

HOW TO PAIR WINE WITH FOOD

Acidity Makes Wines Versatile and “Food Friendly”

- A wine’s body and acidity are as important to matching it with food as its flavor characteristics.
- High-acid wines are easy to pair with a wide variety of foods and will balance and temper a food’s saltiness, richness or smokiness. Champagne pairs well with caviar or smoked salmon; Sauvignon Blanc and Sangiovese are well suited to the high acid of tomato and citrus, respectively.



- High-acidity foods can make tannic wines more astringent and low-acid wines dull.
- Acidity can be a wonderful counterpoint to rich foods, like a Burgundy with roast duck or Chianti with pasta carbonara.

“Bridge” Ingredients Tie Food Flavors and Wine Together

- Adding crumbled goat cheese to a salad makes it a better match for Sauvignon Blanc because the cheese and wine share similar tangy flavors.
- A sauce with peppercorns would pair well with a peppery wine, such as Syrah.
- A sprinkling of toasted nuts on top of a dish helps bridge it to a toasty, buttery and nutty Chardonnay.

- Mint and Sauvignon Blanc or rosemary and Riesling work well together because of complimentary aromatic compounds.



Create a Contrast or Mirror Flavors in the Food

- Great food and wine combinations come from contrasting or matching flavors, texture and taste components.
- When wine is used in the dish’s preparation (a marinade or sauce), the wine served with it should mirror the dish.
- Wine can contrast food by type: roast duck and Pinot Noir are fabulous together because duck is succulent and rich while Pinot Noir’s acidity is a great foil to complement those flavors.
- Wine can mirror food by type: oak-aged Chardonnay and cream sauce are each thick, rich, buttery and creamy.
- Bold, full-flavored reds like Cabernet Sauvignon or Zinfandel will overpower light dishes but are excellent paired with rich meats like a roast.
- Delicate wines are unable to stand up to a dramatically spiced dish but go beautifully with refined dishes.

Consider Complexity

- To best showcase a complex or aged wine, pair it with a simply prepared dish made with high-quality ingredients. A complicated, multi-layered entrée may overwhelm the wine or distract from its subtle and elegant nuances. This is especially true for mature wines.
- For example, a fine Cabernet Sauvignon or top-notch Bordeaux should be paired with a top-quality, but simple dish such as a fine steak or roast. An aged Riesling is an equally great match with steamed prawns or pan-fried brook trout.

Be Adventurous and Have Fun

- Once you’ve got the food-and-wine basics sorted out and you know the various cuisines you prefer, be creative. Many wine lovers adore Riesling with Chinese and Thai dishes; others like Pinot Noir and sushi.



Don’t Forget Dessert

- Ruby Port works very well with dark chocolate and Tawny Port is great with crème brûlée.
- Sparkling wines, like a rosé Champagne, a Prosecco or a Cava, can be wonderful with desserts that feature fresh fruits.
- Cabernet Sauvignon and dark chocolate is a pairing that works well.

COMPATIBILITY

		Seafood with Citrus Sauce Aperitif Salad Sushi	Baked/Poached Fish Shellfish	Roasted Fowl/Seafood with Rich Sauces Cream-Based Pasta or Risotto Grilled Fish (e.g. Salmon) Chicken	Dense Seared Fish (e.g. Tuna) Tomato-Based Pasta	Grilled/Broiled/Roasted Red Meats Marinated/BBQ Meats Spicy Foods	Aged Cheeses Fresh Cheeses Hard Cheeses	Rich, Creamy Dessert Chocolate Dessert Fruity Dessert Fresh Fruit
▶ Light to Full ▶	Soave	●●●●●●		●●			●	
	Orvieto	●●●●●●		●●			●	
	Vermentino	●●●●●●		●●			●	
	Muscadet	●●●●●●		●			●	
	Chenin Blanc	●●●●●●		●			●●	●
	Albariño	●●●●●●		●			●	
	Pinot Grigio	●●●●●●		●●	●		●●	
	Sauvignon Blanc	●●●●●●		●			●	
	Riesling	●●●●●●		●		●	●●●	●
	Gewürztraminer	●●●●●●		●●●●		●	●●●	●
Unoaked Chardonnay	●●●●●●		●●			●●		
Chablis	●●●●●●		●			●		
Viognier	●●●●●●		●●●●		●	●●●		
Medium-Bodied White Burgundy	●●●●●●		●●●●			●●●	●●●	
Vintage Champagne	●●●●●●		●●●●			●●●	●●●	
Oaked Chardonnay	●●●●●●		●●●●			●●●	●●●	
Full-Bodied White Burgundy	●●●●●●		●●●●		●	●●●	●●●	
▶	Dry Rosé	●●●●●●	●●	●●●		●	●●	
	Valpolicella	●●●●●●		●●●			●●	
	Beaujolais	●●●●●●		●●●		●	●●	●
	Barbera	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●	
	Medium-Bodied Red Burgundy	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●	●
	New World Pinot Noir	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●	●
	Chianti	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●	
	Full-Bodied Red Burgundy	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●	
	Rioja	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●	
	Merlot	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●	
	Châteauneuf-du-Pape	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●	
	Barbaresco	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●	
	Brunello	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●	
	Barolo	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●	
	Bordeaux	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●	
Super Tuscan	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●		
Cabernet Sauvignon	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●		
Zinfandel	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●		
Syrah	●●●●●●		●●●●		●●●●	●●●		
▶	Moscato d'Asti	●					●	●●
	Late Harvest Wines						●●	●●●
	Sauternes						●	●●
	Tokai						●	●●
	Tawny Port						●●	●●
Vintage Port						●●	●●●	