

thebacklabel[®]

A monthly wine journey curated for adventurous souls

TAILGATING







TAILGATERS, UNITE

BY LOGAN LEE

BEFORE FINDING MYSELF LIVING IN Brooklyn, I was in born in Florida, grew up there and in Georgia, and “came of age” during college in Charleston, South Carolina. These three states all have a very rich history of college football (and all kinds of sports) meaning we had a very rich tailgating tradition. In the South, tailgating is basically a right of passage. Politicians mix and mingle, lawn games are played, grills are fired up, and certainly a few adult beverages are enjoyed in the red Solo cup-dotted stadium parking lots. At the College of Charleston, believe it or not, I actually had a political science lecture about the importance of tailgating.

Regardless of where you’re from, I think we can all agree that tailgating is now a national treasure. Even Homer Simpson is in on all the tailgating action, declaring “the game is nothing” and the tailgate is the only reason to go to a game. But a mystery remains: how did the tailgate get its start...

Depending on your source, it appears there are several legends and myths tied to the origin of this uniquely American tradition. The American Tailgaters Association (yes, it is a real thing) claims the first tailgating event occurred in 1861 before the Battle of Bull Run during the Civil War. I think we should stick with football for an excuse to turn parking lots into BBQ’s and lawn games!

Most of the other legends surrounding the inaugural tailgate are tied to football. Fans of the Green Bay Packers claim they coined the term “tailgating” in 1919 when fans backed up their trucks to the field, popped the tailgates for seats, and shared snacks with everyone at the game.

However, Rutgers, Yale, and Princeton fans dispute the Packers claim to tailgating fame! Each school has its own origin story to the American tailgating tradition. Fact may never be fully separated from fiction, but we do know that tailgating has never been more fun or elaborate than it is today.

In this issue of thebacklabel, we explore and implore our favorite ways to upgrade even the most deluxe tailgate party. First, we asked the editors at The Kitchn for their favorite dishes to throw together in a stadium parking lot! Second, I think all wine is great for a tailgate, but we hustled to find you guys something really special on the wine front. The Frico wines by Scarpetta are delicious for any occasion, but they couldn’t be more fitting for a pre-football BBQ.

So practice all those tailgating games like cornhole and ladder golf because we’ve got the perfect recipes and vino to make your next football party a winner.

Sip up,

—LL

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THIS MONTH'S RECIPES BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



The Kitchn is an online media destination that celebrates life in the kitchen through home cooking and kitchen intelligence. It is a site for people who like to get their hands dirty while they cook. A place to dive in deep, and embrace the joy of one of our basic needs: Food, cooked at home, nourishing ourselves and our households.

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LAMBRUSCO: DON'T CALL IT A COMEBACK

BY TREVOR BARATKO

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST TIME?

The first time I tasted a serious, well-tended Lambrusco — about eight years back — a whole new world of wine opened up. A world outside simply red versus white, sparkling versus still. The once-niche market of Lambrusco is expanding.

Fortunately, curious wine drinkers are starting to stumble upon it.

“Wait, it looks like a red wine. Why is it fizzy? Oh wow, that’s different – a good different.”

A fizzy, occasionally frothy red wine named after the grape from which it’s crafted,

Lambrusco is a crowd-pleaser from the northern Italian region of Emilia-Romagna. It’s typically made using the Charmat process, with a second fermentation in a pressurized tank. The wine’s hue can range from a rich, midnight purple to a lighter, more pinot-esque ruby.

“Lambrusco is a wine that is destined to make a comeback in the U.S.,” says Devon Price, co-owner and co-founder of Sour Grapes Distributors out of Asheville, North Carolina. “It has that amazing ability to pair with fuller, fattier, grilled foods, all while remaining delicate, really entertaining and possessing relatively low alcohol.”

Let’s be clear. We’re not talking about the grocery store Riunite you’ll see for \$6 or \$7 a

liter. But we’re also not talking about super high-end offerings. Sensational Lambruscos can be found within the \$14 to \$25 range.

After three decades, Lambrusco is still battling off a reputation as your cheap, zany aunt’s favorite quaffer. In the 1970s and ’80s, sweet Lambrusco was the highest-selling import wine in the U.S., with 13 million cases exported in 1984, according to Italian Wine for Dummies. But no more. The Lambrusco we’re talking about is small-batch stuff, produced out of a love for the land. These are wines you’ll need to seek out, but they’re well worth the adventure.

Since Lambrusco is typically chilled and possesses those subtle bubbles, you don’t expect it to flaunt the captivating

characteristics of northern Italy’s finest. But the best Lambruscos do. They’re earthy, sensual and smoky, with medium acidity and touches of tobacco and sour cherry.

