

Made for each other



MICHAEL
daly

In January and February, 14 restaurants and cafes across the Waikato participated in The Great Waikato Food Challenge, developing a dish to showcase produce available in the Waikato.

With this in mind I have decided to follow suit and create a beautiful little dessert using some of region's finest ingredients.

One is honey, and the other is wine.

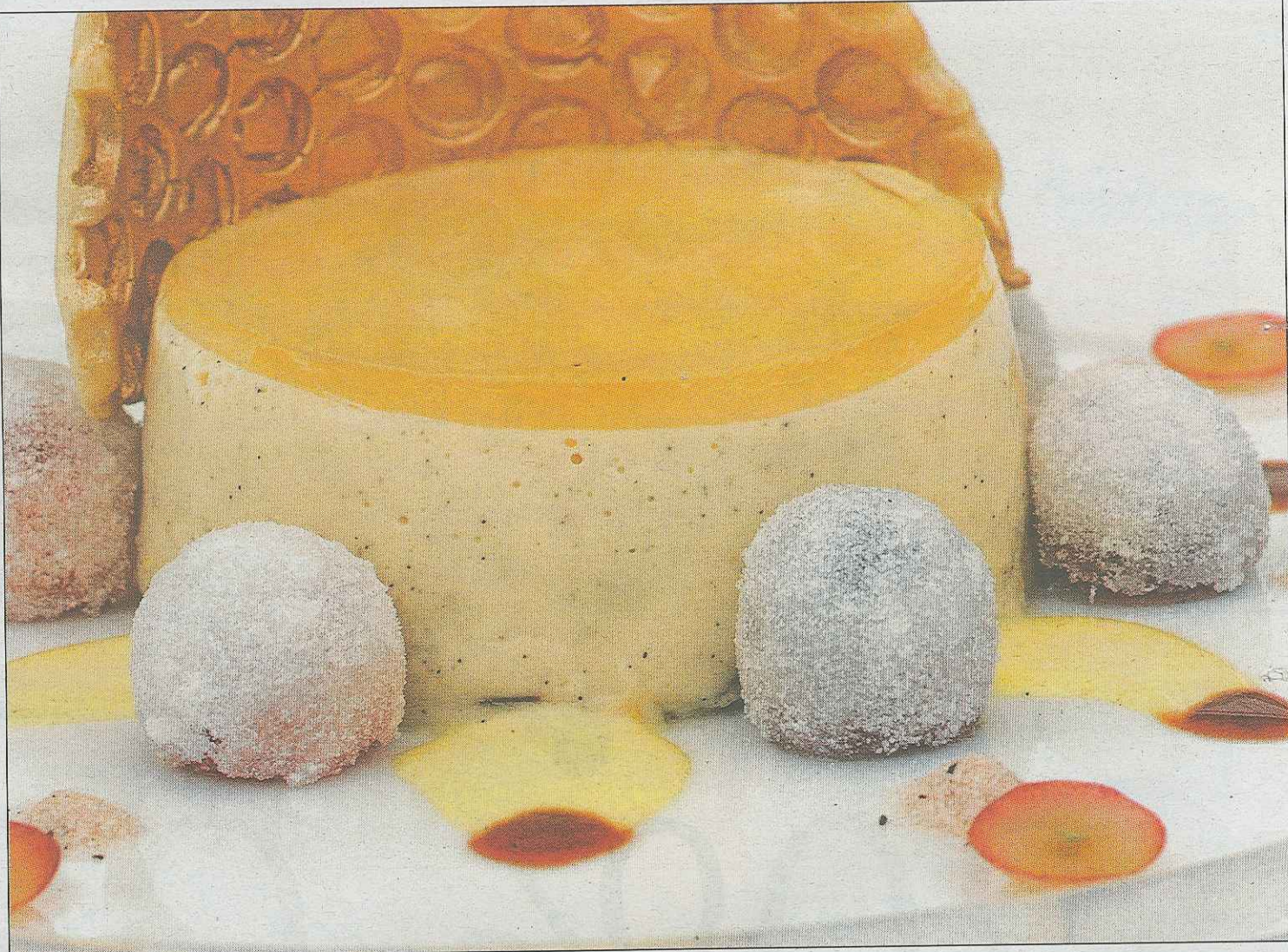
The first ingredient comes from Vitality Limited, a boutique business specialising in quality honey.

