

*Quality*  
is in our **nature**



*Canada*

## Canadian Icewine

*Winter's Nectar*



Canadian Icewine is a sweet dessert wine renowned for its rich flavours and unsurpassed smoothness. While Icewine is also made in Germany, Austria and the United States, Canada is the only wine-producing region in the world with a climate so cold that its vintners can guarantee an annual production of this highly sought-after product.

Icewine is created from grapes naturally frozen on the vine, a process that generates a thick golden liquid with highly concentrated natural sugars and flavours. The resulting wines are of spectacular quality, with subtle bouquets of peaches, apricots, tropical fruits, honey, toffee, caramel, maple and nuts, depending on the grape varietal used in making the Icewine. The range of grape varieties is continually expanding as producers move to red wine grapes—such as Cabernet Franc—from the traditional Icewine base of Vidal and Riesling grapes. Icewine is also being infused into sparkling wines and spirit-based products, expanding the range of Icewine products even further.



Most Canadian Vintners Quality Alliance (VQA) Icewine comes from Ontario, followed by British Columbia. Quebec and Nova Scotia produce Icewine in smaller quantities.

### **A hard-earned harvest**

Canadian Icewines command premium prices because they are expensive and risky to make. The process begins when the grower leaves a select part of the vineyard unharvested, and waits for Canada's bone-chilling cold to descend. As temperatures fall throughout the autumn and into the winter, the vintner watches anxiously as the grapes endure the natural hazards of wind, rot, hail, sleet, and the predations of hungry birds.



If all goes well, and vineyard temperatures reach  $-8^{\circ}\text{C}$  or lower, the harvest can begin. Icewine harvests often begin at night so that grapes may be picked and delivered to processing facilities before daytime temperatures warm. Grapes must be processed while still frozen. Much of the Icewine grape crop, especially that belonging to small producers, is also picked by hand—a challenging endeavour in the cold conditions!



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The yield of grapes to make Icewine is very small compared to that of a normal table-wine grape harvest. Three or more kilograms of grapes will only produce one 375-ml bottle of finished Icewine, while the same weight of fruit, normally harvested, will provide up to 10 times that amount of table wine. However, the results are well worth it. After settling for several days, this golden nectar is aged for several months, allowing the juice to be transformed into an intensely sweet and flavourful, perfectly balanced Canadian Icewine. This wine is an excellent complement to desserts such as cobblers and cheesecake, or to starters such as *foie gras* and *pâté*. And, of course, it is superb when appreciated all on its own.

**Quality guaranteed** 

The sterling quality of Canadian Icewines is guaranteed because of the exacting standards followed by producers. Icewine production is also closely watched by VQA regulatory authorities. Each vintage is carefully monitored to ensure that the Icewine comes from approved grapes grown within a defined viticultural area, and that the grapes are picked and pressed at or below the required temperature of -8°C. The average natural sugar levels of the juice must meet strict criteria and both the alcohol and residual sugar in the finished wine must come exclusively from the natural sugar of the grapes.

It is this stringent approach and meticulous care that ensures Canadian Icewines are genuine and of the highest quality. As further proof of quality, Canadian Icewines continue to receive the highest awards at the world's most prestigious international wine fairs, including Vinexpo and VinItaly.

**Taste the Canadian difference** 

Canada's Icewines appeal to the most discriminating palates and command premium prices around the world. For further information on the Canadian Icewine industry, please visit:

**Government websites**

- Agri-Food Trade Service  
[www.ats-sea.agr.gc.ca](http://www.ats-sea.agr.gc.ca)

**Industry websites**

- Canadian Vintners Association [www.canadianvintners.com](http://www.canadianvintners.com)

 Vintners Quality Alliance [www.vqaontario.com](http://www.vqaontario.com)

 Wines of Ontario [www.winesofontario.org](http://www.winesofontario.org)

 BC Wine Institute [www.winebc.com](http://www.winebc.com)

 Wines of Nova Scotia [www.winesofnovascotia.ca](http://www.winesofnovascotia.ca)

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