That said, Lambrusco’s ability to entertain remains one of its most obvious draws. It makes people say, “Wait, it looks like a red wine. Why is it fizzy? Oh wow, that’s different – a good different.”

“It’s just a dumb value for those who like good food, equally good friends and unpretentious wine,” Price says.

And for those who don’t speak North Carolina, the “dumb” here is a good thing.



FRICO LAMBRUSCO NV

EMILIA, ITALY

A blend of Grasparossa, Salamino, and Maestri

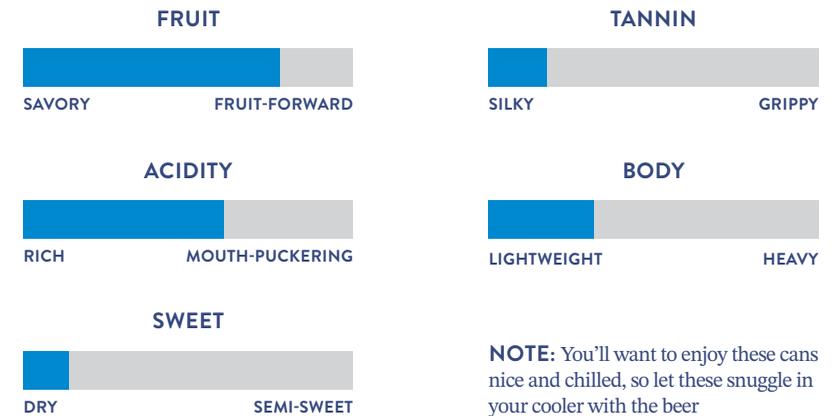


Freshly smashed strawberries, red currants, and pomegranate



A butterfly kiss of sweetness with a tutti frutti-tart finish

MOOD: Let's get this party aka tailgate started! Lambrusco is the perfect before dinner drink (or, as the Italians' say, "aperitivo") making this the best wine to kick off the tailgate.



Lambrusco is our Eleanor and by that we mean it is a wine we've hunted to find and tell you all about for years, but it's been incredibly elusive just like Memphis Raines' attempt to steal the 1967 Ford Mustang AKA Eleanor, in *Gone in 60 Seconds*. But this incredible find has come in an unexpected format i.e. the can. This can is 250ml, so we decided to pack 3 cans in each box to equal one bottle.

Now, as cool as this canned vessel is, the real story is about the two guys that bring this wine to life. On page 20, you'll learn even more about Master Sommelier Bobby Stuckey and Chef Lachlan Mackinnon-Patterson, but, to say the least, these dudes are elevating America's palate and pushing everyday wine to be special and Italian.

The wine is 'frizzante' which means frothy and bubbly. The juice is vibrant and fresh with tiny bubbles delivering ripe strawberries and pomegranate right to the back of your tongue making you salivate for the next sip.



Lambrusco is the wine to pick when you're out to dinner with friends, cause it will make you look like a real wine boss. As long as it isn't of the sugar-y style, Lambrusco is sure to impress! It is a killer match with any pizza — a hipster style deep in Brooklyn or a DiGiorno!



SANDWICH FOR A CROWD

SERVES 8 TO 10

INGREDIENTS

1 large round bread loaf or boule,
(about 9 inches in diameter, 1 1/4
pounds)

1/4 cup olive oil, divided

12 ounces thinly sliced deli ham,
such as black forest

8 ounces thinly sliced Genoa
salami

8 ounces thinly sliced provolone
cheese

1 large tomato, thinly sliced

2 cups shredded iceberg lettuce
(about 2 ounces)

3 tablespoons red wine vinegar

Salt

Freshly ground black pepper

EQUIPMENT

Long serrated knife

Pastry brush

Plastic wrap

Prepare the bread: Slice the bread in half horizontally. Remove some of the soft interior from both halves, but remove more from the bottom half than the top. You want to create a recess for the sandwich fillings to sit inside the bottom half.

Brush with condiments: Brush the interior of both halves with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. (You can also use mayonnaise or mustard instead.)

Layer the ingredients: Layer the meat and cheese inside the bottom half of the bread. Begin with the ham, followed by the salami, and then the cheese.

Add the veggies: Layer the tomatoes on top of the cheese, followed by the iceberg lettuce.

Season the sandwich: Drizzle the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil and the vinegar over the lettuce. Season with salt and pepper.

Wrap and rest: Place the top half of the bread on the lettuce and press down lightly. Tightly wrap the sandwich in 2 layers of plastic wrap, then refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 1 day.

Slice and serve: Unwrap the sandwich and use a long, serrated knife to cut the sandwich into wedges.

RECIPE NOTES

Easy serving: Cut the sandwich at home, then rewrap for easy serving at the park or picnic.

Make ahead: This sandwich can be made 1 day in advance and stored in the refrigerator.

