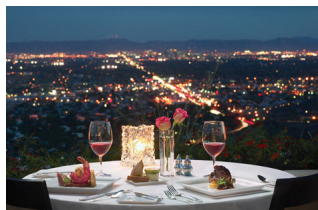


Tips for Wine Pairing and Purchasing

Written by Written by Melissa Larsen

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We asked two local wine pros, Brent Karlicek, wine merchant for Postino winecafé and Postino Central, and Steven Kelley, sommelier at Pointe Hilton Tapatio Cliffs Resort's Different Pointe of View restaurant, for their tried-and-true tips on purchasing for parties and pairing wine with your favorite foods.



Wine and Food Pairing

While most people follow the “white wine with fish and fowl, and red wine with meat” school of thought when it comes to pairing wine with dinner, Karlicek says one fail-proof rule of thumb is putting wine with fare from corresponding origins. For example, he suggests a “refreshing Spanish Albariño with octopus salad or an earthy Oregon pinot noir with alderwood-smoked salmon.” And Kelley offers up a pairing advisory: “You never want the wine to overpower the flavors in the dish, or vice versa.”



Don't Judge a Wine by its Label

It's easy to fall for the bottle with the prettiest or most modern label. Therefore, it's important to be informed about other visible indicators, like whether the bottle has a cork or twist-off cap. “Cork taint can disrupt a wine's taste by leaving the affected wine with a musty odor and taste,” Kelley says. “Twist-off caps eliminate the risk of cork taint.” Though cork taint affects only a small percentage of wines, Kelley says that many high-end vintners are going the twist-off route.



Looking for Something Different?

Kelley suggests trying a selection from Spain or South American, both very fashionable regions for winemaking at the moment. “The popular Argentinean malbec is a rich, full-bodied red that blends fruity and oaky flavors,” he says. “The increasingly sought-after Spanish wines feature both red and white wines that were once considered rustic, but are now made in a more consumer-friendly style.”

Party Picks

Kelley believes that the time to splurge on a higher priced bottle is for a dinner party, and Karlicek thinks a get-together is a perfect time to bring out the bubbly. “I'm of the mind that Champagne and other sparkling wines (Cava from Spain, domestic bubbles from California and Oregon) are the most versatile and underrated options when setting the table or throwing a party,” he says. He also adds that bubbly is a great match for salty, party foods.

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Mouthwatering Mathematics

"When purchasing for a dinner party, a good estimate is one bottle per person," Karlicek says. "Guests will most likely consume two glasses of wine per hour, with a bottle offering four servings. Adjust your purchase based upon the anticipated length of your event." Sounds easy enough. Happy sipping!