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# WINE ENTHUSIAST

JUNE 2017

thecrush

PARED-DOWN PAIRING

## OUT OF A JAM

Get to know strawberries in all sorts of unexpected ways.

In many parts of the country, strawberries are among the first fruits of summer. But thanks to their ability to grow in different conditions and travel well, they're now a sweet treat year-round. The majority of commercially grown strawberries in the U.S. come from California.

"[Strawberries] are great to utilize no matter what stage: underripe, perfectly ripe and overripe," says Justin Walker, the executive chef at Earth at Hidden Pond, a seasonal restaurant in Kennebunkport, Maine that opens in May, just as strawberry runners start to blanket the onsite gardens.

Green, or unripe, strawberries are increasingly popular in restaurants for their flexibility in savory applications. Ask around at your local farmer's market, or grow them on a windowsill.

Walker juices tart green strawberries to use in vinaigrettes and lets overripe berries macerate into marinades. Even when working with perfectly ripe strawberries, he looks to the savory side. "I love strawberries in a salad with blue cheese, or with lime zest and olive oil as a simple snack."

—Nils Bernstein

### PAIR IT

"A floral German or Austrian Riesling with sweet strawberries is beautiful—something that reflects those spring peach blossoms in the Wachau region—while a chilled Beaujolais, fruitful Pinot Noir or even Cinsault are great red options," says Danielle Walker, wine director and general manager at Earth at Hidden Pond. "Green strawberries go well with a Sauvignon Blanc, Grüner Veltliner or Albariño; you want plenty of acidity to balance the tart fruit. Champagne with perfectly ripe strawberries is a favorite, but try a demi-sec so the wine is sweeter than the berries; if you like a more subtle sweetness, a Lambic beer reflects the fruit flavor without tasting bitter."

Winema

The word "strawberry" is believed to derive from "stray" or "strew," for the fruit's tendency to propagate promiscuously.

Strawberries are the fifth most consumed fresh fruit in the U.S., after bananas, apples, oranges and grapes.

Like raspberries and blackberries, strawberries are in the same subfamily as roses. None are true berries.

The Guinness World Record for heaviest strawberry is 8.82 ounces. It was the size of an apple.

Pat Benatar, Ryan Adams, My Bloody Valentine, The Band and country singer Deana Carter have all recorded songs called "Strawberry Wine."

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