

GREAT
TASTE OF

Ontario



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Now more than ever, we need to support our local restaurants, farmers and those along the culinary tourism value chain. The Great Taste of Ontario will inspire travel and feed your curiosity. It will provide Ontarians with information and incentive to explore our taste of place safely, while supporting businesses who support their communities.

Rebecca Mackenzie
president + CEO of
Culinary Tourism Alliance

Let it snow! Six unique activities to experience this winter

We're all for hunkering down and getting cozy, but one of the best ways to make it through Ontario's long winters is to find the joy outdoors

From a wine-filled snowshoeing trek on the Niagara Escarpment, to afternoon tea at Ste. Anne's Spa, or even a day of family fun at a Christmas Adventure Park, there's a little something for everyone on this list.

The Mill's Hot Chocolate Hike in Cobourg

The Hot Chocolate Hike, a self-guided hike hosted by The Mill Restaurant and Pub on Thursdays through Saturdays, began its season on Nov. 25. Keep your hands cozy with a complimentary cup of hot chocolate while you hike through the property's illuminated path. A warm fire and fresh-roasted smores await you at the end of your hike on The Mill's heated patio, where you can finish your night with a hearty dinner or specialty drinks.

'Snowshoe, Waterfalls and Wine' Tour in Niagara

Get together with your wine-loving friends for an afternoon out in the natural landscape of the Niagara Escarpment. Brave the cold on this short snowshoeing trek, where you'll see two of the most impressive waterfalls in the area. If you need to warm up, take heart: There are two scheduled stops overlooking a vineyard where you can relax and sample award-winning wines and delicious charcuterie.

Ian's Christmas Adventure Park in Beckwith

Enjoy a wide variety of Christmas-themed activities all in one place at this tree farm-slash-Christmas adventure park. Grab a blanket and curl up by the fire for a movie under the stars, take a stroll through Candy Cane Lane featuring thousands of twinkling lights, or visit Santa's Workshop for socially distanced photos with Saint Nicholas himself. To finish off your day, take home the ultimate souvenir: your own Christmas tree.

Afternoon Tea + Skating at Ste. Anne's Spa in Grafton

Rest and relaxation are especially important amid the harsh winter weather, which makes a trip to Ste. Anne's Spa the perfect winter activity. Start off your perfect winter day by grabbing your skates to take in the countryside breeze at their on-site skating rink. (Make sure to reserve a spot ahead of time!) After-



Ste. Anne's Spa in Grafton is the perfect rest and relaxation destination for harsh winter weather.

wards, head inside and treat yourself with a warm cuppa and a variety of tiny tastes at Afternoon Tea—with vegan, vegetarian and gluten-free options, you can't go wrong with any of their delightful spreads.

Hiking with Thrive Tours in Sault Ste. Marie

This Indigenous tour business offers eco-cultural touring experiences led by knowledgeable guides. Head out on a guided tour or a snowshoeing adventure, curated for people of any

and all skill levels, while learning about local Indigenous practices and philosophies. Thrive Tours is committed to a zero-footprint business model, meaning you can feel good about exploring the wondrous Northern Ontario wilderness, while doing your part in keeping the environment pristine for years to come.

The Chocolate Express at Stokely Creek Lodge

Mark your calendar: the third annual Chocolate Express event

kicks off in January, 2022. Skiers, snowshoers and chocoholics alike will all enjoy this chocolate-themed experience at Stokely Creek Lodge. Make your way through the many ski and snowshoe trails and take in the beauty of Northern Ontario. The best part? Chocolate treats are stationed throughout the trails, so don't forget to bring your appetite!

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ONTARIO
Yours to discover

Three food trends to try in 2022

Mushrooms, non-alcoholic drinks and a kick of spice will have Canadians everywhere living their most flavourful lives in the New Year



From left: Coffee made from mushrooms? Soon you'll be seeing reishi mushrooms and other adaptogenic fungi everywhere; Canadians, particularly millennials and Gen Z, are increasingly interested in non-alcoholic beer, wine and spirits; it's not just a TikTok trend—food experts say spicy condiments are trending for 2022.

When it comes to food trends for the coming year, our crystal ball says there are three that stand out: wellness with adaptogens, decreased consumption of alcohol and the exploration of spicy foods and condiments from around the world.

Adaptogenic mushrooms

Adaptogenic mushrooms might be new to the Western hemisphere, but they've been used for centuries in Eastern healing modalities. Adaptogens are said to help your body adjust to various types of stress and help your systems return to a balanced state called "homeostasis." In mushroom form, varieties like reishi, chaga, turkey tail, lion's mane and cordyceps may increase the body's resistance to stress and protect against stress-related damage.

Just ask Chanel Murray, vice-pres-

ident and co-founder of Forage Hyperfoods, a medicinal mushroom company that aims to provide accessible holistic and preventative fungi medicine to everybody. "Mushrooms have decades of peer-reviewed clinical research behind their health benefits," she says. "Many of us have used fungi-based medicine without even knowing it. Penicillin, a common antibiotic, is derived from the fungus *Penicillium*, so trying naturally occurring functional mushrooms should not be a far leap."

Sourcing both wild-harvested and organically cultivated mushrooms out of Ontario, New Brunswick and Quebec, Forage Hyperfoods offers potent, bio-available liquid extracts, mushroom coffee blends, raw chaga in various sizes, and new and exciting formats coming soon.

Non-alcoholic beverages

Many Canadians haven't historically opted for non-alcoholic beers, wines and spirits, but a lot has changed throughout the pandemic. Now, more and more millennials and older Gen Z are interested in reducing their alcohol intake, with some looking to eliminate it from their diets altogether. Take it from Elaisha Jade, a mental-health advocate and meditation teacher. "In 2020, I wanted to try doing one year alcohol-free to see if it made a difference in my mood, sleeping pattern and wallet. It made such a difference and I'm now almost two years in," she says. "I had to deal with a lot of explaining and re-explaining my reasons for not drinking to friends. People seemed uncomfortable that I chose not to drink." In a way, opting for non-alcoholic beverages allowed

Jade to evaluate which relationships were founded on being "drinking buddies" and make space to genuinely enjoy the company of others.