Storage: Tightly wrapped and stored in the refrigerator, leftovers will last up to 3 days.



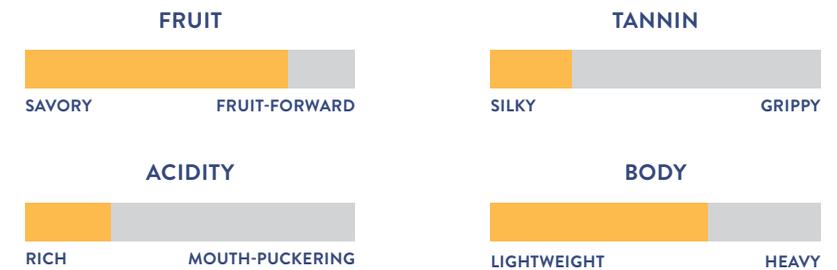
2016 UPWELL PINOT NOIR NORTH COAST, CALIFORNIA

100% Pinot Noir

 Cranberry and raspberry with a subtle whiff of hipster clove cigarillos

 Silky and elegantly smooth like the coolest 1950s jazz musician

MOOD: Your team loses in OT and you're stuck listening to sad tunes from Ryan Adams, but one wine can save you from your sorrows.



It shouldn't be a magic trick to find and enjoy great California wine for under 20 bucks. But over the last 5 years, getting your hands on great California juice that doesn't break the bank has become a serious challenge. Luckily, our buddy and fellow Wine Enthusiast 40 Under 40 honoree, Eric Clemons, has found a Pinot that completely over-delivers for the price point, and we're pumped to share it with you.

The Upwell Pinot Noir is exactly what you should think of and taste when you get your hands on a bottle of California Pinot Noir. It's got a 10 on the 1 to 10 "pinot-ness" scale! The juice is medium bodied with all the classic notes of cranberry, raspberry, and dark fruit with just the right hint of spice. It's perfect year round, but the notes of spice and cloves make it even more perfect for a fall tailgate.

 Red wine can be tricky to pair with Asian fare, but this Pinot Noir is great for almost all Asian-inspired dishes.



BACON-WRAPPED POTATO BITES WITH SPICY SOUR CREAM DIPPING SAUCE

MAKES ABOUT 3 DOZEN BITES

1 pound small or medium red potatoes

2 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided

1 1/2 teaspoons minced fresh rosemary

1 tablespoon olive oil

Freshly ground pepper

1 pound thick-cut bacon

8 ounces sour cream

1 to 3 teaspoons hot sauce

Salt and pepper

Arrange a rack in the middle of the oven and heat to 400°F.

Wash and dry the potatoes. Chop them into 1-inch pieces, keeping the chunks roughly the same size even if they aren't the exact same shape. Put the potatoes in a medium pot, cover with cold water, and bring to a boil. Season the water with 2 teaspoons of salt. Once the water begins to boil, cook the potatoes until just fork tender, 3 to 4 minutes. You want the potatoes to be almost, but not fully, cooked through so they won't fall apart during the next steps.

Drain the potatoes and put them in a large bowl. Add the rosemary, olive oil, remaining salt, and a few grinds of pepper, and toss until the potatoes are evenly coated.

Cut the strips of bacon into thirds. Wrap each potato bite in a piece of bacon, securing it with a toothpick. Put the potatoes on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or aluminum foil spaced an inch or two apart. You may need to cook the potatoes in two batches.

Cook the potatoes for 15 minutes, then flip each piece. Cook for another 15 to 20 minutes, until the bacon is cooked through and as crisp as you like it.

Mix the sour cream and hot sauce in a small bowl. Season with salt and pepper. Pile the potato bites on a plate and serve alongside the dip.



2016 REALCE TEMPRANILLO

VINO DE LA TIERRA DE CASTILLA, SPAIN

100% Tempranillo, certified organic

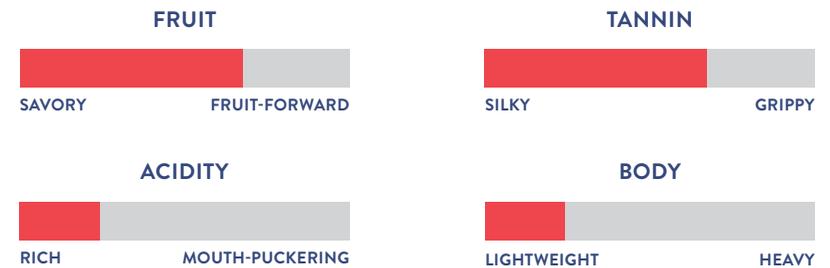


Bursting with vibrant, rich, and dark fruit like black currants, blackberries, pomegranates, and prunes



Dried plums smashed with an old cigar that's been buried in the back pocket of a farmer's Levi's

MOOD: You're making your shopping list and creating a Rolling Stones-inspired playlist for the perfect tailgate, meanwhile screaming at Alexa for the weather forecast.



