

It's Beaujolais Nouveau time

What began as a celebration of the harvest and the assurance of an adequate supply of wine for the Christmas season over one hundred years ago has become an International tradition. On the third Thursday of November (the 18th this year), Beaujolais Nouveau will arrive on liquor store shelves world wide.

This light-hearted, fun juice is exported from a small region in France called Beaujolais. One third of the entire crop of this region is dedicated to Beaujolais Nouveau. The Beaujolais region is only 55 km long and 14 km wide and can be divided into three areas: The southern portion called Bas –Beaujolais (AOC Beaujolais), the upper middle Haut – Beaujolais (Cru Beaujolais) and the northern area of Beaujolais – Villages. You will see some of these Beaujolais on the shelves at NB Liquor, Beaujolais and Beaujolais Villages all year round; however Nouveau is only available once a year.

Gamay is the star of Beaujolais Nouveau and all of the Beaujolais wines. The Gamay grapes used in Beaujolais Nouveau can only come from Bas – Beaujolais or Beaujolais Villages. The grapes for all Beaujolais wines, including Beaujolais Nouveau must be hand picked.

Beaujolais Nouveau is made by a process called Carbonic Maceration. While red wines are usually made by crushing the grapes and fermentation while they are on the skins, Carbonic Maceration actually allows fermentation to happen in the skins. Whole bunches of grapes are used but they are not crushed. They are put into a vat full of CO₂. The grapes on the bottom create more CO₂ while they are being crushed. This process allows the grapes to maintain their light, fruity flavours without much tannin. The whole process of harvesting, fermenting, bottling and travelling around the globe takes only about two months.

Because Beaujolais Nouveau is fairly high in acid; it is easy to drink. Beaujolais Nouveau can vary in flavour somewhat from year to year but you can always count on lots of fruit! Strawberry, cherry and banana flavours abound and hints of candy are common.

Beaujolais Nouveau should be served slightly chilled, however in keeping with Nouveau's personality, drink it however you like. Keep in mind this wine does not have a long shelf life and is best consumed prior to Easter.

Try your Nouveau with traditional roast turkey and stuffing at Christmas, a really great pairing. This light red also pairs well with salmon and pork tenderloin. If you want to experience a fabulous combination, pair your Beaujolais Nouveau with cherry pie and whipped cream.

Most of us drink wine for pleasure and enjoyment and Beaujolais Nouveau fits the bill perfectly as it is neither a serious or complex wine but rather a light-

hearted fun wine and a cause for a celebration. Why not try a bottle this year and see for yourself what all the excitement is about.

Mommessin Beaujolais Nouveau, 750 ml, \$14.99

George Duboeuf Beaujolais Nouveau, 750 ml, \$15.99

Jacques Depagneaux Beaujolais Nouveau, 750 ml, \$14.79

Patriarche Beaujolais Nouveau, 750 ml, \$14.49

Laboure Roi Beaujolais Nouveau, 750 ml, \$15.99

Pierre Andre Beaujolais Villages, 750 ml, \$15.99