



**WINES** OF  
**NOVA SCOTIA**

**Nova Scotia Wine  
Food Pairing Guide**



## About Wine Growers Nova Scotia

In 2002, Wine Growers Nova Scotia (WGNS) was established to represent the interests of farm wine producers in the province, advocate for the local industry, and promote the growth and development of Nova Scotia wines. WGNS is dedicated to fostering excellence across all facets of the industry, cultivating partnerships and attracting potential investors, with the ultimate goal of propelling Nova Scotia wines onto the global stage.

## From Humble Beginnings to an Exciting Emerging Wine Region

Nova Scotia holds the distinction of being Canada's first wine region, with its inaugural vineyard plantings dating back to 1611. In 1980, Roger Dial made history by producing the province's first commercial vintage at Domaine de Grand Pré. The industry saw remarkable growth during the 2000s and early 2010s. Tidal Bay, Nova Scotia's signature wine appellation, was launched with the 2012 vintage. Currently, there are 20 grape wineries and 68 grape growers actively operating. The region boasts 1,200 acres (484 ha) of vineyards, resulting in an annual production of 1.9 million liters.

## Economic Impact Generated Per Bottle of Wine Purchased in Nova Scotia

- Nova Scotia farm wines have **6.8x** the business revenue created per bottle for Nova Scotia than wine bottled in Nova Scotia without any Nova Scotia fruit.
- Nova Scotia's wine and allied industries contribute **\$245.2m** to the Nova Scotia economy.
- Nova Scotia's wine industry attracts over **150,000** visitors each year.
- Nova Scotia's wine industry supports over **1,100** full time jobs.

[Click here to learn more about the economic impact of Nova Scotia farm wine!](#)

## Nova Scotia's Unique Terroir

**A great wine harnesses the soil, the climate, and the surrounding landscape to craft an incredible taste that reminds you of the place it was grown.**

**Here in Nova Scotia, our vineyards are never more than 20km from the ocean, and the vines grow in the remains of an ancient seabed. Having the World's highest tides, a mixture of sandstone and slate soil and being surrounded by large bodies of water all contribute to a unique yet ideal viticultural climate. Each style of wine we produce has a mouth-watering freshness with a hint of salinity reminiscent of an ocean breeze.**

**The slow, even ripening of our grapes—thanks to warm autumn days and cool, crisp nights—allows them to achieve intense, complex aromas and flavors while maintaining a refreshing acidity. Regardless of the style, Nova Scotia wines consistently offer excellent concentration of aroma and flavor, harmoniously balanced by lively acidity. This characteristic makes them exceptionally food-friendly and versatile for pairing with a wide array of dishes.**

## Passionate People

**At the core of Nova Scotia's wine industry are its people. They are highly skilled, passionate and collaborative individuals who actively work together to propel the industry to new heights.**

**From the vineyard workers who carefully tend to the vines, to the winemakers who masterfully blend nature's gifts into a symphony of flavors, every person plays a vital role. Their shared vision is to create wines that not only reflect the unique terroir of Nova Scotia but also bring joy and connection to those who savor them. They are the stewards of this land, passionately preserving its legacy while crafting a future filled with promise and potential.**



**[Click here to see what wineries are saying!](#)**

## Grape Varieties

Nova Scotia's unique terroir supports the cultivation of both vinifera and hybrid varieties, allowing our vineyards to thrive in a diverse climate. While many farm wineries and growers focus on vinifera varieties prized for their classic wine profiles, a significant portion of our vineyard acreage is dedicated to hybrids. These hybrid vines offer a perfect balance, combining the natural hardiness and disease resistance needed for our cooler climate with the wine quality typically associated with vinifera. This adaptability ensures that Nova Scotia's farm wine industry can excel in producing exceptional wines across a range of varieties with quality being at the forefront and differentiating our boutique farm wine region from other wine producing regions.

### Key White Grape Varieties

**L'Acadie Blanc:** Nova Scotia's most widely planted grape variety and the main component of a Tidal Bay blend. Displays notes of citrus fruit and floral blossoms.

**Seyval Blanc:** In a Tidal Bay blend, it contributes lively acidity, crisp citrus and orchard fruit notes along with a subtle herbaceous characteristic.

**New York Muscat:** Very aromatic, with notes of grape, lychee and floral blossoms. Typically used in small quantities to enhance a Tidal Bay blend.

**Chardonnay:** Relatively neutral with orchard fruit and floral notes. It takes well to oak, adding texture and complexity. It has great ageing potential, developing desirable dried fruit notes.

**Riesling:** Aromatic, high acidity, notes of citrus and orchard fruit. Great ageing potential as it develops complex notes of honey and petrol.

### Key Red Grape Varieties

**Baco Noir:** Deeply pigmented in the glass with juicy black fruit, tobacco and sometimes herbaceous characteristic. Typically seen as a single varietal wine.

**Castel:** Displays notes of ripe black fruit and cracked spices along with firm tannins. Used either in blends or as a single varietal wine.