Vino de la Tierra de Castilla is an emerging Spanish wine region and is cranking out some super solid juice! About 50 miles southeast of Madrid, younger winemakers are creating a home base here for many reasons, and one big one is that the rules are a lot less stringent than most of the legacy Spanish regions. This means winemakers have much more freedom for innovation. This bottle is an awesome example of these new wave Spanish winemakers innovating with some classic grapes.

Tempranillo is an iconic Spanish varietal, but the winemaker behind Realce is working with 100% certified organic grapes. The grapes are all hand harvested, the juice is vinified aka turned into wine in steel tanks, and, finally, it is aged in concrete barrels. Yeah, concrete like cement. This style of winemaking means you get uber ripe flavors bursting from each glass.



When you pull out this wine, you can impress your friends with the fun fact that this juice is aged in concrete tanks and not traditional oak barrels. Btw, it pairs well with nearly everything that comes off the grill!



SLOW COOKER HAWAIIAN BRISKET SANDWICHES

MAKES 18 TO 20 SLIDER-SIZED SANDWICHES

FOR THE BRISKET:

3 1/2 pounds beef brisket

Kosher salt

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced

1 (20-ounce) can pineapple slices or rings

1/4 cup soy sauce

1/4 cup packed dark brown sugar

2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

2 tablespoons cornstarch

1 tablespoon finely chopped peeled fresh ginger

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE SANDWICHES:

2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

1 tablespoon Asian sesame oil

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

12 to 14 ounces cabbage slaw mix

18 to 20 Hawaiian sweet dinner rolls

Make the brisket: Pat the brisket dry with paper towels and season generously all over with salt. Cut the brisket in half if needed to fit in a 5-quart or larger slow cooker or to fit in a large frying pan for searing. Heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add the brisket fat-side down (work in 2 batches if needed) and sear until golden-brown, about 4 minutes. Flip and sear the second side, about 4 minutes more. Transfer to the slow cooker and arrange into a single layer as best as you can; the brisket can fit snugly.

Return the pan to medium heat, add the onion, and cook, stirring occasionally and scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan, until just starting to soften, about 5 minutes. Transfer to the slow cooker. Meanwhile, drain the pineapple slices from the juice but reserve the juice. Cut the pineapple slices in half, transfer to a covered container, and refrigerate. Set the reserved juice aside.

Place the pan back on the stove over an unheated burner. Add the soy sauce, 1/3 cup of the reserved pineapple juice (refrigerate the remaining juice for the slaw dressing), brown sugar, vinegar, cornstarch, ginger, garlic, and pepper. Whisk until the cornstarch is fully dissolved, then pour over the brisket and onions.

Cover and cook on the LOW setting until the brisket is fork-tender, 6 to 8 hours. When the brisket is ready, turn the slow cooker off, uncover, and let sit 30 minutes for the meat to rest. At this point, you can proceed with making the sandwiches or, for best results, let cool completely, cover, and refrigerate in the slow cooker overnight.

If making the sandwiches immediately: Transfer the brisket to a cutting board. Spoon off as much fat from the surface of the sauce as you can. Trim any fat from the top of the brisket if desired. Slice the brisket across the grain and return the slices to the sauce.

If refrigerated overnight: Spoon off the white hardened layer of fat from the surface. Transfer the brisket to a cutting board and trim any fat from the top of the brisket if desired. Slice the brisket across the grain and return the slices to the sauce. Spoon some of the sauce over the slices to completely coat. Reheat until warmed through and the sauce is bubbling around the edges, 1 hour uncovered in a 300°F oven, or 1 1/2 hours covered on the LOW setting in the slow cooker.

Assemble the sandwiches: Whisk the vinegar, 2 tablespoons of the reserved pineapple juice, sesame oil, and salt in a large bowl. Add the slaw and toss to combine. Serve the brisket slices on split Hawaiian rolls (about 2 ounces of brisket per sandwich), each topped with a piece of reserved pineapple and some slaw.



@bobbystuckeys

Co-Founder of Frasca Food and Wine, Pizzeria Locale, Scarpetta Wine Company. Husband to Danette Stuckey. And once-a-year marathon runner.



@lachlanmp

James Beard Award Winner, Co-Founder of Frasca Food and Wine, Pizzeria Locale, Scarpetta Wine Company

BOBBY STUCKEY IN HIS OWN WORDS

As many of you already know, the WA crew is a huge fan of wine in cans. We've come across two guys that might be doing it best. Bobby Stuckey and Lachlan Mackinnon-Patterson are one helluva culinary duo. Their partnership started to simmer in the early 2000s at the famed French Laundry, and the deal was sealed when they opened Frasca Food and Wine in Boulder, CO 15 years ago.

