

# 10 Sweet Wines for People Who Don't Think They Like Sweet Wine

Don't knock it.

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PHOTO: TAYLOR FLADGATE

The world of sweet wine is far more diverse than it often gets credit for. Delicious examples are produced all over the world, from a huge range of grape varieties, and in a spectrum of styles.

Just don't call them dessert wines. While many of them are delicious with dessert, they are often just as transcendent with savory dishes. Foie gras with Sauternes, stilton with Port—there's a reason that these are among the most classic food and wine pairings you'll ever experience.

Here are ten great ones to look for, listed alphabetically. Some are priced for everyday enjoyment, while others more for special occasions. The joy they bring whenever they're opened is immeasurable, and even if you don't think you enjoy sweet wines, give these a chance.

## **Amista Ilusión Red Dessert Wine, Dry Creek Valley**

A complex blend of Zinfandel and Syrah, it has aromas of sweet cigar tobacco, dried blueberries, and cedar, and a concentrated palate that carries flavors of black cherries, baker's chocolate, and Chinese five-spice powder. \$28 for 375ml

## **Barboursville Vineyards Virginia Passito 2014**

A passito of Moscato Ottonel and Vidal that boasts fantastic concentration, aromas of golden raisins, white figs, and candied lemon peel, and flavors of pralines and dried pineapple all flecked with fennel and a distinct salinity that lingers through the finish. \$31.99 for 375ml

## **Château d'Anna Cuvée Louis d'Or 2011 Sauternes**

Made entirely from Semillon and defined by its flavors of lemon marmalade and marzipan, this is a honeyed wine that embodies all the generosity of great Sauternes, yet at a fraction of what you might expect to pay. \$25 for 375ml

## **Donnafugata Ben Ryé 2015 Passito di Pantelleria**

Golden raisins, dried figs, and a hint of honeysuckle on the nose precede a wonderfully weighty palate that rolls with flavors of honey-drizzled and caramelized pineapples, white nectarines, mangos, and the slightest nod in the direction of white licorice and whole clove. \$40 for 375ml

## **Inniskillin Gold Vidal Icewine 2014 VQA Niagara Peninsula**

Aromas of candied and dehydrated pineapples, lemon and orange marmalade, and apricot conserves set the stage for a palate that's remarkably fresh given its sweetness and viscosity. Distinct flavors of apricots are joined by a lingering note of orange blossom on the finish. The current vintage, 2017, is available for \$49.95 for 375ml

## **Royal Tokaji Gold Label 6 Puttonyos Tokaji Aszu Szt. Tamas 2016**

Toasted coconut, coffee, and cacao nibs hover above the glass, and slide into unforgettable flavors of honeysuckle, crisp autumn apples and pears, ripe stone fruit, and honey tuille. Remarkable. \$115-\$120.

## **Swanson Vineyards Angelica, Amador County**

The liquid embodiment of maple-syrup-drizzled pancakes with lightly toasted walnuts. Not overly sweet, with raisins, fig newtons, pralines, and a savory undertow just barely pulsing beneath the surface. It's tough to find and will set you back more than \$100, but if you do come across this one, snap it up immediately.

## **Tasca d'Almerita Tenuta Capofaro 2016 Salina**

Candied orange and lemon peel, jasmine, and honey define this gem from the island of Salina, a two-hour boat ride from Sicily. The sweetness is balanced so well that the beautiful ripe fruit shines through without being overwhelmed by the sugar. \$42 for 500ml

## **Taylor Fladgate 30 Year Old Tawny Port**

Transcendent, nutty aromas of apricot preserves follow through to a palate that's also layered with candied orange peel, honey, toasted coconut, coffee, and the slightest hint of mushrooms. It's sweet, generous, and incredibly balanced, and the suggestion of salinity on the finish makes it impossible to stop sipping.

\$139.99

## **Zuccardi Malamado Malbec Vino Licoroso, Mendoza**

Generous and lush, with crushed blueberries and blackberries, warm figs, chocolate, and tobacco. The whiff of cracked black peppercorn on the finish sets the sachertorte and rich cherry flavors into stunning relief. \$20