

THE WINE & FOOD PAIRING GUIDE



spring

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Spring is in full swing—and that means it's time to wipe down your patio furniture, put the bounty of the season to good use and pop open some wine. And when it comes to pairing your favorite springtime dishes with the right pours, the trick is simple: match the main components of the dish (dominant flavor, character, intensity and the comparative level of its fats to acids) with the main components of the wine (acidity, viscosity, tannin, alcohol level, flavor type and intensity), so each enhances the other. That does not always mean complementing. Sometimes, a contrasting style is ideal.

You'll find both of these pairing combinations in this guide, along with excellent, easy-to-make recipes, like seared sea scallops, Greek-style lamb chops and an outstanding mock butterscotch dessert. So, we urge you, spend some time with this special spring pairing guide. You'll score big points with your guests.

—MARINA VATAJ



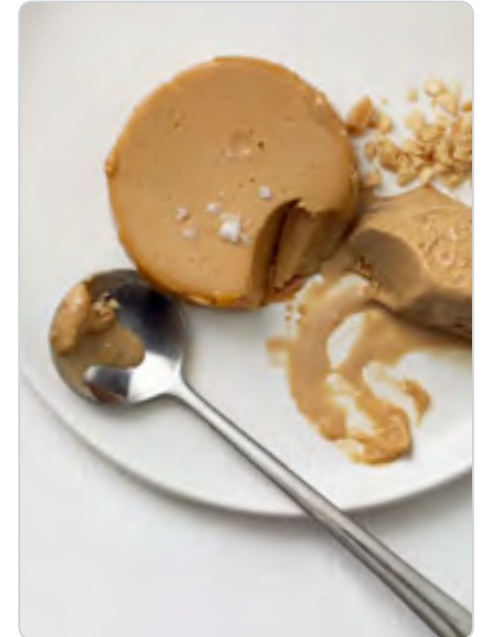
white wine PAIRINGS

- 4 Melitzanosalta:
An Elevated Eggplant Dip
- 5 Perfect Pan-Seared
Sea Scallops



red wine PAIRINGS

- 7 Gochujang-Marinated
Grilled Pork Belly
- 8 Israeli-Style
Lamb Chops



dessert wine PAIRING

- 10 "Butterscotch"
Pudding

AN ELEVATED EGGPLANT DIP

George Pagonis, executive chef/partner at **Kapnos Taverna** in Arlington, Virginia, serves this stellar *melitzanosalta* with anything from pita chips to crudité. The key is to make it ahead of time and refrigerate, as it only gets better as the flavors meld.

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| 2 red bell peppers | 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil |
| 2 Tbsp canola oil | 1 cup crumbled feta cheese, divided |
| 2 Tbsp kosher salt | 2 Tbsp chopped mint |
| 3 large eggplants | Pepper, to taste |
| 1/2 cup toasted walnuts | Sea salt, to taste |
| 1/2 red onion, cut into 1/4-inch dice | |
| 3 Tbsp red wine vinegar | |

Preheat oven to 375°F. Place red peppers in bowl, and toss with canola oil and salt. Place on cookie sheet and bake 45 minutes, or until skin blisters. Remove from oven, place in clean bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Once peppers cool, remove stems, seeds and skin. Cut peppers into 1/2-inch squares.

Preheat grill to medium. Pierce eggplants around exterior, and toss with canola oil and salt. Grill eggplants until completely charred on one side, and rotate. Roast until eggplant is falling apart and almost

burned, about 1 hour. Remove from grill. Cut eggplants in half, scoop out insides, discard skins and chop into small pieces.

Place walnuts on a cookie sheet. Toast in oven until golden brown. Chop into small pieces.

Toss eggplant with peppers in bowl. Add onion, red wine vinegar, olive oil, 3/4 cup crumbled feta cheese and mint. Mix well and season with salt and pepper, to taste. Arrange mixture on plate and sprinkle remaining feta, toasted walnuts, olive oil and sea salt on top.

PAIR IT

The salinity and minerality of the **Sigalas 2012 Assyrtiko** plays well with salty cured meats and breaks down the fattiness of the cheeses nicely.

PERFECT PAN-SEARED SEA SCALLOPS

Ed Witt, executive chef at **The Katharine Brasserie & Bar** in North Carolina, relies on a quick and zesty pepper relish to partner with this pan-seared scallops dish, featuring spring onions and smashed fingerling potatoes.

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| 8 large sea scallops | 2 Tbsp olive oil, plus additional to fry |
| ½ lbs fingerling potatoes | Piquillo pepper relish (recipe below) |
| Sea salt and white pepper, to taste | |
| 1 bunch trimmed spring onions | |

Boil potatoes in salted water until fork-tender, about 15 minutes. Drain and let cool. Season onions with salt and pepper. Toss with olive oil. Grill (or cook in sauté pan over medium heat) until slightly wilted. Set aside.