Looking to explore what's out there? The Feast On certified Spirit Tree Estate Cidery's non-alcoholic craft ciders are perfect for the upcoming holiday season. Other Ontario options include West Avenue Ciders, beers from Partake Brewery and distilled non-alcoholic gin by Sobrii.

Spicy condiments

If homemade chili oil going viral on TikTok has taught us anything, it's that Canadians are more open to exploring the flavours that the rest of the world has to offer. In fact, research shows that more people gravitate towards the spicy version of whatever they're ordering when

dining than not these days. After all, heat paired with flavour can enhance any culinary experience, an opinion Roshan Kanagarajah, the founder of Kitchen Guerilla, enthusiastically confirms. "We have so many immigrant communities [in Toronto] and everyone is exchanging ingredients and sharing experiences... hot sauce in varying forms is a staple in so many households," Kanagarajah says. That's why he started a company making hot sauces and marinades. At first, he used peppers that his wife, Dalscene, grew in her garden. These days, he works with larger suppliers, but he hasn't forgotten his roots. Every year, he releases a limited-edition batch made with her peppers.

What some of our favourite Ontario foodies are giving this Christmas

We asked the local experts – cookbook authors, chefs and food entrepreneurs – for their best recommendations

We have never craved community and connectedness more than this past year, and that extends to our gift giving. Instead of lots of stuff under the tree, we'll be giving meaningful gifts that help bring our loved ones together.

What better way to do that than through food? So, we asked four food experts what they're gifting this holiday season.

Paul Sawtell and Grace Mandarano co-owners and CEOs of Toronto's 100KM Foods

"We are especially excited about this upcoming holiday season as an opportunity to reconnect, recharge and rejuvenate. Food is such an integral part of this, and the community and connection around preparing and sharing it with family and friends is what we look forward to most at this time of year. Naturally, then, we find the ideal gift for foodie friends or family to be online family cooking classes offered by our good friend, chef Tawfik Shehata and his food school Julia's Child, which is an homage to his mother and, of course, a wink to the culinary trailblazer herself.

Additionally, one of our favourite

pastimes is enjoying a glass of wine around a fantastic cheese and charcuterie board with friends. At 100KM Foods, we have curated some great cheese and charcuterie gift boxes, featuring amazing products from some of Ontario's best artisanal producers. They can be purchased and delivered from The Market at 100km Foods to that special someone on your gift list."

Stephen Beckta owner of Ottawa's Beckta Dining and Wine Bar

"For this holiday season, I'm giving a few special gifts to the special people in my life: First, my homemade brodo (bone broth). It's a recipe that I have tweaked many times, and it keeps getting better. We have two important people in our world that are fighting cancer right now, and this brodo provides a huge dose of easy-to-digest protein, vitamins, minerals and anti-inflammatories. It's also amazing for people who like to stay healthy, and works well as a mid-afternoon pick me up or as the base for killer braised dishes or soups. I've adapted the recipe from the "Hearth Broth" featured in Marco Canora's Brodo Book.

Next up is a custom curated wine case from Curated By Beckta. Our wine director curates a six or 12-bottle case around your individual tastes and favourite styles, and turns guests onto amazing, small-production wines that aren't available at the LCBO. And finally, nothing says love like bubbles. Our restaurant group has our own private label sparkling wine made in partnership with Cave Spring Vineyard. One hundred per cent Chardonnay, aged almost three years on the lees, this local sparkling will rival most entry-level Champagnes that are twice the price."

Eva Chin chef at Toronto's Feast On-certified Avling

"Currently, Avling is producing our own charcuterie, which is the number one gift I'd recommend to give this holiday season. We butcher our own whole animals and grow our own vegetables on our rooftop. And we're now offering a smorgasbord that samples everything from our pantry, preservation shelves and our butcher.

One of the biggest issues that arose during the COVID-19 pandemic is food insecurity, and the way



Emily Richards, home economist and cookbook author, favours a cookie swap for the holiday season.

Avling is solving our own food insecurity is by producing everything on our own. We grow our own food, produce our own beer, use up all our products, byproducts and waste and put them back into our menu and into our production. I think the spirit behind this – of making use of the resources we have, of feeding each other and not letting anything go to waste – is the sincerest gift."

Emily Richards Guelph-based home economist and cookbook author

"Traditionally, I do a cookie swap for the holidays. Because we couldn't all get together last year, I had everybody drop off their cookies, then I mixed them, did a porch drop-off, and we Zoomed and snacked together. It's a flexible tradition. I have

family recipes that I like to make and give as gifts, which also reminds me of the people that aren't here anymore. I have food memories of all the loved ones I've lost, of their favourite recipes, so I like to share that with friends and spread their memory.

I incorporate each individual's favourite flavour, and pairings are fun, too, thanks to Guelph's many great local distilleries and breweries. It gives me a creative edge, but it's also double the joy for friends. Especially now, with what we've gone through, when we are able to take the time to be thoughtful about those in our lives, it means more. Cooking and baking are wonderful, and sharing the results during the holidays is meaningful; you're putting your time and effort into making a loved one feel good."

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Made-in-Ontario gifts for the food lovers on your list

From spiced nuts to alcohol-free snacks and sophisticated sweets, here are eight gifts they'll love, all from local artisans and makers

Experts have been warning that supply chain issues could derail our holiday shopping for months now, but there's an easy way to avoid all that hassle: shop local. Here are eight sweet gift ideas, all handmade by local Ontario artisans.

CUSTOM TEAGRAM

Tea of choice with a personal message, **Pluck Teas, \$19.50, pluckteas.com.**

Running out of gift ideas for your BFF? Try sending a "tea-gram" from Pluck, the Toronto tea company. Choose one of their top-selling blends, pen a personal note and voilà – they'll think of you every time they make their morning cuppa.

