

Wine Advice: Wine Selections



Spring marks a time to embrace fresh light-bodied wines that reflect the season. Light, refreshing and best served cool many of these gems are also very reasonably priced. All the more reason to look forward to spring, as if the cold and large amount of snow is simply not enough.

As daylight hours lengthen food and wine preferences change as does our wardrobe. We cast away heavy coats replacing them with light spring jackets, and substitute brightly coloured clothing made from breezy fabric for wool sweaters. Spring marks the time to abandon the heavy reds and the “warming” tipples served during the cold winter season in favour of light-bodied fruity, citrusy

and floral alternatives. Pairing wine with the season? Why not?

The most suitable wines, those that evoke spring and pair beautifully with spring fare, are light-bodied and available in red, white and rosé wines. Such light-bodied delights capture the flavours and aromas of spring in all its glory.

Fresh produce becomes more plentiful and seasonal produce like pea shoots and local fresh and tender greens become readily available with help from greenhouses and hoop houses that speed things along. Fresh greens are introduced, spring salads inviting.

There are many variables to consider when selecting suitable wines. When making a selection remember that wines produced in warmer climates, from places and countries that we think of as fortunate to have eternally warm weather are fruitier and more expressive than those produced in cool-climate areas. This is true for white wine, red and rosé wine.

In general, lighter dishes pair well with white wines with profiles that include fresh stone fruit and a floral component. Riesling, both slightly sweet and dry versions, Gewurztraminer, Viognier, Chardonnay (unaged) and Chenin Blanc, Pinot Grigio, and the most fragrant of white grapes, the Moscato grape variety are fabulous spring choices.

Many wine blends are delightful spring wines and one example is Vinho Verde, a blend of

indigenous grape varieties from Portugal. "Verde" means "young wine" indicating the wine is released to market 3-6 months after production when youthful. This light-bodied wine, whether white, rose or red, is fresh and lively with a welcoming spritz of bubbles upon opening. Aveleda Fonte Vinho Verde, a light-bodied and lively multi-award winning value white wine retails for \$11.49 and Pluma Rosé Vinho Verde costs \$10.99. Red Vinho Verde production is limited and not locally available.

There are some white wines that are collectively referred to as "green wines" as they are considered ideal wines served with greens like tender greens, asparagus and artichokes. The Austrian white wine Grüner Veltliner falls in this category. Light-bodied, aromatic and peppery the Grooner Grüner Veltliner retails for \$15.63. Albariño (Alvarinho) from Spain and Chablis from Northern France are other fine examples of green wines. Sauvignon Blanc is considered the "best" pairing for greens especially those wines produced in the Marlborough area of New Zealand.

Light-bodied and delicate rosé pairs beautifully with fresh spring salads and lighter fare. The dry wines of Provence, France, are excellent choices. Chateau Gassier Sables D'Azur Rosé at \$17.99 is a personal favorite.

Red wines produced from young grapes are much lighter in body and fruitier than red wines produced



from older grapes which make wines of greater depth and complexity. Examples include the wines of Rioja in Spain, Valpolicella in Italy and Chianti, also from Italy. These light-bodied youthful wines are less costly than their aged counterparts. Other red selections are Beaujolais, an easy drinking approachable light-bodied red wine with aromas and flavours of strawberry, red cherry and raspberry from Beaujolais, France, Barbera from Italy and youthful Pinot Noir.

The above wines are also suitable summer wines although as we progress to the first day of summer, June 24/2018, you may wish to introduce medium-bodied wines.

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An advertisement for Bennie's Restaurant & Catering Services. The background shows a bar area with a red cocktail in a martini glass and a menu board. The text reads: "YOUR PLACE OR OURS?", "BENNIE'S RESTAURANT & CATERING SERVICES", "Let us cater your next event!", and "(204) 726-0207 - 612 Rosser Ave. Brandon, MB" with social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.