In sauté pan over medium-high heat, add olive oil. Smash each potato with palm. Add to pan. Sear each side until golden brown. While potatoes cook, warm another sauté pan over medium-high heat. Coat with olive oil. Pat scallops dry, season with salt and pepper, and add to pan. Cook until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Reduce heat to medium. Turn scallops. Cook until golden on other side, about 3 minutes.

Arrange scallops and potatoes on plates. Garnish with piquillo pepper relish and spring onions. *Serves 4.*

Piquillo Pepper Relish

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| 1 cup chopped jarred piquillo peppers | 1½ tsp extra-virgin olive oil |
| 3 Tbsp capers | Salt and pepper, to taste |
| 1 tsp fresh lemon juice | |

Pulse ingredients in food processor until combined, but with some texture. Add salt and pepper to taste. Relish may be prepared 2 days ahead and refrigerated.

PAIR IT

"I recommend a **Hugel Riesling from Alsace**," says Herbie Gimmel, general manager of The Katharine. "Its bracing acidity and vivid stone fruit play well with both the sweetness and mild spice from the piquillo peppers."





THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO WINE, CHEESE & CHARCUTERIE

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GOCHUJANG-MARINATED GRILLED PORK BELLY

Korean cuisine is having a major moment. It offers surprises on the plate and makes for an interesting partner to wine. Case in point, this richly flavored pork belly dish, featuring *gochujang*—Korean chili paste—created by Hooni Kim, owner/chef of the Korean restaurant in NYC **Hanjan** and **Danji**.

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| 2 pounds pork belly,
cut into ¼-inch slices | 4 Tbsp sugar |
| 1 cup gochujang | 2 Tbsp toasted
sesame oil |
| 4 Tbsp soy sauce | 3 Tbsp saké |
| 4 Tbsp minced garlic | 2 Tbsp mirin |

In nonreactive bowl, combine all ingredients. Cover mixture and refrigerate for at least 8 hours. Grill pork belly (or use grill pan over medium heat), turning occasionally, until cooked through and caramelized, about 15–20 minutes. Cut into rough 2-inch pieces with scissors. Serve over rice or in lettuce cups with grilled garlic and/or grilled scallions. *Serves 4.*



PAIR IT

"I love a good Australian Shiraz with this dish," says Kim. "It's bold and spicy, with enough structure and tannins to stand up to the funky, spicy and fatty flavors of the dish." Bottlings from South Australia, like St Hallett's 2012 Blackwell Shiraz from Barossa or Red Knot's 2014 Signature Shiraz from McLaren Vale, will offer this intense fruit, spice and firm structure.

ISRAELI-STYLE LAMB CHOPS

There's no singular star in this simultaneously rich and refreshing dish created by Nir Mesika, chef at **Timna** in NYC. Featuring freekeh, tahini, yogurt and mint, it provides plenty of reasons to explore the complexity of Israeli cuisine.



PAIR IT

Amir Nathan, wine director at Timna, recommends **Chateau Musar's 2012 Jeune Rouge**, a blend of Cinsault, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon from Lebanon. "Like Nir's style of cooking, this is traditional, with a twist," says Nathan. "The wine is both savory and jammy, which makes it a bit funky, in a good way."

LAMB CHOPS WITH FREEKEH, TAHINI, YOGURT & MINT

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| 6 | lamb chops (rib or loin), fat trimmed | 1/2 | lemon, seeded and thinly sliced |
| 2 | Tbsp freshly ground cumin seeds | 6 | grape tomatoes, halved |
| 2 | Tbsp <i>ras el hanout</i> (North African spice mix) | 6 | small okra pods, stemmed and halved crosswise |
| 3 | Tbsp preserved lemon, minced | 1 | tsp smoked paprika |
| 1 | Tbsp minced garlic | 1/4 | cup Greek yogurt |
| 1 | Tbsp minced fresh thyme leaves | 2 | Tbsp raw tahini |
| 5 | Tbsp olive oil | 2 | Tbsp chopped fresh mint leaves |
| 1 | tsp salt | | |
| 1 3/4 | cups vegetable stock | | |
| 1 | dried Persian lime (optional) | | |
| 3/4 | cup cracked freekeh | | |
| 1 | red onion, chopped | | |
| 1 | chopped jalapeño pepper | | |

Combine cumin, *ras el hanout*, 1 1/2 Tbsp preserved lemon, 1 tsp garlic and 1/2 Tbsp thyme in bowl with 2 Tbsp olive oil and salt. Mix well. Add lamb chops and coat. Marinate for at least 30 minutes in refrigerator.