ONTARIO-THEMED TEA TOWELS

Tea towels with handcrafted patterns, **Zest Kitchen Shop, \$32, zestkitchenshop.com.**

From loons on Loon Lake to water towers watching over Prince Edward County, the Kingston-based artist Kate Golding beautifully captures vignettes of Ontario on her tea towels. Each design is hand-painted, and the towels are printed and sewn in Canada.

LOCALLY-MADE CHOCOLATES

12-piece assorted chocolates, **Raven Rising Chocolates, \$37.50, ravenrising.ca.**

This Indigenous chocolate company is owned by chef Tammy Maki, a Saulteaux Ojibwe from White Bear First Nation. Chef Maki uses ingredients that have traditionally been important to her community, including paw paw, black trumpet mushroom, birch syrup, sumac, sweet Ontario corn and wild grapes, to craft her decadent and beautiful sweets. Raven Rising also offers monthly chocolate subscriptions, a must for chocoholics.

SWEET WHISKY-SPICED PECANS

4oz of spiced pecans, **Jewels Under the Kilt, \$9.49, jewelsunderthekilt.com.**

Jewels Under the Kilt is the brainchild of Elisabeth Burrow, the company's founder and chief roaster, who left big city life behind in 2010 for a 90-acre farm in the quaint township of Fergus, Ont. Before long, she and her family had planted 100 nut trees, she'd developed a unique roasting process and she had a cheekily-named business making delicious treats, including these nuts, which are made with whiskey from a local distillery.

MEAD-FLAVOURED CARAMELS

Salted caramels, **Ontario Honey Creations, \$15, ontariohoneycreations.com**

You definitely "mead" to get these treats for your dessert-obsessed loved ones. A partnership with Elora, Ont.-based caramel company Laura Raes, these candies are infused with your choice of Dry Mead, Ginger Creamed Honey, or Lavender Creamed Honey from Ontario Honey Creations.

STONE GROUND DARK CHOCOLATE

Chocolate bars, **Chocosol, from \$8 or \$40 for a six-pack, chocosoiltraders.com**

Here's a gift you can feel good about. This Toronto-based chocolate company and social enterprise makes what it describes as "bean-to-bar," small-batch and artisanal chocolate in flavours including Vanilla Sea Salt, 5 Chili Bullet and Coffee Crunch. Chocosol's offerings are made using organic, shade-grown cacao that has been sourced directly from Indigenous communities in the Lacondon jungle of Chiapas and the Oaxacan mountains of Southern Mexico. They're also free of nuts, dairy, soy, gluten and preservatives.

LIVING VINEGAR

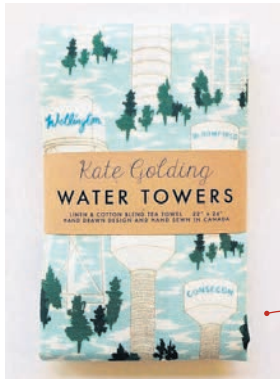
Big League Vinegar Kit, **Acid League, \$49, acidleague.com.**

Acid League's vinegars, which come in flavours such as Apple Cider Maple, Meyer Lemon Honey, Strawberry Rosé and Garden Heat, is the perfect gift for cooking enthusiasts looking to upgrade their pantry. Show up to your next dinner party or weekend visit with this tasting set and your hosts will be delighted.

CHEESE BASKETS

3 Cheeses Basket, **St-Albert Cheese Cooperative, \$30, fromagesalbert.com**

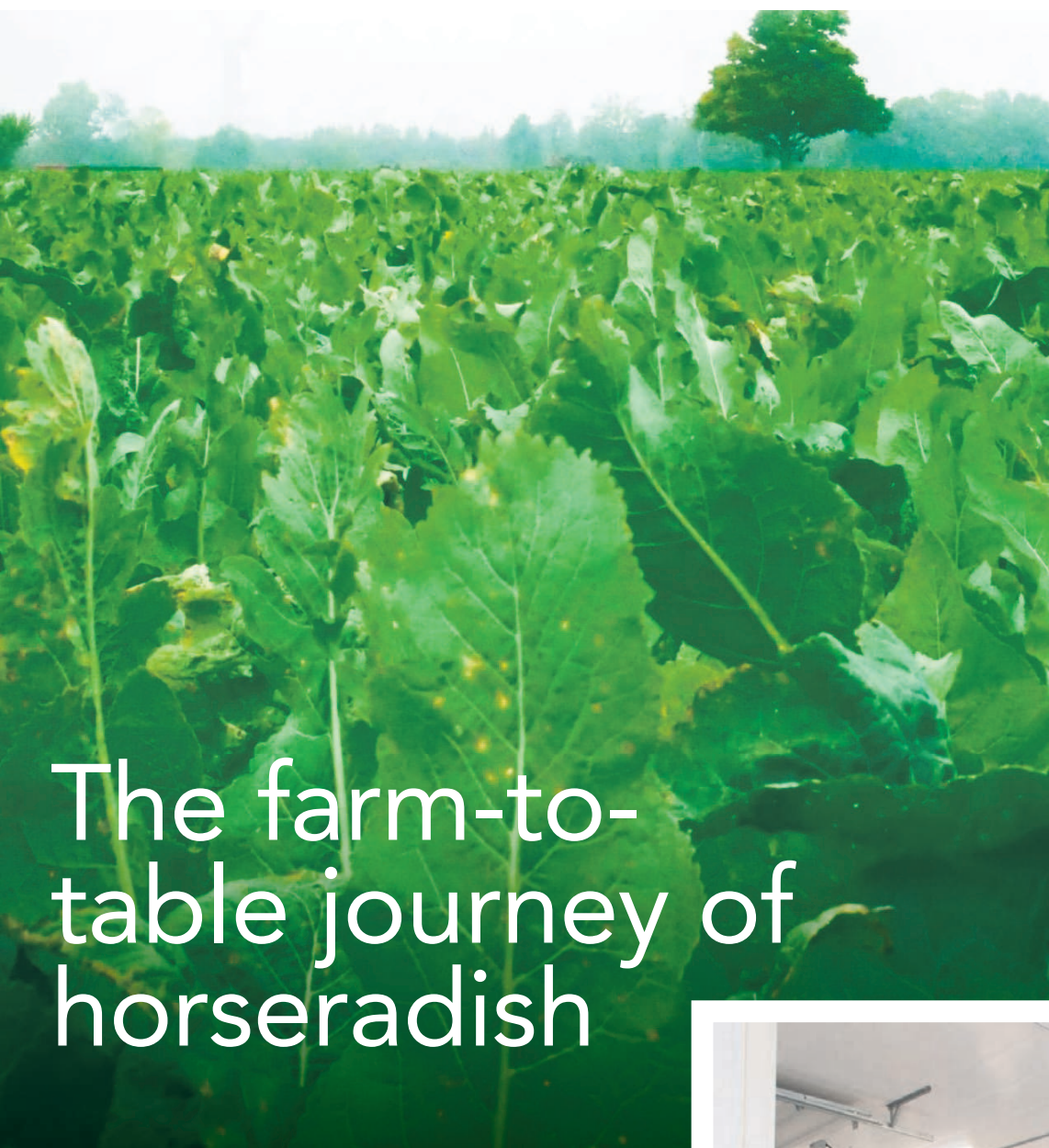
St-Albert Cheese Coop is one of the oldest cooperatives in Canada, with more than a century of experience producing high quality cheeses in Eastern Ontario. They sell gift baskets with boxes of crackers, jars of fruit spread, a bottle of sparkling juice and, of course, a selection of their finest cheeses. Include as many as seven of your favourites!



