known as the "Cognac of Rums," this solera 15 super-premium rum is the perfect choice for those looking for exceptional quality and sophisticated taste. Not all rums are created equal and one sip of Matusalem Gran Reserva emphasizes that point. Complex yet velvety smooth, with a pronounced bouquet and flavour. Available in Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia. Listed in New Brunswick but currently out of stock.)

A man not old, but mellow, like good wine,
Stephen Phillips (1845-1915) Ulysses, III. ii



Stocking Stuffers

Moselland Bernkasteler Kurfurstlay Riesling (A fresh white wine from the Mosel Valley which has been selected for its crisp character and classic

Riesling flavours. Available in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.)

Warsteiner Premium Verum Beer (The # 1 beer in Germany from one of the world's most modern breweries. Since 1753 Warsteiner has brewed its beer in accordance with Germany's Purity Law. Warsteiner contains no chemicals, preservatives, or additives. Available in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.)

Cline Five Reds (A blend of Carignane, Mourvèdre, Zinfandel, and Alicante Bouschet, aged in French oak provides up front fruitiness and light tannin structure. There is an intriguing herbiness to this wine. A great quaffing wine with enough character to intrigue the most sophisticated oenophile. Available in Nova Scotia.)



Stan on Wine

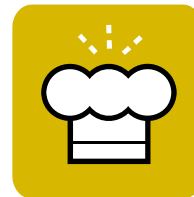
French wines are changing, if not the wines themselves, at least the labels. Within the last few years the sales of Australia wines have increased and at the same time many wine producing countries including France have seen a decline. There are numerous reasons behind the Aussie rise, far too many to discuss at this time. However, labelling is clearly one of them. Most Aussie wine bottles display the name of the grape so many consumers now are asking for ,say "An Australian Shiraz". The French wine makers have taken note!

Fine producers such as **Yvon Mau** are now permitted to add the grape name to some of their wines. Their **Côtes De Gascogne** wine now has Colombard/Chardonnay prominently displayed on the label and their **Vin de Pays de L'Aude** now has Shiraz listed as the grape. Even changing Syrah to Shiraz is in its self a bold move. At this year's Wine Fest in Newfoundland Mainbrace featured two **Yvon**

Mau wines both displaying this new name change pattern. Their **Premium Bordeaux** red now has Merlot/Cabernet on the label and their **Premium Bordeaux** white is now displaying Sauvignon Blanc. Some experts suggest achieving success in the wine world is somewhat of a name game. French producers, lead by **Yvon Mau**, are poised to enter and perhaps win that game.

-**Stanley Laite** is Mainbrace's Newfoundland Manager.

Bacchus we thank who gave us wine
Which warms the blood within our veins;
That nectar is itself divine.
The man who drinks not, yet attains
By godly grace to human rank
Would be an angel if he drank.
Pierre Motin, French drinking song



Holiday Appetizers

Blue Cheese and Sherry Fondue

750 gm cheddar cheese, grated
250 gm blue cheese, crumbled
250 ml concentrated tomato soup
15 ml Worcester Sauce
100 ml **Tio Pepe Sherry**

Gently cook the first four ingredients in a pot, stirring constantly, until the cheese is melted and bubbling. Add the sherry and transfer the fondue to a fondue pot. Serve with bread cubes or chunks of fresh apple for dipping.

Sparkling Mushrooms

60 gm butter
20 gm garlic, minced

700 gm small white mushrooms, destemmed
 400 ml **Castellblanch Brut Zero** cava
 10 ml minced parsley
 Salt and pepper

Sauté the garlic and mushrooms in half of the butter until the mushrooms are lightly browned. Stir in the cava and simmer to reduce to about ¼, then remove the mushrooms to a serving dish. Whisk the remaining butter, a bit at a time, into the reduced wine, season with salt and pepper. Pour the sauce over the mushrooms and sprinkle the parsley on top. Serve with a well-chilled sparkling wine (see page 1).

Apricot Brie Wheel

250 ml canned apricots, well drained
 250 ml **Bernkasteler Kurfurstlay Riesling**
 450 gm Brie (in a single wheel, rind trimmed)
 80 gm slivered almonds, lightly toasted

Simmer the apricots in the wine until the liquid is reduced to about 60 ml. Place the Brie on a lightly oiled pie plate, pour the apricot mixture over top, and sprinkle with the almonds. Bake in a pre-heated 170°C oven until it is hot and bubbly. Serve with crostini or melba toasts and a glass of **Moselland Ars Vitis, Bernkasteler Kurfurstlay Riesling, or J. Lohr Riesling**.