In large pot, boil stock with dried lime and remaining

thyme. Add freekeh, reduce heat to low and cover. Simmer until liquid is absorbed, about 20 minutes.

In a large sauté pan over medium-high heat, add 2 Tbsp olive oil. Add red onion, remaining garlic, jalapeño and lemon. Cook until tender and lightly browned, about 8 minutes. Add grape tomatoes and okra. Cook about 5 minutes. Add freekeh, paprika, remaining preserved lemon and 1 Tbsp olive oil. Mix well, adding salt, if needed.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Over medium-high heat, add coating of olive oil. Add chops in single layer. Sear each side for 2–3 minutes, then transfer to oven for 3 additional minutes, until a thermometer reads 130°F (for medium-rare). Let rest 5–10 minutes.

To serve, divide freekeh among two plates. Place lamb chops on top. Garnish with yogurt, tahini and mint leaves. *Serves 2.*

SALMON EN CROÛTE

Pair with Oberon Sauvignon Blanc

Prep time: 25 | Cook time: 40 | Servings: 4-6

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 1 1/2 lb spinach, fresh
- ☐ 1/2 stick butter
- ☐ Salt and pepper
- ☐ 2 Tbsp garlic, chopped
- ☐ 1 cup sundried tomatoes, chopped
- ☐ 1 lb goat cheese
- ☐ 2 lbs salmon, skin removed
- ☐ 2 packages puff pastry
- ☐ 1 lemon, juiced
- ☐ 1 egg
- ☐ 1/2 cup water



DIRECTIONS

1. Pre-heat the oven to 375F. In a large sauté pan, add the butter and garlic over medium heat. Once the butter is melted, add the spinach and sauté until wilted. Add salt and pepper to taste, then allow the excess liquid to drain.
2. Place two sheets of the puff pastry on a lightly floured surface, then use a rolling pin to lightly roll the two puff pastry sheets together.
3. Line the spinach and sundried tomatoes down the center of the puff pastry. Cut the goat cheese thin and place on top of the spinach, then top with the salmon. Sprinkle the salmon with lemon juice and season with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Whisk together the egg and water, then brush on the puff pastry surrounding the salmon. On a floured surface, roll out more puff pastry. Lay the second puff pastry on top of the salmon and press down surrounding the salmon. Trim the excess puff pastry, then brush over with the egg wash.
5. Bake at 400F for about 30 - 40 minutes, then serve hot.



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RECIPE COURTESY OF CHEF HALEY GUNTER



“BUTTERSCOTCH” PUDDING

This silky, mock butterscotch pudding—made with a caramelized white chocolate—was created by Blaine Staniford, chef at Texas’s **Grace**. It’s richness and sweet accompaniment make for a decadent treat.

2 (2.46 ounce) bars Valrhona
Dulcey blond chocolate,
chopped finely

½ cup heavy cream

½ cup milk

2 Tbsp sugar

2 eggs yolks

Butter or cooking spray,
for coating ramekins

Preheat oven to 325°F. Lightly butter four 3-ounce ramekins. Cut a circle of parchment paper to fit the bottom of each one, then butter the parchment. Set the ramekins in a roasting pan just large enough to fit.

Place the chocolate in a heat-proof bowl. In a small saucepan over medium-high heat, scald the cream and milk, then pour over chocolate and whisk until it’s melted. In another bowl, whisk the sugar and egg yolks well. Gradually whisk in a small amount of the chocolate mixture, then whisk that mixture back into the chocolate.

Divide the mixture among the ramekins, then pour boiling water into the roasting pan so it comes

three-fourths of the way up the sides of the ramekins. Cover the pan with foil, and cut several slits in the top. Bake for about 25 minutes, or until the edges are firm but the middle jiggles. Remove from the pan, cool to room temperature, then cover with plastic wrap and chill at least 3 hours. To serve, run a knife around the side of each ramekin, invert onto a plate, and remove parchment. To serve, add crushed glazed Marcona almonds and salted-caramel gelato. *Serves 4.*

PAIR IT

“I subscribe to the school of thought that your dessert wine should be sweeter than your dessert,” says Jenny Kornblum, Grace’s sommelier. “**Yalumba’s Antique Reserve Tawny** from Barossa Valley, Australia, really fits the bill, with its sweet and nutty flavors. It has a richness and complexity to it without being syrupy or cloying to the palate.”



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DIGITAL MANAGING EDITOR: MARINA VATAJ

ART DIRECTOR: JULIA LEA

CONSULTING DESIGN: PETE FRIEDRICH

PHOTO DIRECTOR: MEGAN BAGGOTT