

ICE WINE or EISWEIN



Dave & Emily Margulis
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Ice wine is made from grapes that are left on the vine to freeze. The water in the grapes freezes, but the grapes do not. The frost grapes are much sweeter and produce a wine that is much sweeter. Due to the fact that making ice wine is a very labor intensive and risky process. The results are a relatively small amount of wine. The grapes must be left on the vines to freeze, so Mother Nature plays a large part in the process. If left on the vines too long the grapes will be ruined. If harvested too soon the wine won't be as sweet.

The first ice wines were produced in Germany in around 1794. The grapes for ice wine are naturally frozen still on the vines. This means the grapes are picked by hand in the early morning just after the first frost. Grapes aren't frozen in a freezer to make ice wine. If done this way an inferior wine will result.

Once harvested, the grapes are pressed, and the juice extracted. The juice is actually bits of ice. The flavor comes from the concentrated sugar and acid, which didn't freeze. Leaving the grapes on the vine longer creates a sweeter grape juice. After pressing, the ice wine is stored in oak barrels for fermentation. Ice wine comes from colder climates like Germany, Austria, Canada, and the northern United States. Oregon, and Washington state produce some very good ice wine. The process of making ice wine is so time consuming, it tends to be very expensive. Ice wine is best when served chilled, and goes well with dessert, or as a dessert. Enjoy your ice wine slowly.

Your Personal Wine Consultants

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