Food, Wine, and Health

Here is a BBC take on the health effects of moderate wine consumption (May, 2002)

“Another health benefit has been attributed to red wine - fighting off the common cold. According to scientists in Spain, drinking wine, especially red, stops people from developing colds. Something in wine seems to have a protective effect because the same was not seen with beer and spirits.

The evidence comes from a year long study of 4,000 volunteers. Experts at five universities found that people who drank more than two glasses of red wine a day had 44% fewer colds than teetotalers. Drinking

one glass of red wine a day also protected against colds, but to a lesser extent.

Red wine has been associated with a number of health benefits, including a lower rate of heart disease. An ingredient in red wine may also prevent herpes, according to a recent study. The ability of red wine to ward off colds may be due to its antioxidant properties, according to Professor Ron Eccles, director of the Common Cold Centre at Cardiff University. Lifestyle factors - such as sipping red wine at home rather than drinking in crowded pubs - could also be a factor, he said.“

Here's to the corkscrew - a useful key to unlock the storehouse of wit, the treasury of laughter, the front door of fellowship, and the gate of pleasant folly.
W.E.P. French

Paimpec sur Vins

Comment augmenter et agrémenter la culture vinicole du NB



Au fil des ans la culture vinicole du NB s'est modifiée et dernièrement nous voyons des activités très formatrices avoir lieu dans des magasins d'alimentations ou ailleurs. Le festival des Vins de Moncton est un incontournable. La culture vinicole évolue rapidement. Il y a des gens, de plus en plus nombreux, au NB qui ont mis beaucoup d'efforts pour se renseigner et s'éduquer dans le domaine du vin. Des gens vont consommer du vin par plaisir pour en apprécier les qualités. Ce n'est plus un aliment de luxe c'est un produit de divertissement.

En septembre dernier avait lieu a Caraquet un événement relié au vin et comme a chaque occasion de nombreuses personnes m'ont posés des questions sur les produits. En novembre il y avait celui de Moncton. Le désir de savoir plus dans ce domaine y était très présent. Des questions comme celles-ci m'ont été posé : Avec quoi est fait un Valpolicella? D'où viens le tannins? Comment fait-on le Rosé? Shiraz ou Syrah? Comment lire une étiquette d'un vin? C'est quoi un Bordeaux? Il y a aussi les

thèmes : les différents pays, les cépages, les millésimes et d'autres encore. Les demandes d'informations sont aussi variées qu'il y a de cépages. Les gens ont une soif de connaissance qui doit être satisfaite ici pour éviter qu'ils aillent dans des régions où le savoir du vin est plus coutumier que marginal. Et des magasins de spécialités comme Edmunston ou Prospect St, à Frédéricton sont des plaques tournantes pour la culture vinicole d'une région.

C'est aux représentants et aux restaurateurs qu'il incombe de faire cette éducation et formation. Mainbrace possède une vaste gamme de produits qui présentent beaucoup d'intérêt et bientôt il sera possible de goûter à d'autres merveilles. La cuvée 2007 promet de fournir de quoi satisfaire la curiosité gustative d'amateur de vin de plus en plus nombreux.

-Marc Paimpec est Gérant pour Mainbrace (Nouveau Brunswick et IPE)



Mulled Wine



- 750 ml **Painter Bridge Zinfandel**
- 1 orange, thinly sliced
- 120 ml **Matusalem Classico Rum**
- 10 cloves
- 150 gm sugar
- 3 cinnamon sticks, roughly broken
- 5 ml ground ginger

Combine all ingredients in a slow cooker. Gently warm the ingredients on low to medium heat (avoid boiling), for 20 minutes. Stir occasionally to make sure that the honey or sugar has completely dissolved. Serve in mugs.



Beaujolais Nouveau

The **Fougères Beaujolais Villages Nouveau** brought to Nova Scotia in November sold very quickly. If you do find any in your local NSLC store grab it as a fun pairing with your holiday dinner.



The role of **Mainbrace** is to market the beverage alcohol products that we represent to final consumers, to licensees, to private wine stores, and to the Provincial Government agencies.

We aim to enhance responsible enjoyment for consumers, to facilitate profitable sales for licensees and private wine stores, and to assist agencies in fulfilling their mandates.

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Check out the **Mainbrace** web site at:

www.mainbrace.ca

for a complete list of products represented by **Mainbrace**, for tasting notes, recipes, recent reviews, and news of wine events in the region.