

Fabulous Food & Wine



Fine Wine From The Argentine Can Enhance Your Holiday Table

(NAPSA)—Here's food for thought: You can give your holiday get-togethers an extra flair with the help of two delicious dishes made with an increasingly popular wine.

Then

Malbec comes from French grapes transplanted to Argentina in the mid-1850s as part of a government program to improve agriculture. Since 1884, the wines of Don Miguel Gascón® have been recognized for the rich, smooth flavors that come from growing in high-altitude vineyards in the Andes Mountains.

Now

The resulting Malbec red wine, explains Don Miguel Gascón Malbec winemaker Ernesto Bajda, is "richer, rounder, more complex than the original wine and has lots of flavor, rich texture with no sharp edges so it works very well with food."

What You Can Do With It

For example, you may care to try these recipes for a daring dip and a deliciously stuffed pastry.

Receta Empanadas Criollas

These little stuffed pastries probably arrived in Argentina from Galicia, in northwestern Spain. And the Spanish probably got the idea from the Moors, who occupied Spain for 800 years. Empanadas can be filled with a variety of flavors to make a delicious snack or a hearty, portable meal. "Criolla" is an historic term that refers to a woman of Spanish blood, but born in the Argentine "colony."

Ingredients

Pastry:

- 2 pounds of all-purpose wheat flour
- 3 ounces of melted unsalted butter (warm but not hot)
- 1.5 ounces of salt
- 7 ounces of warm water (or beer, or half water/half beer)

Filling:

- 1½ pounds of ground beef



Chimichurri salsa and steak are staples of the Argentine table, and local Malbec wine is the perfect companion.

- 3 pounds of very thinly sliced onions
- ¼ pound of unsalted butter
- 3 teaspoons of ground sweet red pepper
- 2 teaspoons of cumin
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, minced
- 1 teaspoon of chili powder
- 1 clove of minced garlic
- 3½ ounces of pitted green olives
- 1 pinch of sugar
- salt and pepper
- olive oil
- ⅓ cup of raisins (optional)

Directions

Pastry:

Mix the flour and salt in a large bowl. Add the melted butter, then the warm water (or beer), and mix all the ingredients. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead the dough until all the ingredients are well integrated and the dough is smooth. Wrap the dough in plastic and leave at room temperature for about 15 minutes.

Roll the dough to a thickness of only ⅓ of an inch, then cut into 6-inch circles.

Filling:

In a pan over medium heat,

put the butter, onions and garlic. When the onions are translucent, add a little salt. Add the meat and cook thoroughly for 20 minutes, then add the spices of cumin, chili powder, sweet red pepper and a pinch of sugar. Remove from the heat and add the minced boiled eggs and the green olives. Taste and season with salt if necessary. Let the mixture cool, then put two tablespoons of the filling into the center of the circles of dough. Fold the dough over to make the pies. Brush lightly with olive oil.

Cook the completed pies in a hot oven for about 10 minutes, until golden brown.

Receta Chimichurri

Spain, Italy and Ireland converge in this ubiquitous dipping sauce. The name may derive from "Jimmy McCurry," an Irishman believed to have been the first to concoct this condiment while serving in the army in Argentina, when the country was under Spanish rule in the 19th century.

- 1 teaspoon chopped garlic
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- 1 chopped scallion (green part only)
- 2 teaspoons chili flakes
- 2 teaspoons chopped thyme
- 3½ ounces wine vinegar or lemon juice
- 3½ ounces extra-virgin olive oil
- salt and pepper

Mix all of the ingredients in a bowl, adding the olive oil last. Chill in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours for integration of flavors. A whole day would be better.

Learn More

You can learn more, including where to find this fine wine, online at www.gasconwine.com.