

gastropost FOOD MISSIONS FOR FOOD LOVERS

HOW IT WORKS

1. GET A MISSION

Each week, we'll assign a new food mission. If you're a food lover, accept it — you could be featured in Gastropost, online and in the pages of National Post.

2. DO A MISSION

Some missions will be easy. Others will challenge you. All will offer a fun and rewarding food experience to celebrate and elevate food in Toronto.

3. GASTROPOST IT

Once you've completed a mission, share your experience. We'll ask for photos, videos, stories — whatever's best to communicate what you have to share so we can learn together.

JOIN US!

Visit gastropost.com/joinus

We're looking for Toronto food lovers to join us on fun weekly missions that elevate our city's food experience. Introduce yourself to us at gastropost.com/joinus.

LAST WEEK'S MISSION: SOMETHING DELICIOUS

We asked a group of food lovers in Toronto to eat something delicious every day and tell us about it. Some dined out, others stayed in — all made our mouths water. Here are the results

MISSION 1

"SOMETHING DELICIOUS"

Send us a photo of something delicious you eat every day. (Put some extra effort into finding something great that will make others wish they were eating it, too!) And let us know some of the context: Where did you get it? Who were you with? What were you thinking while you ate it?

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE:



gastropost.com



Melissa Leong
Duck confit devotee, teen vampire fiction author



Tea party at my place. Guestlist: One. Menu: Key lime cheesecake from Carole's Cheesecake Factory, white jasmine ice loose-leaf green tea from Sloane Tea Company with a touch of wildflower blossom honey. Pip, pip, cheerio.



Jascha Baraness
Manager and sommelier at Barque Smokehouse, golfer



Burrata on crostini, haricots fins wrapped in guanciale, courtesy my friend Lesley. Was a phenomenal pairing with Viognier from the northern Rhone. **Where?** Jascha gets his burrata at Cheese Magic in Kensington Market, 182 Baldwin St., 416-593-9531



Noah Godfrey
Stinky cheese lover, dad, husband and entrepreneur



Homemade ground turkey tacos with caramelized onions, mushrooms, zucchini, green peppers, tomato, lettuce, cheese and salsa. Turkey from Cumbrae's. Chef wife is limited edition and not available for catering.



Jessica Leigh Johnston
Enjoyer of veggies, sweets and coffee



I was so keen on this huevos rancheros at new favourite brunch spot The Ace that I forgot to snap a pic before digging in. Fresh corn tortillas demand immediate attention. **Where?** The Ace, 231A Roncesvalles Ave., 416-792-7729, theacetoronto.com



Adam McDowell
Food writer, curry fan



Monday night's mugginess dictated that dinner had to be something that involved as little heat generation (and effort) in the kitchen as possible. The solution: skewers of wee shrimp and scallops pan-fried quickly and dropped on mixed greens with a dressing of coconut oil, lime juice, honey and clippings of lemongrass from the herb thingy on my kitchen windowsill.



Jason Rebel
Christie Pits Community Gardens gardener, confessed foodie



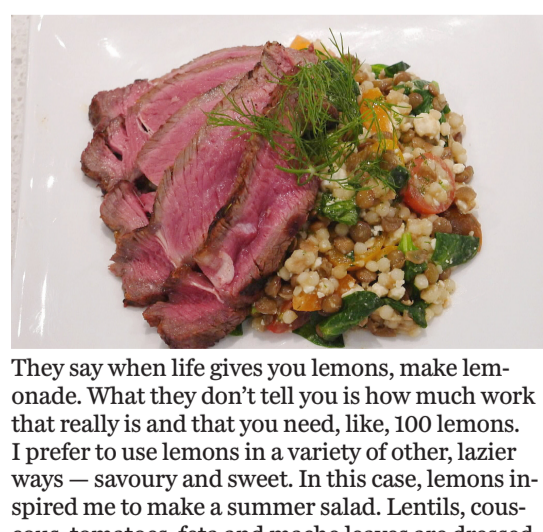
Octopus Salad with fingerling potatoes from Agave and Aguacate. Easily one of the best dishes I will have all year, and a perfect lunch for a hot day. **Where?** Agave and Aguacate, 14 Augusta Ave., 647-208-3091, agaveyaguacate.blogspot.ca



