

Emily NOLAN

WINE CHEAT SHEET

You don't have to buy \$100+ wine for it to be excellent!

Whites:

Torrontés for white - it's like a sauvignon blanc and they are ALL GOOD! It's an Argentine wine and their climate is so perfect for this wine varietal that you can get a great bottle for under \$15. You can't go wrong!

How to pair: With its light aromatic style and cool serving temperature Torrontés is an excellent match with the foods of the spice route (Indian, Asian). Torrontés makes a great match alongside coconut curries and Thai spice peanut dishes. In terms of intensity of food, opt for light colored meats such as poultry, fish and tofu because they won't overwhelm the delicate flavor, aroma and acidity in the wine.

Malbec

Try Archaval Ferrer

How to pair: Malbec is a medium to full-bodied red wine, and thus, it begs to be paired with more full-flavored foods. However, unlike Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec doesn't have a super long finish (or as aggressive tannins), which means it will pair extremely well with leaner red meats, and even lighter cuts like dark meat turkey or roasted pork. The pairing secret of Malbec is that it works well with pepper, sage, creamy mushroom sauces, melted cheese, and in particular, blue cheese.
YUM!

Portuguese Wines

There are diverse selections of Portuguese wine that are really good and hail from an up-and-coming region -- check them out!

Reds:

Pinot Noir

Banshee is a great affordable Pinot. It's produced out of Sonoma so again the climate helps a ton because it's a tough wine to produce.

How to pair: I like to think of Pinot Noir as a catch-all food pairing wine.

Pinot Noir is light enough for salmon but complex enough to hold up to some richer meat including duck. In a pinch, when everyone orders a vastly different entree at a restaurant, you can usually win by picking Pinot Noir; it will make everyone happy.

Chianti

Chianti is a fruit forward easy drinking wine. Isola e Olena is generally at a lower price point (in the \$20s) and great. Italian Chianti is usually less expensive and just as good for everyday drinking.

How to pair: Chianti has savory flavors paired with high acidity and coarse tannin which makes it an incredible wine with food. The high acid cuts through richer fatty dishes and stands up to tomato sauces (pizza!). All that dry, powdery tannin makes Chianti wines ideal with dishes that use olive oil or highlight rich pieces of meat such as Bistecca alla Fiorentina.

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Reds:

Rosé

Rosé is generally very inexpensive and VERY good, even at lower price points. Whispering Angel is very popular but most roses are really good. Try Lavignone, Chateau Lastours, Bernard Baudry Chinon and so many more.

How to pair: Rose is best when paired with spices and nightshades (tomato, red pepper, eggplant). Look to Morocco, the Middle East and India for inspiration.

Cabernet Sauvignon

Try Round Pond, Elizabeth Spencer, and Ballentine (for those in the SF Bay Area --they only sell in Napa).

How to pair: Cabernet Sauvignon is one of the more complex and layered wines out there. It has higher tannins and a savory character often described as black pepper and tobacco. Because of Cab's traits, look for foods high in fat and umami flavors for Cabernet Sauvignon food pairing. Try Cabernet Sauvignon with a charred gruyere burger, a mushroom pizza with tomato sauce or some marinated ribeye steak. To champion the fruit flavors in Cabernet Sauvignon, don't pair it with chocolate. Instead, pair wine with braised short ribs or mushroom stroganoff. The powerful umami flavors overcome the savory quality of Cabernet Sauvignon leaving the berry flavors out in the open to shine.

Tips:

1. Look at Wine Enthusiast for recommendations on what wines are doing well. They do these round ups: under \$15, under \$30, under \$50, etc. that's really helpful in discovering new wines.
2. Shop online at K&L, Total Wine, or Bevmo

Rules of thumb:

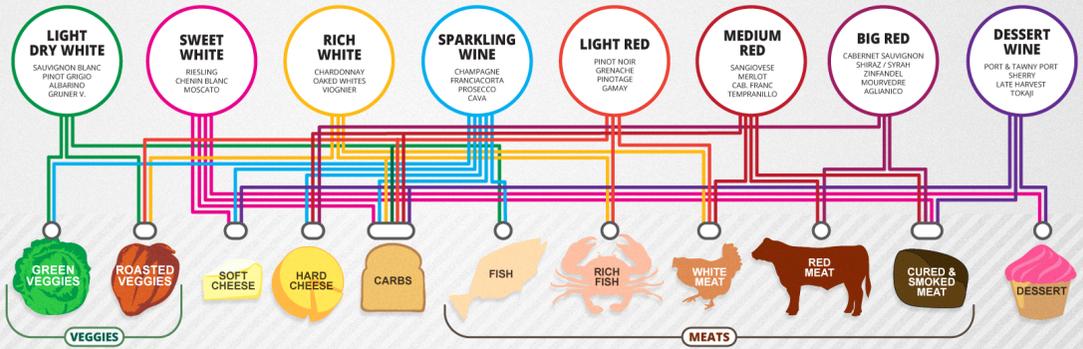
1. Rose and Sauvignon Blanc are the least expensive/easiest to make
2. Chardonnays get tricky because if they're too buttery or too oaky it makes them bad
3. Reds are more complex so they end up being pricey
4. Pinots are the most delicate to make. The really great high-end pinots end up being pretty pricey.
5. Malbecs and Torrontes are less expensive because they're made in Argentina and weather is easier on the grapes and easier to produce.

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FOODS THAT ARE DIFFICULT TO PAIR WITH WINE

- asparagus
- green bean
- artichoke
- brussel sprouts
- chocolate

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Curator notes:

Of course, what makes good wine “good” is that you enjoy and LOVE it. It doesn’t matter who recommends the wine or what the rating is – go with what you like, experiment, take notes, and enjoy the journey. In many ways, wine is art and it is a lot of fun to discover new tasting notes...but most importantly, enjoy them with friends & family.

Wines curated by Elizabeth Soares

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Food pairings by Wine Folley