We worked close with Bobby, Lachlan, and the Scarpetta Wine Co. team to bring you their brand new Frico wines! In mid September we sat down with Bobby aka Master Sommelier, Restaurateur, six-nights-a-week wine director, and lover of punk rock for a fun conversation. Enjoy!

FROM THE BEGINNING...

It was funny, I went to work in the restaurant business as a busboy then became a waiter, and that's kinda the start of my journey. The energy of the restaurant really resonated with me. Things that drive other people just bonkers seem almost in slo-mo to me. Things that drive anxiety in other people are just calming to me. All the tickets on a busy Friday night, expediting plates, I think that is totally normal.

I was a waiter in the early 90s. The wine buyer said "you really like wine" and "you should look into the Court of Master Sommeliers intro course." And at the time, you had to fly to San Francisco to take the course... When I took that initial somm class, I was like 'wow, you can do this as a profession?!?' I love this! I want to do this! And the rest is history. I'm in the restaurant six nights a week and that's the joy of what I do workwise.

HOW HAS THE RESTAURANT WORLD CHANGED?

In the '80s there wasn't sommelier positions. There hadn't been this massive explosion of sommeliers or restaurants in general. The world moved a lot slower. Meaning advancement. You had to do so many things for so many years before you could ever be the Maitre D or a sommelier. That was just part of the world. You think about thousands of restaurants that have opened in the past 15 to 20 years... that creates such an opportunity for young people to get into wine much earlier or quicker than it used to be.

GETTING OFF THE BEATEN PATH IS AN ADVANTAGE.

We left the French Laundry (where Bobby met his business partner, Lachlan!) 15 years ago to open Frasca, which is a restaurant in Boulder, CO. And this is where it gets really weird. We opened a restaurant 15 years ago based on Friuli-Venezia Giulia, so northeastern Italy. If you were in the Bay Area the pecking order to get great farm product — if you were a new restaurant — it was really, really hard. In Boulder, restaurants were not even using the farms. Restaurants didn't do that back then. So combined with the great lifestyle of Colorado, we knew this

was the place to open.

We had a bit of an advantage. If you think about 14 or 15 years ago when we started going to Friuli we would close the restaurant and take all the staff there. You have this region like Friuli that doesn't get any attention. Then you have this restaurant that is getting national and international acclaim in Boulder, Co based on their region. They loved it! There were a lot of people that were really helpful to us. And that wouldn't have happened if we started in Tuscany, or the Rhone, or Burgundy.

How I studied about wine some 20 years ago when I was going through the Master Sommelier program is I studied about service. I loved service. When I studied about wine, then I studied about cuisine and the culture... and I fell in love with the region, Friuli.

THE GOAL IS TO DRINK GREAT WINE, EVERY DAY.

Historically, this is where we've had it wrong in the U.S., and hopefully we're helping change this. We'd like to look at scores and have a special occasion wine on Saturday night or on an anniversary. That's how Americans drank wine. Versus it's Tuesday night and I want to drink something delicious.

Our whole Idea when we look at projects for Scarpetta is to overachieve and overdeliver for the price set. Because that's our goal. Because that's how we like to drink too! We want people drinking wine seven nights a week not just on their special occasions. There is so much reasonable and affordable and delicious wine out there — that should be everyone's mission.



2017 BALLADE SAUVIGNON COLOMBARD CÔTES DE GASCOGNE, FRANCE

70% Sauvignon Blanc, 30% Colombard



Herbaceous AF



Creamy lemon curd, citrus, and grapefruit flavors that give the wine a tight steely texture

MOOD: This is the wine for when the tailgate starts to get a little rowdy and someone plays Sandstorm by Darude. It's lemon lime-y electricity in a bottle.



This Sauvignon Blanc hails from the Southwest part of France. SB is one of the OG's of grapes. Quiz time! Other Noble Grapes include Merlot, Cabernet, Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, and Riesling. Surprise... they're all French grapes! This is partly thanks to a great marketing campaign enacted unwittingly by King Louis XIV. The monarch developed such a reputation for extravagance and luxury that the rest of the world started to crave all things French, including the wine.

It's also partly just due to the rich wine history in France — they've spent centuries perfecting their craft, priming it for global domination. The vines started to wind their way far outside of France, making them ubiquitous, well-known, and beloved. They were labeled cépage noble, or, roughly, noble grapes.

This bottle is fresh, zippy, and has quite a bit of zest! A fresh and zesty white wine made from young vines growing on sandy and limestone soils. The nose is fresh with fragrances of lemon curd, white flowers, and red grapefruits, while the palate is shimmery creamy citrus.