**Pinot Noir:** Delicate red fruit and floral notes. Often oak-aged for toast/spice, offering great ageability. Also used in sparkling wine.

# T I D A L B A Y

Tidal Bay is Nova Scotia's signature wine style and appellation. It is an ode to European appellations like Chianti, encompassing both technical standards and stylistical parameters, and is one of a kind for North American wine regions. Its name draws inspiration from the Bay of Fundy, home of the highest tides in the world.

Nova Scotia excels at this refreshing style of wine due to its proximity to bodies of water including the Bay of Fundy. With vineyards no more than 20km from the Atlantic Ocean, vines are mitigated from extreme cold in the winter and often receive cooling, coastal breezes during the summertime which provide relief from warm daytime temperatures. The growing season is elongated by ideal conditions that continue through the Autumn months consisting of warm, sunny days followed by cool, crisp nights. This fluctuation allows grapes to slowly ripen during the day, developing intense flavors and aromas, while then retaining their natural acidity at night. The resultant wines showcase great aromatic and flavor intensity which is balanced by lively acidity.

**In order for a wine to be classified as a Tidal Bay, it must meet the following standards:**

- Be a blend of at least two or more grape varieties
- Be no more than 11% in alcohol
- Be produced from 100% NS grown grapes
- It comprises at least 51% of primary permitted varieties (L'Acadie Blanc, Seyval Blanc, Geisenheim 318 and/or Vidal Blanc).
- Pass a sensory evaluation by an independent tasting panel of industry professionals

[Click here to hear from wineries!](#)

**Tidal Bay is described as the very essence of Nova Scotia in a glass, it is cool, crisp, lively and aromatic. The perfect pairing for our local seafood or for socializing with friends.**

## Sparkling Wines

Nova Scotia's favorable climate and geology are perfect for producing exceptional sparkling wines. Warm summers and the Atlantic Ocean's temperate influence create a cool growing season, resulting in wines with brilliance, intensity, and essential acidity for balance and structure.



Nova Scotia sparkling wines like **L'Acadie Vineyards Joie de Vivre**, made using the Charmat method (the same production process as Prosecco), feature bright, fruit-forward flavors and lively acidity. Their refreshing qualities make them ideal for pairing with light dishes such as oysters, fresh salads, and fish tacos.



[Want to learn more about L'Acadie Vineyards? Click here!](#)

Nova Scotia sparkling wines, made using the traditional method (the same production process as Champagne), like **Domaine De Grand Pré Nova Scotia Brut**, feature vibrant acidity and fruity notes with a rich texture. They pair excellently with heartier proteins and creamy dishes such as seared scallops, fried chicken, and mac and cheese.

[Want to learn more about Domaine de Grand Pré? Click here!](#)



Nova Scotia's traditional sparkling wines, like **Benjamin Bridge Brut**, gain richness and complex aromas through years of aging, balanced by lively acidity. They pair well with rich, earthy dishes such as stuffed mushrooms and hearty proteins such as grilled lobster and roast chicken.



[Want to learn more about Benjamin Bridge? Click here!](#)

## Tidal Bay Wines

Stylistically, Tidal Bay is a dry to off-dry crisp white wine displaying lively fruit flavors and aromas ranging from zesty citrus (lemon, key lime) to riper, tropical notes (melon). Often present are notes of fresh floral blossoms and minerality bringing added complexity. Their intense aromas and flavors are harmoniously balanced by refreshing acidity, making them a perfect match with Nova Scotia Seafood, summer salads and light dishes.



Tidal Bay wine pairs well with Nova Scotia Seafood, enhancing rich dishes like seafood chowder, seared scallops, and butter-poached lobster. Its bright citrus and minerality complement the salty flavors of raw oysters.



Tidal Bay wines, which are off-dry with some residual sweetness, complement spicy dishes like Asian stir-fries by balancing heat and refreshing the palate with lively acidity.



Fresh wines pair well with fresh dishes. Tidal Bay's lively acidity complements heirloom tomato salad and cuts through the richness of a kale Caesar salad.



Not a fan of seafood? No problem! Chicken, pork and plant-based protein dishes also pair perfectly with Tidal Bay wines for the same reasons they work so well with seafood.

## Noteworthy Pairings

**1365 Church Street Vineyard & Winery Tidal Bay & Assorted Sushi**

[Want to learn more about 1365 Church Street Winery? Click here!](#)



**Marble Mountain Estate Tidal Bay & Pan Seared Haddock**

[Want to learn more about Marble Mountain Estate? Click here!](#)



**Jost Vineyards Tidal Bay & Chicken Shawarma Wraps**

[Want to learn more about Jost Vineyards? Click here!](#)



## Other White Wines

Nova Scotia's most recognised wine style is bright, crisp and aromatic whites, with pronounced acidity and flirtatious character. Influenced by their Atlantic climatic conditions, they are the perfect complement to our lobster, scallops and salmon. White hybrids such as L'Acadie Blanc, Seyval Blanc, Vidal, and New York Muscat have had much success. This growing success has also been seen with Vinifera such as Chardonnay, Ortega, and Riesling.