You?
Lover of food with expertise to share, even if you don't know it yet



Jason Miller
Horrible cook, managing editor of the perfect baguette



They say when life gives you lemons, make lemonade. What they don't tell you is how much work that really is and that you need, like, 100 lemons. I prefer to use lemons in a variety of other, lazier ways — savoury and sweet. In this case, lemons inspired me to make a summer salad. Lentils, couscous, tomatoes, feta and mache leaves are dressed with lemon, olive oil and dill. This went perfectly with the Beretta Farms ribeye with Mediterranean rub charred on the barbecue to medium rare. **Where?** Beretta Organics, berettaorganics.com



Benjamin Errett
Unreasonably passionate about sandwiches



First Law of Dinner Thermodynamics: Hot day (30C) + Hot sauce (Sriracha) + Cool noodles (with mango, mint and shrimp) + Cold beer (Hefeweizen) creates a meal in perfect equilibrium with itself. QED.



Maryam Siddiqi
Unreasonably passionate about sandwiches



Truth be told, the presentation of the fish tacos for two at the County General threw us for a loop, but it didn't take long for our makeshift taco bar to develop into a fine-tuned operation. Eight soft taco shells, two people — this fish didn't stand a chance. **Where?** The County General, 936 Queen St. W., 416-531-4447, thecountygeneral.ca



Jen McDonnell
Horrible cook, managing editor of Dose.ca



Was sick of seeing all my friends from home posting about lobster season, so I decided to bring lobster season to T.O.! **Where?** Fresh Lobster from Loblaws at Maple Leaf Gardens, 60 Carlton St., loblaws.ca

THIS WEEK'S MISSION: RIESLING REFRESH

This week, we challenge our food lovers to call some friends and host a Riesling taste test. The three bottles together cost less than \$50, and the placemat below helps keep score

MISSION 2

HOLD A WHITE WINE TASTING AT HOME.

Explore the aromas of the Rieslings recommended below, available widely at the LCBO. Using the placemat provided here, share your experiences.

(And maybe cook up a little something to go with the wine, too.)

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE:



gastropost.com

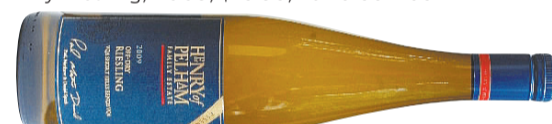
Wine #1 Geil Bechtheimer Rosengarten Riesling Kabinett, 2011 \$14.95



Wine #2 Cave Spring Dry Riesling, 2009 and 2010, \$14.95, LCBO 233625



Wine #3 Henry of Pelham Reserve Off Dry Riesling, 2009, \$15.95, LCBO 557165



How to host a simple wine tasting at home

1. Each taster will need a pen and the placemat at right. To get more copies, download a PDF of the placemat at gastropost.com/missions and print off as many as you need.
2. Designate one person the pourer/photographer (who can drink along with you), and place one wine glass per circle on each taster's placemat. Don't reveal which wine is which!
3. Taste the wines one by one, using the aroma wheels (see below!) inside the circles to keep track of what you detect.
4. Try to guess which is the odd wine out — the German among the Ontarians — and assign each wine a letter grade.
5. With appropriate drama, the pourer can now reveal the identity of the wines.
6. Share your observations. Join us at gastropost.com/joinus and then send us photos and descriptions of your tasting — the foods washed down with the wine, the setting, and clear images of your completed placemats.



Use the aroma wheel

Ever wondered how oenophiles come up with the descriptions you see in wine reviews — overripe banana, old wooden stairs and so on? Everyone's an expert in what their own nose knows, but it doesn't hurt to have an aroma wheel handy. As well as doubling as a coaster for grown-ups, these circles will help you find choice words to describe your Rieslings. Go through each category one by one, starting with "Fruity," and check off all the terms that suit each wine you taste. Feel free to write in your own!



Q&A

The idea for this week's Gastropost mission to taste three \$15(ish) Rieslings came from Gastropost expert Jascha Baraness, manager and sommelier at Barque Smokehouse on Roncesvalles Avenue. Here, he explains the inspiration to another Gastroposter, Adam McDowell.

Q Why did you think of Rieslings for this week's mission?

A It can show you so many things from one grape variety. Riesling can be dry and light or it can be full-bodied and sweet. It can run the whole spectrum. There is a Riesling for everybody out there, whereas there may not be a Sauvignon Blanc for everybody. And also it makes me think of summer. Off-dry Riesling, for me, is apple juice for grown-ups. It's just the most quaffable, tasty thing to have on a hot day.

Q Are there any telltale differences between European and New World Rieslings that we should look for?

