

SHEMITTAH WINE CONCERNS FOR THE MONTREAL COMMUNITY



NISSAN 5784 - APRIL 2024



Dear Montreal Community,

The MK would like to notify the public that Shemitta wines are currently present on the wine market. As we approach the upcoming Yom Tov of Pesach, it's important to be aware of the intricate laws surrounding shemittah wine and its consumption.

Shemittah refers to the seventh year in the agricultural cycle, during which agricultural activities are prohibited in Eretz Yisrael. Produce grown on Shemittah year carry a special sanctity known as "kedushat sheviit." **This inherent kedushah requires us to treat shemittah products in a very specific and controlled manner, even for those outside Eretz Yisrael.**

1. Handling Shemittah Products: Shemittah products must be handled with utmost caution and adherence to halachic guidelines:

- Portion control: One may not allow shemittah produce to be wasted
- Leftovers of shemittah cannot be disposed of with regular waste.
- Leftovers must be set aside until they are no longer fit for consumption.
- Any form of unconventional preparation, such as using wine to cook is prohibited.
- The Havdalah candle may not be extinguished in shemittah grape juice or wine.
- They may not be gifted to anyone one who may not handle them appropriately.

2. Wine Concerns: The last shemittah year was in 2022, making all Israeli wines from that year subject to shemittah laws. It's essential to carefully examine wine labels for indications of shemittah status. Often it is indicated on the back label.

3.Otzar Beit Din: The most common Shemitta wine on the Montreal market is the Otzar Beit Din wine. These wines are common at the SAQ outlets. Otzar Beit Din label implies that the wine has Kedusha and must therefore be treated appropriately. The bottle is generally labeled on the back.

4.Yevul Nochri: Yevul Nochri products are a subject of dispute among the greatest authorities. Some believe that they do not have Kedushat Sheviit, while others believe they have full Kedusha and must be treated accordingly. Those who are stringent on Yevul Nochri may be required to perform "Biur" on the day of purchase

5.Bottom Line: It's important to understand that even when not specified on the bottle, Israeli wines from 2022 may still carry Kedushat Shviit due to various methods employed by wineries. **We recommend that all 2022 wines be treated in accordance with the halachic guidelines mentioned above.**

If you are unsure about how to handle shemittah wines or have questions about their status, we strongly recommend to ask and seek guidance from a reputable halachic authority prior to purchasing any 2022 Israeli wine.

Wishing the community a Chag Pesach Sameach.

