

PARTICULAR FOOD & WINE PARTNERS

Artichokes - Make most wines taste like heavy metal. Drink water, or squeeze lemon onto the chokes, which seems to tone down the tinny edges, and team with a high-acid, fresh dry white.

Asparagus - Also a difficult customer. A dry white with lots of flavor, like fresh Sauvignon Blanc.

Avocado - Rhine Riesling, white port.

Beef Roast - Cape Bordeaux blend, Cabernet, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Pinot, just about any serious red. Cold roast beef: room for a bit of light here, reds that can take a spot of chilling, Pinot Noir, also Rosé, Blanc de Noir, sparkling dry Rosé. See also stews below.

Bobotie - Chenin Blanc, Pinotage, Rhine Riesling.

Bouillabaisse - Fresh young white, Sauvignon Blanc, dry Rosé.

Braais - Depends what's being braaied, but whether meat, fish or fowl, wines that have character and muscle, not shrinking violets which would be overwhelmed by the smoke for a start.

Calamari - Sauvignon Blanc, dry white blend, MCC.

Charcuterie - Simple fresh reds.

Cheeses - Beware, those that tend to go ammoniacal with maturity can kill any wine. A good cheddar can be very good with an elegant red or ruby port. Cream and goat's cheeses are better with full whites – try a Semillon. A slab of real fresh parmesan (NOT the type that looks like dehydrated flea droppings) is, to my mind, cheesedom's most brilliant good red wine partner. Blue cheese, as long as not over the top, is good with rich, sweet wines, e.g. NLH, and port.

Chicken - (roasted) Champagne, best red or white. Actually chicken is a just-about-any-wine food.

Chinese - MCC dry (or dryish) white with flavour, Rhine Riesling.

Chocolate - Difficult. Demi-sec bubbly, red Muscadet, Cape Pineau des Charentes (see Laborie). Or wait and have a glass of dry champagne after the chocolate mousse.

Crudites - Simple dry white.

Curries - Beyers Truter of Kanonkop recommends (what else?) Pinotage; Giorgio Dalla Cia of Meerlust Cabernet, or a Cape "Bordeaux" blend. Chardonnay is good with a fish curry, especially when coconut milk is an ingredient. A cheerful, very slightly off-dry Chenin is fine too. Add a slight sprinkle (as in Graca) and it's even better. But beer is best. We find Gewürtz too musky-flowery, except perhaps with a sweetish Cape-Malay dish.

Duck - Fruity young red, Champagne, Shiraz, off dry Rhine Riesling, Pinot Noir.

Eggs – Not great for or with any wine, but a simple omelette calls for a simple glass of red.

Fish - (grilled) Sauvignon Blanc; (cream sauce): Chardonnay, Chardonnay blend; (freshwater) more delicate white, MCC; (salmon) Chardonnay, Champagne, fruity, non-tannic young red, Pinotage (red wine sauce) red used in recipe, Pinot Noir.

Foie gras - Sweet white, NHL/SHL, MCC, Merlot.

Fruit - Rosé MCC, sweet sparkling, sweet dessert. Beware of citrus fruits they can overpower/sour a wine.

Game birds - Rose, Pinot Noir, Cape Bordeaux (the darker the meat the darker/stronger the wine!)

Ham - Young Pinot Noir; fresh, juicy red.

Hamburgers - Dry, simple red.

Ice Cream - (If not too sweet): good bubbly.

Kidneys - Full red, Rhine Riesling, Chardonnay.

Lamb (roast) Cabernet, Merlot etc; (chops); Shiraz, young Cab. Try avoid mint sauce – it distorts even the taste of minty, new clone Cabs.

Liver - Fruity forceful young red, maybe Pinotage.

Mushrooms - Pinot Noir.

Mustard sauce - light red, Pinotage.

Nuts - Port after meal; sherry before; nutty desserts: MCC.

Oysters - MCC, Sauvignon Blanc, lightly wooded or unwooded Chardonnay.

Oxtail – Shiraz

Pasta - (seafood) Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay (cream, cheese, egg, meat, tomato sauce) sturdy red.

Pate - Champagne, Gerwürtztraminer, Rhine Riesling, Pinot Noir.

Pizza - Depends on ingredients, but also see pasta above.

Pork - Off dry white, red, Rosé, Zinfandel, Pinotage with spare ribs. In Portugal, roast suckling pig is often teamed with bubbly.

Quiche - Full fruity white, Riesling, Gerwürtz, Sylvaner.

Rabbit - Depends on how it's cooked and the ingredients. Anything from great to simple red or white.

Ratatouille - Light fruity red, Rosé, Blanc de Noir.

Risotto - (fish) medium-bodied dry white (mushroom) Pinot Noir.

Salads - Go easy on the vinaigrette – vinegar (or even too much lemon juice) affects wine. A prickly fresh white or Rosé with a Salade Nicoise. A Chardonnay with a grand shellfish salad. Or something non-serious like a Blanc de Noir. Or top up one's water table.

Sardines - (grilled) Vinho Verde, young red.

Shellfish - (grilled, boiled, steamed, cold with mayonnaise) Sauvignon Blanc, crisp young Chenin, off dry Rhine Riesling (rich sauce) Chardonnay, Semillon blend, MCC; (peri peri) light petillant white; (mussels) Sauvignon, Chenin Blanc.

Smoked Fish - Aromatic white, Sauvignon, fat Chardonnay, Gerwürtz and Riesling, dry or white with a touch of sweetness and good fresh acidity.

Snacks - (of the canape sort): aperitif white, fruity, dry to off-dry, kir, sparkling white/Rosé, Blanc de Noir, dry sherry.

Snails - Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, dry Riesling.

Souffles - (Cheese) red; (fish) white; (dessert) dessert white.

Steak - Reds (pepper steak) somehow smoothes tannins, so doesn't need a mellow old bottle.

Stews, etc. - Cut of meat and ingredients dictate. (Cassoulet) hearty red (coq au vin, civet de lapin, boeuf bourginon) Pinot Noir; (sausages and sauerkraut) Riesling, Gerwürtz, Chenin; (paella) uncomplicated full red: (fish casserole) see Bouillabaisse; (vegetables) light red, Chenin Blanc.

Sushi - A not too-grand (nor too rich) Chardonnay.

Sweetbreads - Chardonnay, or fine claret, Pinot.

Thai - Draughts of cool fresh white for the chilli-hot dishes. Lemon grass, coconut milk and good Chardonnay go surprisingly well together. We've not found any reds really successful, although a chilled Nouveau style could hold it's own.

Tongue - Gently dry white, fruity red.

Tripe - Hearty red, simple dry white, dry Rosé.

Turkey - Zinfandel, dry Rosé, Pinot Noir.

Veal -Take your pick, depending on preparation. With vitello tonnato try a chilled, light red.

Vegetables - Sauvignon Blanc.

Venison - Powerful, Pinotage, mature Bordeaux.