Crisp and refreshing Nova Scotia whites, such as **Beausoleil Farmstead L'Acadie Blanc**, are an ideal match for light and fresh dishes, including ceviche, caprese salad, and steamed mussels.



[Want to learn more about Beausoleil Farmstead? Click here!](#)

Vibrant and aromatic Nova Scotia whites like **Gaspereau Vineyards Riesling** compliment richer seafood such as smoked salmon, a hearty plate of roasted vegetables or with spicy noodles where its residual sweetness will balance the heat of the dish.

[Want to learn more about Gaspereau Vineyards? Click here!](#)



Textured Nova Scotia whites with some vinification in oak barrels such as **Blomidon Estate Chardonnay**, compliment richer dishes such as seafood chowder, roasted turkey and mushroom risotto.



[Want to learn more about Blomidon Estate Winery? Click here!](#)

## Rosé Wines

Nova Scotia is home to an exciting array of Rosé wines. Some are created in a light, pale Provençal style, emphasizing fresh citrus, berry, and floral notes. Others experience longer maceration, producing deeper colors and a richer texture, highlighted by pronounced red berry fruit flavors. Occasionally, a touch of residual sweetness is added to balance the acidity, or it may be a stylistic choice for a juicier profile. No matter the shade of pink, each wine beautifully combines intense flavors and aromas with a refreshing acidity.



[Click here to hear from wineries!](#)



Light and delicate Nova Scotia Rosé wines, like **Mercator Vineyards' Compass Rosé**, pair beautifully with a fresh summer salad. They also provide a refreshing contrast to richer seafood dishes and white proteins, such as planked salmon and roasted pork.



[Want to learn more about Mercator Vineyards? Click here!](#)

Deeper Nova Scotia Rosé wines, such as **Bear River Vineyards Lightly Lucie**, harmonize beautifully with richer dishes like Ratatouille. Additionally, those exhibiting a hint of residual sweetness can enhance the flavors of fruit-based desserts, like strawberry shortcake, or help to counterbalance the spiciness of a chicken curry.

[Want to learn more about Bear River Vineyards? Click here!](#)



## Red Wines

Nova Scotia's cooler climate and shorter growing season pose challenges for red wine production. Nevertheless, many farm wineries create quality wines from hybrid and cool-climate grape varieties, such as Baco Noir and Pinot Noir. Winemakers embrace the unique characteristics of the land, resulting in red wines with intensity, freshness, structured tannins and purity of fruit.



Light-bodied Nova Scotia red wines, such as **Lightfoot & Wolfville Ancienne Pinot Noir**, offer a delightful contrast to rich seafood dishes like seared tuna, heartier meats such as duck confit, and a selection of cheese and charcuterie.



[Want to learn more about Lightfoot & Wolfville? Click here!](#)

Juicy, medium-bodied red wines from Nova Scotia, like **Lockett Vineyards Phone Box Red**, pair wonderfully with heartier dishes. Consider pairing them alongside options such as burgers (whether veggie or meat), spaghetti and meatballs, or roasted lamb chops.

[Want to learn more about Lockett Vineyards? Click here!](#)



Richer red wines from Nova Scotia, like **Planters Ridge Quintessence Red**, pair wonderfully with robust dishes. They make a perfect pairing to a comforting bowl of chili, beef Wellington, or grilled vegetables.



[Want to learn more about Planters Ridge Winery? Click here!](#)

## Sweet/Dessert Wines

While Nova Scotia Icewine can be somewhat elusive, as it isn't produced in every vintage, the province offers a diverse selection of alternative dessert wine styles. Some wineries craft medium-sweet wines that boast fresh, aromatic qualities and lower alcohol content. Others draw inspiration from renowned wine regions, like the Douro Valley, by incorporating a neutral grape spirit to create fortified wines, such as Port. These wines are characterized by their higher alcohol levels and prominent flavours of dried fruit and dark chocolate.

Despite their sweetness, a refreshing acidity ensures a well-balanced finish, preventing them from being cloyingly sweet on the palate. Consequently, these wines pair beautifully with a range of sweet, spicy, and savory dishes.

Medium-sweet white wines, such as **Avondale Sky Winery Bliss**, featuring hints of juicy citrus and tropical fruit, beautifully enhance the sweetness of fruit-based pies and tarts. Conversely, these wines offer a delightful contrast to rich, savory dishes like seared foie gras or spicy shrimp curry.



[Want to learn more about Avondale Sky Winery? Click here!](#)

Fortified Nova Scotia dessert wines that mimic the style of Port such as **Lost Bell Kingsport** are a complimentary pairing to chocolate cake and sticky toffee pudding. On the other hand, they can provide a contrasting pairing to savoury bites such as a cheese plate.

[Want to learn more about Lost Bell Winery? Click here!](#)





# WINES OF NOVA SCOTIA

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