

# Wine & Food...

## a match made in heaven

by Butch Steadman  
Dorignac's Director of Wine & Spirits



Living in such an incredibly food rich city, I have truly come to appreciate the relationship between wine and food. Yes, I love both wine and food on their own, but when perfectly paired the experience is double the pleasure.

I am asked daily to suggest the right wine for a certain dish. And, while I'm always happy to make a recommendation, the first rule when pairing wine and food is that there are no rules. So if you prefer red wine, you can absolutely enjoy it with fish if you simply follow a few suggestions. The first is the most basic, but is also the most important: drink what you like.

Always take into account the weight of both the dish and the wine. For example, pairing a light Italian Pinot Grigio with a grilled steak is not the best choice as the beef's bold flavors will overpower the wine. A better choice for steak would be a rich, flavorful red such as Bordeaux or California Cabernet Sauvignon. Simply put, serve delicate food with a light wine and robust food with a bold wine.

Next, be sure to consider the sauce and preparation of the dish. For instance, a delicate piece of grilled fish would work nicely with an elegant Sauvignon Blanc, but fry it and cover it in a rich, cream sauce and now it's better suited for a full-bodied Chardonnay.

Think about the flavor profiles of both the wine and the dish, as a great match can be created by complimenting or contrasting. For example, dishes with a hint of sweetness, like honey-mustard, Italian tomato sauce and Teriyaki, will be complimented by slightly sweet wines such as Chenin Blanc and Riesling.

However, the same Chenin Blanc or Riesling can work beautifully with spicy cuisine like Thai, Cajun or Creole, as the sweet flavors of the wine contrast and offset the heat of the dish.

Another good tip is to consider regional combinations, meaning select a wine that comes from the same area as the dish because both have evolved to compliment the other. This explains why spaghetti and tomato sauce tastes so good with Italian Chianti and a nice, crisp Alsatian Riesling works so well with sauerkraut and sausage, a classic dish in Alsace, France.

Also if you are cooking with wine, then serve the same wine you use in the dish, which will help marry the two. The best way to understand how wine and food interact is to experiment. When you have the chance taste different wines with the same dish and in no time you'll be pairing like a pro.

### Classic Pairings with Butch's Picks:

Chablis & Oysters

*Joseph Drouhin AC Chablis \$18.99*

Champagne & Caviar

*Perrier Jouet Grand Brut \$36.99*

Pinot Grigio & Prosciutto

*Villa Cornaro LS Pinot Grigio \$14.99*

Sauternes & Foie Gras

*Chateau Sudiurant \$59.99/375ml*

Pinot Noir & Duck

*Diamond Oaks Pinot Noir \$14.99*

Cabernet Sauvignon & Steak

*Charles Krug Cabernet \$24.99*

Bordeaux & Lamb

*Marquis de Vauban \$12.99*

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