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A meal in Waterloo Region is like a great story, combining elements of unforgettable tastes with the unique place that produces them. From the incomparable farm-to-table freshness of locally grown and raised fare to the culinary invention of our adventurous chefs, each morsel brims with distinct artistry. To plan a food experience as mouth-watering as it is memory making, visit dineinwr.ca.



The farm-to-table journey of horseradish



How Dennis' Horseradish makes their 'farm to fork' condiment in Norfolk County

Originally founded in 1960 by Oxford County local Dennis Gyorffy, who began bottling the spicy sauce in his basement in Tillsonburg, Dennis' Horseradish passed through the hands of several area families until it was acquired last summer by "the three Marks."

The partners, who all met at Western's Ivey Business School, each brought something to the endeavour: "[Mark] Vandenbosch, who's got a background in agriculture, thought that we could grow better horseradish in Norfolk County than anyone in Canada," says Mark Healy, nodding to the area's arid, sandy soil which is ideal for the fiery root vegetable. "I came at it from the brand side, and thought we could really do something with the brand's history and heritage." The last Mark – Whitmore – grew up in Norfolk County, and knew the Hantz family, who had run the business for decades. "Whitmore actually joked to friends, as far back as 30 years ago, that if Dennis' ever came for sale, he'd buy it," says Healy.

After a year of learning the family recipes from master horseradish maker Rick Hantz, Whitmore, who lives on Turkey Point, is now overseeing the brand's Delhi production facility.

THE FARMERS:
Lindsay Menich and Drew Patterson

Before horseradish can be processed, it needs to be grown. Dennis' 16 acres of root is grown for them by Lindsay Menich and Drew Patterson in nearby Teeterville, Ont. meaning this horseradish is uniquely Norfolk County from "farm to fork," as Healy puts it.

In late spring, Menich and Patterson plant three-inch cuttings from last year's root. "You're hoping for a very hot, dry summer," Healy says,

going on to explain that farmers deliberately want to "stress" the root by making it thirsty so it produces a protective oil that gives the root its signature heat.

Working with hyperlocal producers means they can control the freshness of their root, which directly correlates to how much heat the horseradish has, something other manufacturers who buy their root through an intermediary aren't able to do as easily. "If you're eating horseradish and it's hot, that's a good thing. It means it was fresh when it was bottled," he explains.

THE PRODUCER:
Dennis' Horseradish

If you stumble into Dennis' Horseradish's production facility and see people wearing gas masks, do not be alarmed. It's a good sign that the horseradish they're processing is fresh and full of nasal-passage-opening flavour. A member of the same plant family as mustard and wasabi, horseradish root contains a chemical compound called allyl isothiocyanate that gives it that signature heat. Of course, while that pungent punch is something condiment lovers chase by the spoonful, in large quantities it can make your eyes water and even irritate your throat – something the team behind Dennis' Horseradish know all about.

The production process starts with tumble-washing the roots in water to remove the dirt. "At that point, you'll know you've got horseradish," says Healy, "because when you ding up the root you're starting the off-gassing process. If you've grown really hot root, it's hard to be in the room with it."

From there, it's ground, then mixed with vinegar, water and other ingredients – beets for the beet relish, for example, milk to cut the heat in their milder Original style, or mustard oil to preserve that zing in the Hot and Extra Hot.

"In a day, we can do three batches and produce about 5500 jars," says Healy. They've experimented with a maple horseradish, and for the holiday season they've got a cranberry version as well. "We're on a mission to change the traditional view that horseradish [is] just for roast beef," says Healy. They're already exporting in bulk to the U.S. and overseas – a container just went to a seafood sauce producer in Asia – and this is just the beginning.



Clockwise from top left: Farmers Lindsay Menich and Drew Patterson grow horseradish root in Teeterville, Ont.; the fresher the root when it arrives at Dennis' production facility, the spicier the final product; the company's factory in Delhi, Ont.; Dennis' offers a cranberry sauce-flavoured horseradish for the holiday season.



"Our growth equates to local farming growth, to local employment, and all those economic impacts and benefits are real."

THE RESTAURANT
David's

Much like licorice, horseradish can be a divisive flavour profile.

"The problem with horseradish is that everyone thinks it's spicy when it's not," says Mark Stortini of David's of Port Dover, a Feast On Certified restaurant perched on the shore of Lake Erie in Norfolk County. "It's not a downward heat that hits the base of your tongue and goes into the back of your throat. Horseradish actually goes vertically up into your palate, and freshens and enlivens."