Vitality's beekeeping operations are based in the Waikato and King Country. Their honey is sourced from the pristine Marokopa Valley and Waikato farmlands. It is collected from a wide variety of plants, but predominantly willow, clover, gorse and buttercup.

Vitality owns and operates 100 beehives, each hive producing a range of monoflora and multiflora honeys each year.

The honey that I'm using in this recipe is called Sweetree Marokopa spring honey, collected from the hills of Marokopa. The nectar is predominantly from the native rewarewa tree and the honey has a silky, velvety texture with a tangy aftertaste.

The second ingredient comes from Hilltop Wines, a small boutique vineyard on Pencarrow Rd between Hamilton and Cambridge overlooking the Waikato basin. Being on top of a hill helps



Perfect pairing: Local Waikato honey and wine are a winning combination in this divine bavaroi.

Photo: CHRIS HILLOCK

maximise their sunshine hours and means optimum balanced ripeness.

I'm using one of their award-winning wines called Late Harvest Flora. I first tasted this wine at a friend's dinner party a couple of weeks ago and instantly fell in love with it. This wine is a cross between a gewurztraminer and semillon. It has a perfectly sweet bouquet of pears, figs and a hint of spice.

Combining honey and wine together was a must for me in this recipe.

The flavour of the sweet wine with the citrus floral flavours of the honey is a match made in heaven.

VITALITY HONEY & FLORA GRAPE BAVAROIS

200ml milk
Zest of 1 large lemon
4 egg yolks (size 7)
160g Marokopa spring honey
3 gelatine leaves or 1 ½ tsp powder gelatine (for the bavaroi)
1 cup cream (whipped)
1 tsp vanilla seed paste or ½ vanilla pod
150g red or black grapes (seeded and diced)

½ cup flora wine
1 tbsp Marokopa spring honey
2 gelatine leaves or 1 tsp powdered gelatine (for the wine jelly)

■ **Before you start:** Prepare a loose bottomed flan ring with a disc of greaseproof paper on the bottom or for a simpler way, just chill four glasses of your choice.

■ **To make the bavaroi (honey mousse):** Take a heavy-based saucepan and heat the milk with the lemon zest until boiling point. Whisk the eggs, vanilla and honey together until combined. Pour the hot milk on to the eggs and mix well. Add back into the saucepan and cook over a low heat for 5-10 minutes or until the mixture coats the back of the spoon. Make sure you keep stirring or it will split and turn to scrambled eggs.

■ **How to use gelatine:** If using leaf gelatine, soak it in some cold water until soft. If using powder gelatine, mix the powder gelatine with 1 tablespoon of cold water in a cup and place it in a water bath of simmering water. Wait until it turns into a clear liquid. Then whisk it into the custard to melt. Pass the custard through a fine

strainer into a clean stainless steel bowl. Set the bowl into a sink of ice cold water and keep stirring until the custard as cooled down and starting to semi set. Gently fold through the whipped cream and grapes.

■ **Setting the mousse:** Divide the mixture evenly between the four glasses or straight into the flan ring. Cover with a piece of glad-wrap and chill in the fridge for a couple of hours until set.

■ **To make the Hilltop flora wine jelly:** Bring the wine and honey to the boil. Add in the gelatine to dissolve and place the pot into a bath of ice cold water. Cool the jelly right down. Pour the jelly over the top of the mousse and place back into the fridge to reset.

■ **Finishing the dessert:** Toss some small grapes in a little melted honey and drain off in a fine sieve. Toss the grapes through some castor sugar until completely covered. Arrange nicely on top and serve with a nice chilled glass of Hilltop flora wine. Serves four.

Note: If the custard sets too much while cooling it down on the ice, take the bowl and place it over a low heat to melt the custard again. Repeat the process until semi set before adding in the whipped cream.

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