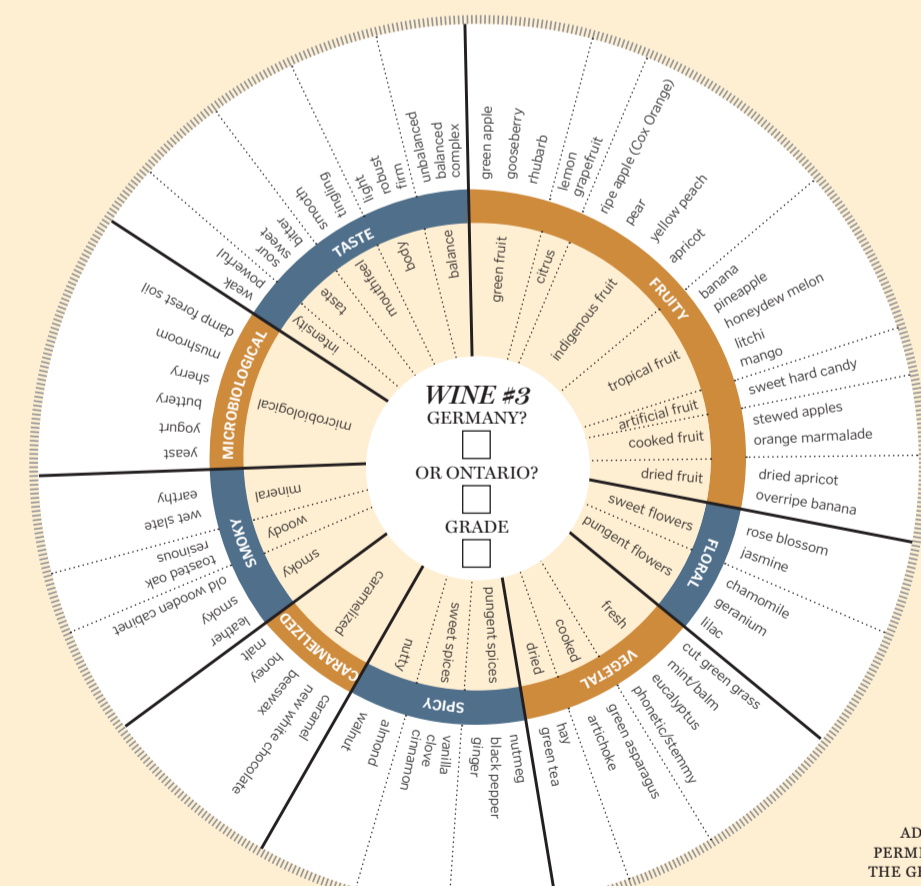
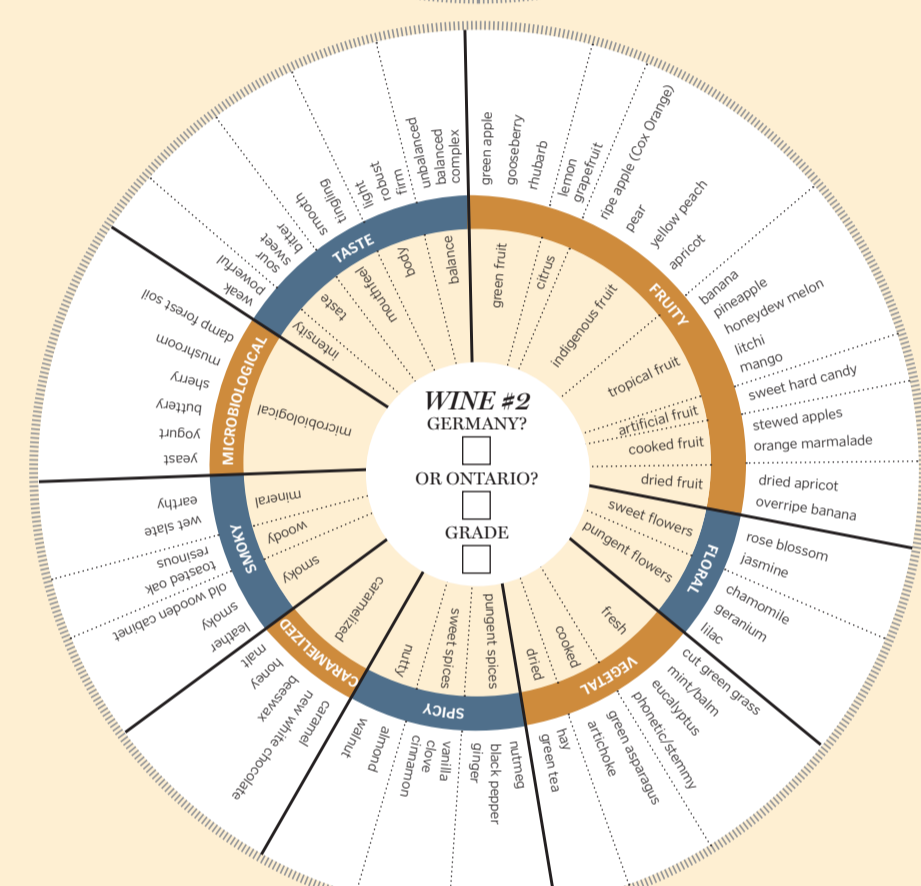
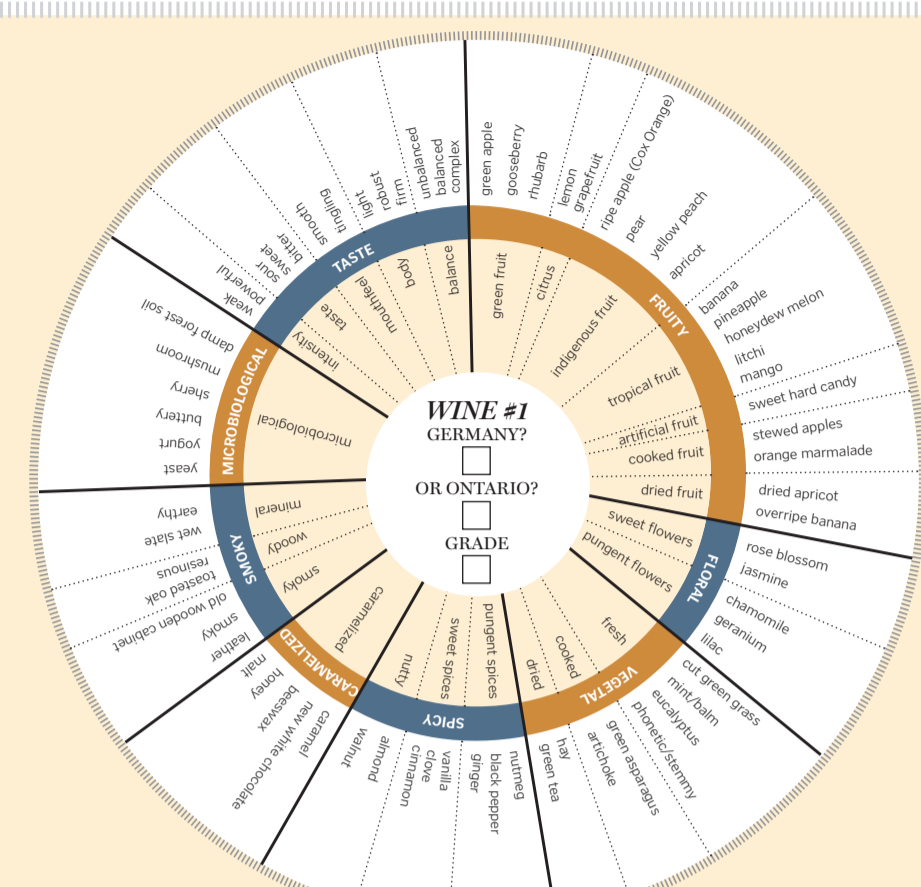
A Even within Europe there's going to be differences. German Rieslings are going to be off-dry [a little sweet]. Even the dry ones will have some residual sweetness, whereas 90% of Alsatian Rieslings are going to be very dry... and very focused and lean. Just across the Rhine from Germany to France you're going to find significant differences.

Ontario is proving itself to be a Riesling mecca. Ontario Riesling combines the best from Germany and the best from France. Ontario sort of seems to fall in the middle with most of the Rieslings being slightly off-dry. That can be very pleasant on a hot day and can pair very well with food.

Q I can imagine someone who doesn't have a lot of experience tasting wine being intimidated by these aroma wheels and the idea of picking out flavours like grass

and grapefruit. Does it take experience to taste wine properly?

A No, you can just leap in and do it. We've all cut a Granny Smith apple. We know what that smells like. It's just a matter of being able to take almost a leap of faith and saying, "I really am getting this aroma from it." There really is no wrong answer. Wine is such a personal thing. One person's going to get a thing [out of it]. One person's going to get another thing. And both people can be right.



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