And while this Mark is no relation to the other three Marks, he has been serving Dennis' Horseradish at the restaurant for the last seven or eight years, since he first bought a bottle at the Norfolk County Fair and Horse Show.

"Right around the same time, I came into the restaurant and my chef was like, 'Here are samples of five different types of horseradish from Dennis'," recalls Stortini. Since then, Dennis' has been a staple ingredient for the restaurant, aiding in the

"creative culinary experimentation" that is David's signature move. "Dennis' gets the flavour profiles, and we take and adopt it into recipes," says Stortini, who's a big fan of the horseradish brand's more unusual flavours, like the mustard horseradish. "It's a really great product," he says, adding that he appreciates the bottle's upside-down label design that means you store the jar on its head in order to make sure your horseradish remains as moist as possible. "It's really smart."

They've used the horseradish in a remoulade for lamb, mixed with fresh dill and mint from the restaurant's garden, and it's also made an appearance in the wasabi-horseradish mayo used in a deep-fried sushi roll a few years back. It's a requirement for serving with their perennial-favourite oysters, where the bottled horseradish is presented alongside freshly grated, which tends to be much gentler in profile.

When it comes to hyper-local produce, Dennis' is in good company at David's. "We're very locally-based, and we've helped to grow different industries in the area," says Stortini. For example: Unable to find local lamb, the restaurant worked with an apple grower nearby who agreed to allow a herd of lambs to graze in her

orchards on the fallen fruit. "That's now grown into a huge industry," he says, which means they can now just buy the lamb racks from her, not the whole animal as they pledged to do in the beginning. "All of our produce is grown locally," he says, listing everything from broccoli to zucchini to watermelons. "Norfolk County is such a huge growing area in Ontario. We're the largest apple producing region in Canada. One of the biggest Yukon gold potato farmers in the country is a member of my golf club." There's also fresh fish, specifically Lake Erie pickerel, which they serve pan fried or breaded in cornmeal, delivered to them by local fisherman Captain George. "We're constantly making and evolving dishes with components from our region," says Stortini.

Right now, Stortini is in the midst of planning David's 2022 menu, which will be launched on the last Friday in January at their annual bash, where you can enjoy a nine-course tasting menu while getting to meet some of the local producers whose ingredients inspired the new dishes. Will Dennis' horseradish be a feature in a new menu item? "Watch this space," says Stortini.

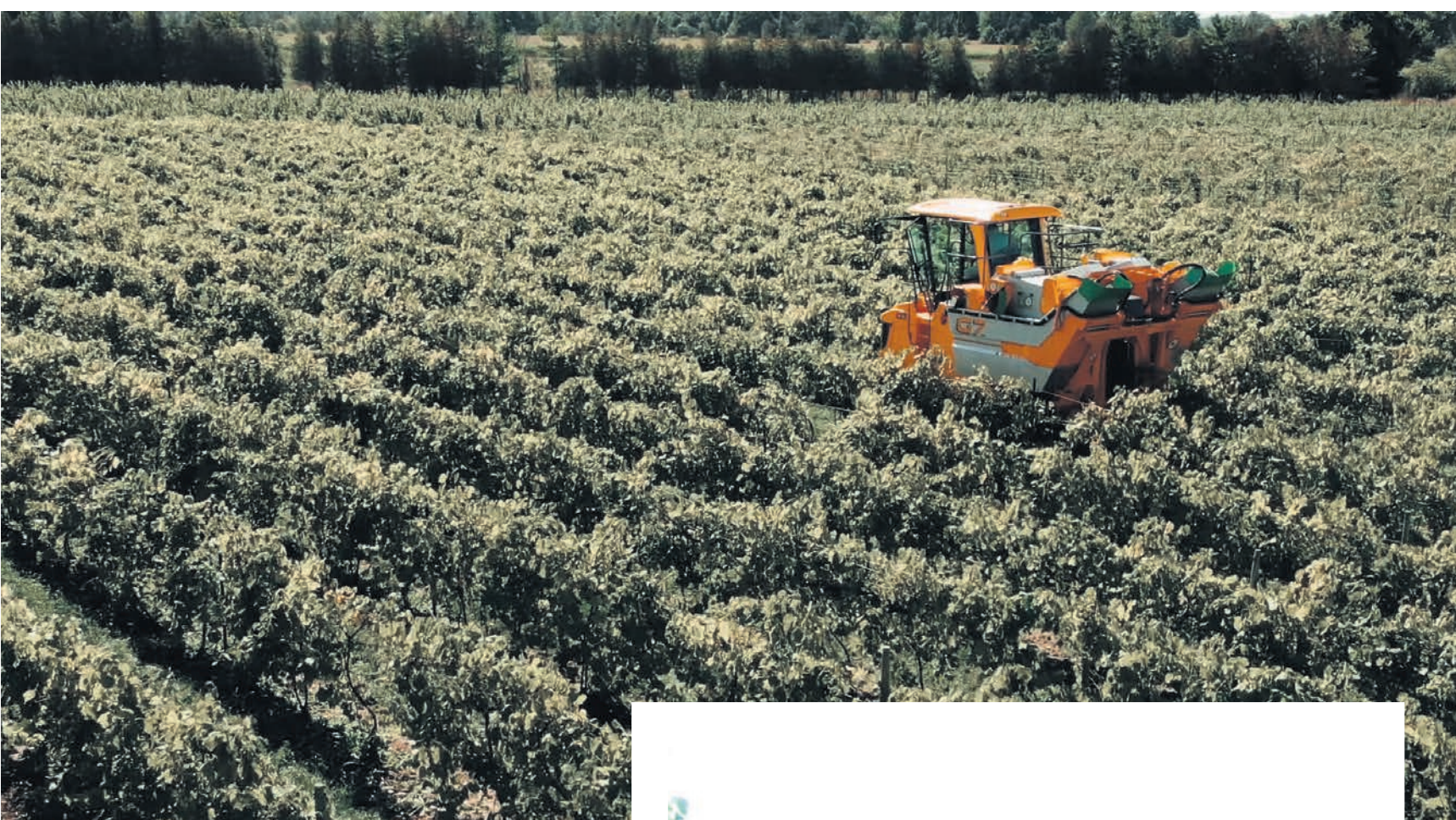


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Brave new terroir

Ontario vintners are pushing beyond the borders of the province's traditional wine regions

At its most basic, terroir is the belief that environmental factors, including soil, climate, and altitude, impart unique characteristics into a grape that could not be imparted by any other region of the world. But in Ontario, grape-growing pioneers are testing and taming new terroirs and challenging our ideas about where 'good' wine comes from.