Sauvignon Blanc tastes very different depending on where the wine is made. New Zealand versions of SB are typically grassy with big bell pepper notes, whereas French versions are more refreshing and citrus driven. It is probably the best wine to pair with a salad of all kinds.



CREAMY VEGAN QUESO DIP

MAKES ABOUT 4 CUPS; SERVES ABOUT 16

2 tablespoons olive oil

1/2 large yellow onion, finely diced

3 cloves garlic, minced

2 large carrots, very finely
chopped

1 cup thinly sliced butternut
squash

2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1/2 teaspoon chili powder

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black
pepper

1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth

1 (4-ounce) can green chiles,
drained

1 1/2 cups unsweetened plain
almond milk

1 raw cashews, soaked for 30
minutes or up to overnight and
then drained

1/4 cup nutritional yeast

1/2 cup chunky tomato salsa or
pico de gallo

1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar

Optional toppings:

Chunky salsa or Rotel

Pickled jalapeños

Chopped cherry tomatoes

Cilantro

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat until shimmering. Add the onions and garlic and sauté until the onions are soft and the garlic is fragrant.

Add the carrots, butternut squash, 1 teaspoon of the salt, cumin, chili powder, and black pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, for a couple of minutes. Add the vegetable broth and simmer, stirring frequently, until the vegetables are soft and tender. You want them to be soft enough to blend up in a blender without any problems.

Transfer the mixture to a high-powered blender. Add the green chiles, almond milk, drained cashews, nutritional yeast, salsa, vinegar, and remaining 1 teaspoon salt. Blend, scraping down the sides as needed, until the mixture has reached a thick and creamy consistency.

Taste and adjust the seasoning as needed. If it's cooled off, transfer to a saucepan and gently warm over low heat to desired temperature. Serve it in a bowl alongside tortilla chips and garnish it with your favorite toppings.



FRICO FRIZZANTE NV VENETO, ITALY

50% Trebbiano, 25% Glera, 25% Chardonnay



Fine bubbles popping with whiffs of Granny Smith apples and Asian pears



Peonies, lilies, and green apples shimmer and dance across your tongue

MOOD: The game clock is ticking down to zero and your team strolls into the end zone for the winning score! You are victorious and Queen's "We Are the Champions" is all you can hear in the stadium!



Italy is the most underrated and maybe most misunderstood sparkling winemaking country on the planet. Italian sparkling wine is caught in the crosshairs of being overshadowed by the brand power of Champagne and the false, but popular belief, that Prosecco is cheap and only meant to mix with OJ for a Sunday Mimosa hangover cure. Most of the standout sparkling Italian wine is just overlooked.

But we have good news! More than 25 years ago, a young kid got a busboy gig and fell in love with hospitality. Now a master somm, restaurateur, and all-around cool guy, Bobby Stuckey shows off some seriously delicious and equally accessible sparkling vino with the Frico Frizzante. (Read more about this wine [hero on page 20.](#)) The Frico Frizzante is uber dry and you'll have no fear of a wicked sugary hangover with this sparkling wine. The bubbles are fine, elegant, crisp, and deliver flavors of elegant white flowers and green apple perfect for celebrating your team's big win or getting home from the office before 6 PM.



Elevate your sushi game by pairing it up with a dry sparkling wine. You can do grab-n-go and hit the tailgate with this canned sparkling juice matched with a California roll from Dean & DeLuca!



COWBOY CAVIAR

MAKES ABOUT 5 1/2 CUPS; SERVES 8 TO 12 AS AN APPETIZER

FOR THE VINAIGRETTE:

2 tablespoons olive oil

Finely grated zest of 1 medium
lime

Juice of 1 medium lime

1 teaspoon kosher salt

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1/4 teaspoon chili powder

1/4 teaspoon dried oregano

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black
pepper

FOR THE COWBOY CAVIAR:

1 (15-ounce) can black-eyed peas,
drained and rinsed

1 (15-ounce) can black beans,
drained and rinsed

3 cloves garlic, minced

2 medium Roma or plum
tomatoes, seeded and diced

1 medium orange bell pepper,
seeded and diced small

1/2 medium jalapeño pepper,
seeded and minced

1/4 medium red onion, small dice

1 cup fresh or thawed frozen corn
kernels

Chopped fresh cilantro

Make the vinaigrette: Place all the ingredients in a large bowl and whisk until well-combined.

Make the cowboy caviar: Add the black-eyed peas, black beans, garlic, tomatoes, bell pepper, jalapeño, red onion, and corn to the bowl of dressing and toss until well-coated. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour, then toss again and garnish with cilantro. Serve with tortilla chips, on a salad, or in a tortilla.



