SommWine's

Wine and Food Pairing Practice with Chicken

Here are the wine and food pairing rules you will observe with this practice

1. Match the weight of the wine with the weight of the food.
2. Most wines will go reasonably well with most foods.
3. It is often **more important to pair the wine with the sauce** then to the protein!

What you will need:

1. Buy wines. Try to buy half bottles so you can try more wines. You can buy 1-4 wines. If you only drink white wines, just buy the whites. If you only drink red wines, only buy the reds.

White wines:

1. A light-bodied, Pinot Grigio from **Northern Italy** such as from Veneto or Friuli-Venezia-Giulia [lime citrus, pear, high acid]
2. An medium-bodied unoaked Chardonnay from Chablis (NOT a Grand Cru), just buy a basic Chablis AOC or or an unoaked Chardonnay from New Zealand, Oregon, Eden Valley Australian, British Columbia, whereever [apple, pear, high acid].
3. A full-bodied oaky Chardonnay from California, or Australia, or from Pouilly-Fuissé, in Bourgogne, France [pineapple, toast, butter]

Red wines:

1. A light to medium-bodied Beaujolais from Bourgogne France [unoaked, light to medium-body, light tannin, elevated acidity, red fruits], or a Chianti Classico DOCG [medium bodied, red fruits, medium tannin], or a Chianti Classico Reserva or Gran Selezione DOCG [full bodied, red and black fruits, elevated tannin, elevated acidity, new oak] from Tuscany, Italy
2. A Pinot Noir from Oregon, or Central Otago, New Zealand [These wines are medium bodied, medium tannin, elevated acidity, red fruits, new oak]
3. A Shiraz from Australia or a Malbec from Argentina [full bodied, medium-elevated acidity, black fruits, new oak, plush soft tannins]

2. Prepare the food. You will either need grilled, pan seared or oven baked chicken. You will also need 2 sauces. 1) Chimichurri (lemon juice or acid, fresh green herbs) or just a squeeze of fresh lemon juice; 2) a cream sauce such as a beurre blanc, Bearnaise or other (rich buttery, heavy)

How do you know when a wine and food pairing works?

The simplest way to know if a wine and food pairing is working, is if the wine tastes good after you've had the food. Then, you can say the the pairing works.

Usually, it's the wine that changes, not the food in a pairing.

However, there are times when the wine tastes better with the food than it does on its own. This is when a wine and food pairing just 'sings' to you and is what sommeliers aim to do in restaurants

Try each of the wines with each combination of food: Taste the wine first on it's own. Make a note on how it tastes. Then make notes on how the wine changes after tasting the food

	1 Chicken with no sauce	2 Chicken with Chimichurri or with just a squeeze of lemon juie	3 Chicken with Cream Sauce
Wine #1			
note			
Wine #2			
note			
Wine #3			
note			
Wine #4			
note			

To understand wine and food pairing principles better, check out our blog post called '6 Easy Steps to Become a Wine Pairing Guru' at www.sommwine.com/blog or sign up for our wine and food pairing course online.

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