At the family-operated Dark Horse Estate Winery near Grand Bend's Lake Huron shores, vice-president of operations Ashley Horlor says that the flavours that come out of the terroir they grow in are completely different than ones found in the same grape varieties that are grown elsewhere. "We're getting more fruit expression in our grapes. If you go to the Niagara region, there tends to be a more leathery taste. We get more black fruit with ours," she says of the winery's Cabernet Franc and Marquette grapes.

Lorraine Mastersmith, co-owner of Ottawa Valley's Kin Wineries says that their terroir also produces a fruit-forward wine with unique properties. Thanks to mineral-rich soil, Mastersmith says, "the profile is completely different. It's much more acidic – still sweet, but it has a higher acidity level. Because of that high acidity, it allows us to be able to [make wine] without much interference – not having to add different things to keep the fermentation going. What that ends up doing is making our wines very ageable."

But with unique terroir comes unique wine-growing challenges and innovative solutions. Some of the wineries in colder climates, like Kin, have sought advice from Prince Edward County growers (who've been at it for a few decades) when it comes to tying down and burying their vines for winter, but technology has offered solutions.

For example, at Orangeville's Adamo Estate Winery, winemaker Shauna White uses geothermal textiles to protect the property's vines. "We did some studies and noticed that it was anywhere from five to eight degrees warmer under the blankets. So now our vineyard is 100 percent blanket-ed. We no longer bury with soil, and we found this extremely effective. It helps lower disease plus it gives us an earlier start in the spring," she says. "And it allows us to keep our soil structure and prevent it from degrading over time."

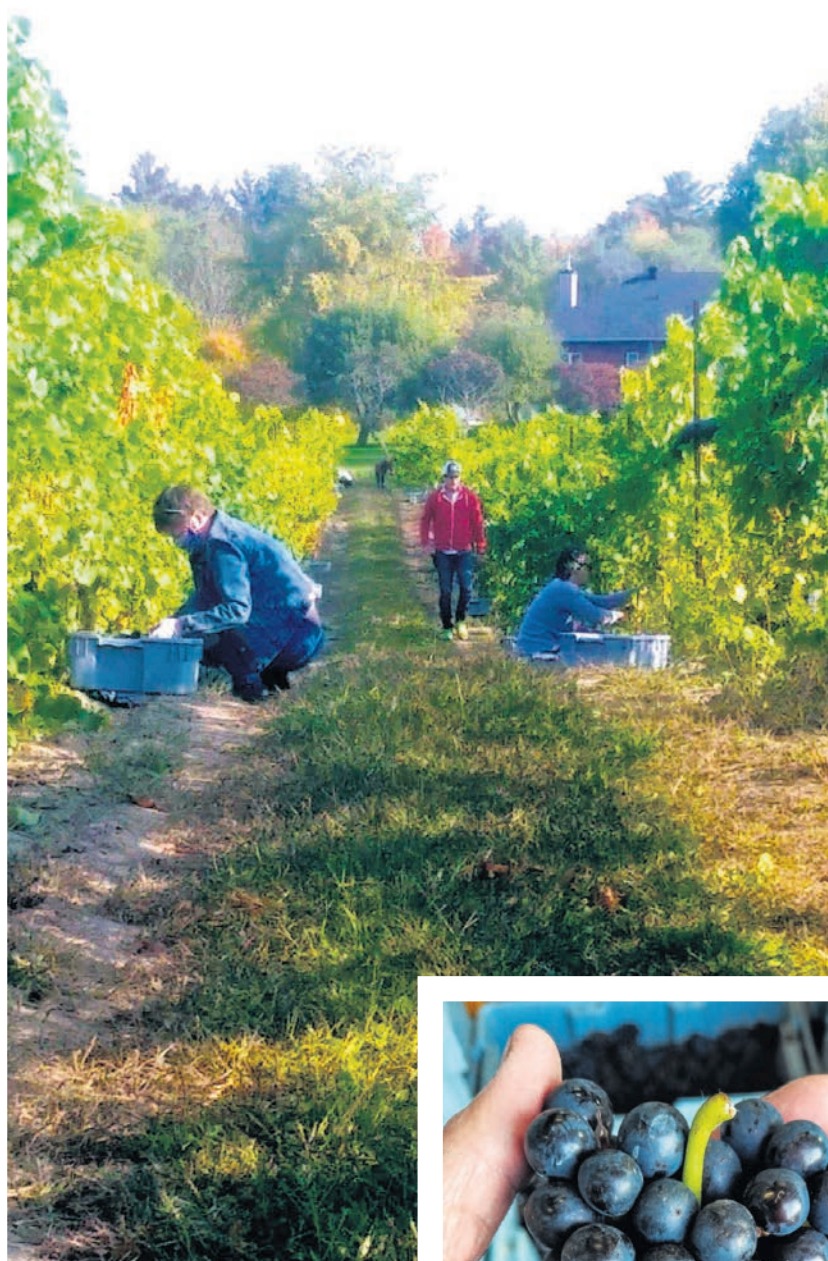
At Roost Winery in Collingwood's Blue Mountains, owner Michael Maish and winemaker Jessica Maish use the area's climate to their advantage, strategically choosing grapes that can handle the cold. "We don't want to try and grow European grapes here. The idea was that we would choose things that were disease-resistant so that we could try to farm and make wine in a lower intervention kind of way, rather than having to deal with a lot of the pressures that the climate would bring to

a European variety," they say.