2016 MITOLO JESTER VERMENTINO

MCLAREN VALE, AUSTRALIA

100% Vermentino



Scooped melon balls rolled in fresh herbs and punchy citrus leaves



A family of grapefruits and green apples hosting an electric, zippy, and tart dance party

MOOD: The grill is fired up, meat is a sizzlin', bean bags are flying, and "Sweet Home Alabama" by Lynyrd Skynyrd permeates the stadium parking lot. This moment is the peak of the tailgate.



Indigenous grapes grown in vineyards in different parts of the world, not of their origin, is always interesting. Sometimes interesting in a bad way, but most the time a winemaker sees the opportunity to make a great, but maybe slightly different wine. Vermentino is mostly thought of as an Italian and Mediterranean grape, but in true Aussie and New World style, the Mitolo Winery is shaking things up and making a serious name for themselves.

Mitolo is a family owned business, started and led by Frank Mitolo with a vision of harnessing his Italian heritage to create a range of wines of individuality, integrity, and quality. The maritime climate of McLaren Vale perfectly reflects that of the Mediterranean and Mitolo family's roots. Warm days and cool, breezy nights create the perfect climate for a balanced wine: melon-y goodness, grapefruit, and fresh cut herbs leave a long fresh, tart, and subtle chalky finish. We're lucky these Italians headed for the Land Down Under and are innovating the Aussie wine scene.



If there ever was a seafood wine, then this Vermentino is it. Think anything fresh out of the ocean like shrimp, calamari, and octopus covered in EVOO and lemon wedges.



HAM AND CHEDDAR LUNCH BOX MUFFINS

MAKES 12 MUFFINS

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

1/2 cup stone-ground yellow cornmeal

2 teaspoons baking powder

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 1/4 cups buttermilk

2 large eggs

7 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled, divided

1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese

8 ounces thick-cut deli ham (1/2-inch thick), diced

3 tablespoons finely chopped chives, divided

Freshly ground black pepper

Arrange a rack in the middle of the oven and heat to 375°F. Line a standard 12-well muffin pan with paper liners or coat the wells with cooking spray.

Whisk together the flour, cornmeal, baking powder, garlic powder, baking soda, and salt in a large bowl. Whisk the buttermilk, eggs, and 5 tablespoons of the butter in a medium bowl until combined. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry, and mix with a wooden spoon or rubber spatula until just combined. Some lumps are fine. Fold in the cheese, all but 1/2 cup of the ham, and 2 tablespoons of the chives.

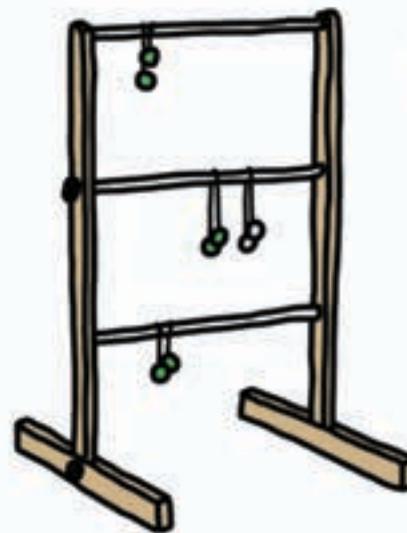
Spoon the batter into the muffin wells, filling each about 3/4 full. Top the muffins with the reserved ham, sprinkle with the remaining chives, and sprinkle with pepper. Top each muffin with 1/2 teaspoon of the remaining melted butter.

Bake until the tops just begin to brown and a toothpick inserted in the center of a muffin comes out clean, 20 to 25 minutes. Cool the muffins in the pan for about 5 minutes, then transfer to a cooling rack to cool completely.



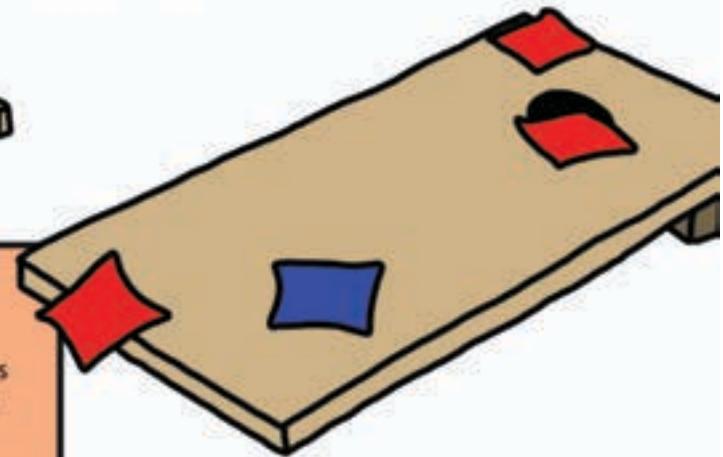
GAME TIME.

