

---

# Picking wine for Easter dinner is a challenge

BY DAVE ECKERTSPECIAL TO THE STAR

We're rapidly approaching Easter Sunday, which comes early this year on April 5. For many of us, the holiday culminates in a large family meal. Like Thanksgiving, some families choose brunch/lunch time for the meal, while others do dinner.

Unlike Thanksgiving, though, where the vast majority of meals center on turkey and all the trimmings, Easter feasting often means ham, one of the more challenging wine matches, or lamb, one of the more flexible with regards to wine.

With both options in mind, and a little bubbly to get things started, I've come up with some suggested interesting sippers for the Easter meal.

Some of the wines and producers are new to me. I've included well-known regions and grape varieties, and lesser known areas and grapes. The common denominator in all these are tasty bottlings that won't break the bank but will provide delicious matches with a wide range of cuisines.

Let's begin with the starter. It's kind of an unwritten rule in the Eckert household that all holiday meals, and many non-holiday meals for that matter, start with some bubbly.

I'd love to say that means Champagne all the time, as I truly believe there is nothing that matches the elegance, excellence and quality of Champagne. But alas, Champagne's price tag often pushes me toward other tasty, more affordable, sparkling wine options.

One such option is prosecco, a lightly fizzy wine from the Veneto region of Italy. Proseccos are produced with just a hint of sweetness. They are soft in the mouth and pleasantly fruity with good acidity, all qualities making them good matches for saltier/sweeter types of food.

Ideally, I'd say that would mean something like prosciutto and melon, but for Easter I'm thinking more of the prosecco matching up with a glazed ham. I've tried it, and it's a pretty darned good pairing.

There are a host of good, inexpensive proseccos on the market. I recently tried the Bellenda San Fermo prosecco Superiore. This prosecco ... so it's richer than some other versions you may find. I believe a bolder prosecco is better suited to handling a honey- or pineapple-glazed ham, and I wouldn't mind at all starting with a glass of the Bellenda before moving to the dinner table, then having a second glass with the ham.