A successful growing season, however, is just the first step for wineries aiming to attract customers that may not think of a particular region as one that produces wine. For these wineries it comes down to two key elements: creativity and credibility. At Kin, Mastersmith relies in part on the reputation of her winemaker, Brian Hamilton, a 25-year veteran well-known in the Niagara and Prince Edward County communities. She also knows the power of a good pairing. Kin's Food Truck Fridays and Sunday Suppers drew hungry crowds (and their Instagram accounts) to the winery's beautiful sunset views. "That brought a lot of social media attention," she says, adding that getting products into LCBO stores helps, too.

At Roost, Jessica Maish has injected the element of surprise in the way she introduces wines to new clientele by arranging blind tastings. It allows people "to just experience the wine without any preconceived notions of what it should taste like," she says. Partner Michael Maish's ideas about emerging regions are more elemental. He believes the winery's success comes from a commitment to excellence. "Jessica's approach is 'I'm going to make the best quality wine I can make from these grapes.' She's not going to compromise on the equipment and the care in which she takes to make the wines," he says.

For Dark Horse, the strategy for getting their wines into more people's glasses was centered in accessibility and approachability, leveraging their Grand Bend location to reach a broad spectrum of tourists and visitors. "We have a few different tiers and each tier allows us to do a different expression," explains Horlor, referencing the winery's Unapologetically, One Horse Town, and Valegro wine collections. "For example, our Unapologetically wines are young, fruitful wines. It's geared towards the millennial – it's almost like that entry level to get people enticed," she says. "For us, we wanted to make sure we had wines for everyone."



Clockwise from top: New wineries are putting down roots outside of Ontario's traditional wine-growing regions; All grapes are not created equal! Environmental factors have a huge impact on a wine's taste and quality; These pioneering wine makers show that it's possible to make 'good' wine throughout the province.

Five Ontario wineries that are thinking beyond the barrel

Tawse Winery

For Niagara escarpment winery Tawse, spirit-distilling was a natural progression from wine-making. From the base of their rieslings came Tawse Vermouth, a botanical-infused aperitive that's right at home in a gin martini. (Yes, Tawse makes a gin, too.) Their "La Pressatura" riesling is an Ontario take on Italian grappa, and they also make a variety of cocktail bitters in flavours like Wild Cherry and Lavender.

Lighthall Vineyards

Grapes and sheep might not sound like an intuitive pairing but the wine and cheese they produce most definitely are. At Prince Edward County's Lighthall Vineyards, locally sourced sheep's milk is turned into mouth-watering and wine-complementing cheeses like manchego, brie, and feta to match with the wine producer's Chardonnays and Pinots.

Small Talk Vineyards

Take one look at the tall cans of cider produced at Niagara-on-the-Lake winery Small Talk Vineyards and you'll understand why it brands itself as the happiest place in wine country. Their Shiny Apple Cider comes in flavours that will speak to customers with a sweet tooth (see: Salted Caramel and Apple Pie) as well as those looking for something with a bit of a bite (like their Pink Lemonade and Pomegranate varieties).

Rosewood Estates Winery

Ancient Norse lore said that mead, a drink made from fermented honey, could equip drinkers with the gift of poetry or wisdom. Niagara's Rosewood Estates Winery makes no such promises, but they do offer unique mead flavour experiences like the one found in their Pomme D'Or, which is produced using "burnt honey co-fermented wild with raw heritage cider apple juice inside French oak" or their Mead Royale, which has notes of jasmine, ginger, and orange peel.

Schatz Winery & Hessenland Inn

In addition to their Petite Pearl and Cabernet Franc, this Zurich, Ont. winery, located near Lake Huron's Grand Bend beach destination, offers precisely what a day of sun and sand requires: ice cold beers. The winery's partnership with Bad Apple Brewing Company produces their Hessenland Helles, a malty Munich-style lager that's blonde and crisp and served as the property's house beer. The helles is used on site at the winery's restaurant to make a raved-about traditional German schnitzel sandwich, too.

Ultimate Holiday Feast ROAD TRIP

Celebrate the season with delicious food and drink!

Our quaint historical towns in **York Durham Headwaters** are brimming with local produce, baked goods, meat, craft beer, wine, cider and spirits. Check off every ingredient needed to create a true holiday feast while discovering unique and memorable destinations along the way!



Shot on location at *Alabaster Acres*, Caledon, Ontario.
Photo: Barry Best Photography.

STAY SAFE.

Plan ahead and visit safely. Please check with local businesses for hours of operation, reservation & vaccination policies, and any additional guidelines prior to visiting.

A Foodie Fanatic Adventure!

The YDH Virtual Market is your checkout counter for everything local.

Tourism businesses in **York Durham Headwaters** are working hard to get the very best products, food and experiences to your door. Our virtual market shines a light on local agri-tourism providers who are committed to providing you with the very best and tastiest in sustainable foods, while artisans and specialty shops are showcasing their unique products. Read all about their passions, try out some fun recipes and start shopping!



How to travel responsibly in 2022 and beyond

These simple actions can help you reduce the footprint of your next trip and leave a positive impact on local communities

According to a recent Statistics Canada report, while Canadians have travelled less this year than they did in 2019, those who are taking vacations are almost all staying within Canada's borders, and for good reason: Our country, and especially our province, has plenty of day trips or weekend stays to ignite your taste for exploration and local adventures.

But travel looks different than it did pre-COVID, and as we head into 2022, it's important to keep that in mind. Many of us are working on the recognition of our privilege and learning how to better use it to fight racism, injustice, climate change and promote sustainability. The pandemic has elevated difficult but meaningful conversations and expanded the scope of who we want to support and stand with, something that translates to every area of our lives including our travel habits.

That's something Ajoa Mintah, founder and CEO of Four All Ice Cream in the Kitchener-Waterloo region, thinks about a lot. She knows that supporting local matters because being in a community meant being part of a community. "If you're spending \$1 with us, you're also spending money with a local dairy, with a local bakery and with other small-batch producers," she says. "We go out of our way to bring us all up because there's room for all of us."

This type of camaraderie is what makes Ontario's small towns and cities so special. It's a deep-seated support system that is welcoming, and needs to be respected when visiting, especially post-pandemic.