It used to be that tailgating was merely a prelude to kickoff; a “the game’s not until later, so let’s hang and nosh in the meantime” kind of affair. But prelude it is no longer. Tailgating has become a main event in its own right, between the quality eats, the ample booze, and, of course, the activities. Here, check out some little-known fun facts about our favorite tailgating games to play before the big game.



LADDER TOSS

- Some people believe that the bola is a stand-in for a live snake, which cowboys used to throw at fences.
- The game goes by many names, including lasso golf, North Dakota Golf, dangle ball, and läderbölen.
- The game was patented by a Pennsylvania postman, Robert G. Reid, in 1999.



BEER PONG

- Some states have legal restrictions against beer pong, like banning it in colleges or bars.
- There is a World Series of Beer Pong.
- There is a beer pong video game for Wii, which was renamed *pong toss* after getting some parental flack.

FLIP CUP

- Some people think flip cup dates back to George Washington and the battle of Valley Forge. *Unlikely.*
- The game was (most likely) invented by college students in 1987 in Hoboken, New Jersey.
- There is *not* a World Series of Flip Cup. There are tournaments, though.

CORNHOLE

- A 14th-century cabinet maker created the game after watching kids throw rocks into a groundhog’s hole.
- Corn was originally used as a weight in the bags because of its abundance.
- In 2017, there was a 5-day cornhole championship tournament aired on ESPN. It had more viewers than Major League Baseball. *Seriously.*

WASHER PITCHING

- Die-hard washer pitching players (because, yes, those exist) will likely refer to the game as *war-shers*. (Or so we’ve heard.)
- There are skunks involved.*
- The pre-game washer tossing to determine the team that starts is called a *diddle*.

*Not real skunks. A skunk is a term for a game where one team reaches 11 points before their opponent gets any.



GLOSSARY

ACIDITY

Gives wine a bright, crisp, tart taste and is essential in keeping a wine balanced — acidity balances out sweetness. You can gauge how acidic a wine is by taking note of how much you salivate after your first sip of wine. More saliva = more acid.

BODY

Describes how heavy wine feels on the palate. When determining body, picture the difference between how skim milk feels in your mouth versus how heavy cream feels. If a wine feels like skim milk, it has a lighter body. If it feels more like heavy cream, it has a full body. Acidity, sweetness, tannin and alcohol all affect the body of a wine.

DRY

A “dry wine” is one that does not have a sweet taste. However, even if a wine is technically dry, it can still have a considerable amount of residual sugar that’s concealed by a higher acidity. Example: unsweetened is technically “dry.”

FRUITY

Commonly confused with sweetness (because we affiliate fruit with sweetness), “fruity” describes the presence of fruit flavors in wine. To better understand fruitiness in wine, imagine unsweetened iced tea with lemon squeezed in it. The tea has a fruitiness from the lemon but is still dry because it’s unsweetened.

SWEETNESS

A wine’s sweetness is measured by the amount of naturally occurring sugar — Residual Sugar (RS) — that’s left in the wine at the end of the fermentation process. This sweetness is ranked from bone dry (Brut Nature) to very sweet (doux) and can usually be detected by a slight tingling sensation on the tip of the tongue.

TANNIN

The astringent or “grippy,” almost drying, feeling a red wine leaves in your mouth. A wine’s tannin level is determined by how long the pressed juice sits with the grape seeds and stems, which is where tannins are naturally found. Example: think about how your mouth feels after drinking unsweetened black tea — also high in tannin.

VARIETAL PRONUNCIATION

Chardonnay [shar-dn-AY]

Colombard [KAHL-hm-bahr]

Glera [glare-a]

Lambrusco [Lamm-BROO-skoh]

(Lambrusco) Grasperossa [gras-pah-ROH-sa]

(Lambrusco) Maestri [mah-EHS-tree]

(Lambrusco) Salamino [sal-a-MEE-noh]

Pinot Noir [PEE-noh NWAR]

Sauvignon Blanc [so vihn-YOHN BLAHNGK]

Tempranillo [TEM-pra-NEE-yo]

Trebbiano [Treb-bee-AH-no]

Vermentino [ver-meh-TEE-noh]

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THE WINE

We’re constantly tracking down, taste-testing and selecting authentic bottles from winemakers around the world — wines that are new to us and hopefully new to you, too. We curate authentic wines rather than bulk blending so that you can truly experience the diverse world of wine.



ADD YOUR FAVORITES

Discovered something you love in your box? Browse our wine shop and stock up on your favorites. Members get exclusive discounts on the wine shop (up to 25% off!) AND free shipping (when you select “No-Rush” shipping at checkout). Hurry! They go fast.



MEMBERSHIP FLEXIBILITY

More in the mood for only red (or white) wine this month? Switch the type of wine you want to receive. Swimming in wine right now and need a break? Log in to manage your membership to fit your wine needs. P.S. We’re now offering 6 packs of all white or all red!



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