Follow the local rules

Rules and restrictions may differ from place-to-place. Look up public health sites to inform yourself before



“If you're spending \$1 with us, you're also spending money with a local dairy, with a local bakery and with other small-batch producers.”

Ajoa Mintah
Founder of Four All Ice Cream

travelling. Keep in mind that smaller communities have smaller health care systems; don't overwhelm them. If you have reason for concern, take a COVID test ahead of your travels.

Make thoughtful choices

Train your eye to take note of programs and logos designed to help guide your decision-making in impactful and sustainable ways. Look for stamps like Ocean Wise on seafood or Sustainable Winemaking Ontario on wine bottles. Feast On® supports over two hundred businesses that pledge to source food and drink that's Ontario grown and made. Peruse their site ahead of a trip to make your dining plans.

Respectfully educate yourself on the traditions of the area

Acknowledge the land that you're

on and seek out information about the traditions and history that permeate it. Consider booking your next adventure with an Indigenous tourism company, like Voyageur Wilderness, to keep the learning going. Inspired by the Savoie family's Métis heritage, Voyageur offers canoe adventures and lodge getaways on Voyageur Island on Nym Lake, near Atikokan, Ont. In addition to outdoorsy adventures, each trip also offers visitors a chance to taste traditional foods and learn about Métis culture.

Go out of your way to support BIPOC communities

You've committed to show up for racialized and marginalized communities. Now, it's time to put your money behind it. Look for restaurants, shops, cafes and services that are BIPOC-owned in the places

you visit or along the way. Some suggestions to get you started: The Indigenous-owned Flying Chestnut Kitchen in Eugenia has lineups for pre-orders, so check the menu on Instagram before going. Bacchanalle serves up delicious Caribbean food for delivery or takeout in Ottawa. And in Pickering, Ont., Ma Yvé Grill is one of the only — if not the only — restaurants with traditional Congolese food on offer, such as fumbwa, a stew made with dried wild spinach, peanut butter and smoked fish. If that sounds familiar, it's because it was NBA player Serge Ibaka's go-to order when he played for the Toronto Raptors.

Look for under-the-radar spots

Destinations off the beaten path are going to be less busy and offer respite from the line-ups and crowds. Plus, hidden gems often make for the most memorable travel experiences, and Ontario has plenty to offer. For example, the province is home to more than 600,000 Franco-Ontarians spanning Ottawa to Thunder Bay with family legacy and delicious food to share. There's the famous St-Albert Cheese, of course, which offers tours of its St-Albert facility, where there's also a restaurant, tasting shop and cheese museum. Whiskeyjack Beer, a craft brewery located in Haileybury, Ont., is another top pick. Head brewer Luc Johnson grew up in a French-Canadian family—as you can tell by the name of the brewery's Belgian witbier, Ta-Beer-Wit, a play on a French-Canadian curse word.

Slow down and adapt to the flow

In the rolling hills of Haliburton, visitors seek a retreat. But the infrastructure wasn't built to sustain the population jump it sees in summer and on long weekends. The town is small and moves at a slower pace. It's something Ashey McAllister, the Director of Operations at Abbey Gardens, wants people to be mindful of. "We're very friendly. We want to welcome people and we want people to be willing to see what we have to offer without wanting to see pieces of the city," she says of the limited Main Street parking spots, lack of chain coffee shops and chatty cashiers. "Be willing to match the pace and accept the town for what it is. Be willing to wait."

Five perfect New Year's getaways, whatever your travel style

To start 2022 on a high note, here are some of the best places to ring for New Year's Eve

FOR THE OLD-SCHOOL CHARMERS: Langdon Hall in Cambridge

Langdon Hall is a Victorian-style estate surrounded by woodland and gardens in Cambridge, Ont. With amazing hospitality and elegant amenities, it's a great place to relax. Guests will enjoy special twists on their exquisite menu, live music, champagne and a whole lot of fun on New Year's Eve, followed by a special breakfast on New Year's Day.

FOR THE COZY CAMPERS: Deerhurst Resort in Muskoka

Deerhurst Resort offers up the ultimate Muskoka getaway on a regular day, but they're really ramping up the offerings for New Year's, while following safety protocols, of course. Expect activities like holiday-themed scavenger hunts, campfires, winter disc golf and an evening ramble along the resort's Starlight Snowshoe Trails, which are lit with sparkling lights. Many more activities from snowmobile rides to a Zig Zag Escape Cabin are available for advanced booking.

FOR THE ROMANTICS: Elora Mill in Elora

Located in the heart of Ontario's most beautiful village, Elora Mill Hotel & Spa offers a calm and relaxing getaway to help you unwind amidst the stunning views thanks to its Spirit package. This package includes a one-night getaway that includes handcrafted truffles, a 2021 hand-blown glass ornament, a five-course celebration menu and breakfast for two.

FOR THE POSH PARTIERS: Fairmont Royal York in Toronto

Just in time for New Year's, the luxe Fairmont Royal York is re-opening the Library Bar, a famous cocktail den in Toronto. Even better, they'll be hosting a New Year's Eve event which includes a special menu, a welcome cocktail and bottle of champagne. The hotel will also be hosting a New Year's Eve prix-fixe dinner menu at Reign Restaurant.

FOR THE YOUNG FAMILY: Great Wolf Lodge in Niagara Falls

Great Wolf Lodge is the perfect holiday getaway if you have young children. Guests can start their holiday with a family yoga class, followed by family storytime, kid-friendly comedy shows and some live music for everyone. Other activities include a wolf walk, where kids can learn about forest animals, a knighting ceremony and a magnificent New Year's Eve fireworks display that can be watched from your balcony. As a souvenir, each guest room will be given hats and noisemakers to celebrate with as well as a special gift bag for the whole family.

New Year's Eve at Elora Mill means rest, relaxation and tasty treats — its Spirit package includes a five-course dinner and handcrafted truffles; Great Wolf Lodge is offering family-friendly entertainment, activities and a fireworks show that can be enjoyed from your balcony.



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