



# Grapevine

April 2019

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## Vibrant Wine Pairings that Make Springtime Sing

Along with mellowing temperatures, returning birds and longer days comes a wealth of vibrant food and wine pairings. With Easter and Passover on the way, let's take a look at some heavenly culinary-vinous matches.

A veritable vegetal vegetable, asparagus is not the easiest of foods to pair with wine because the natural compounds in both often clash. With asparagus' flavor profile somewhere between earthy and slightly bitter, Sauvignon Blanc's grassiness compliments it, while its citrusy and sometimes floral character will balance it. Tempering asparagus' flavors with the richness of Hollandaise or poached eggs will render it utterly delicious with the crisp, clean lime and passionfruit notes of the **2017 Charles Krug Sauvignon Blanc**. \$13.59

The **2017 Matteo Correggia Roero Arneis** from Italy's Piedmont region would be an exquisite partner for risotto with fresh Spring peas. The wine's minerality and palate of ripe melon and stone fruits are a ready foil for risotto's rich creaminess, while the soft acidity will dance seamlessly with the sweetness of green peas. This is Astaire and Rogers gracing your table. \$15.49



Replete with Spring's bounty, *salade Nicoise*, with origins in Nice, France, is a composed salad that includes olives, tuna, anchovies, young green beans, new potatoes and hard cooked eggs, with radishes and other vegetables sometimes making an appearance. With its variety of textures and colors, it is both sprightly and grounding, and it welcomes a wine with that same complexity. **Owen Roe's 2016 Sharecropper's Chardonnay** from Yakima Valley, Washington is an ideal pairing. With barely detectable oak from neutral French barrel aging, its notes of pineapple and starfruit capped by a crisp finish stand up to *salade Nicoise's* festival of flavors. \$12.99

Strawberries are another flexible ingredient in this vibrant season, one which can crown anything from a

brilliant salad to shortcake. An irresistible pairing for these culinary jewels is the **Mionetto Prestige Extra Dry Sparkling Rosé**, made with red grapes from northern Italy's Veneto and Trentino regions. Soft and fruity with aromas of wild strawberries and raspberries, it captures the essence of vernal freshness. \$12.49

Mushrooms — whether starring in a supporting role, say on pappardelle with walnuts and ricotta, or as a light lunch's main event, a sautéed wild mix with Spring herbs and cream — are a stunning partner to an earthy, lighter bodied wine like the **2014 Giesen Pinot Noir** from New Zealand. Called 'elegant and silky' by Wine Enthusiast, its quiet acidity, fine tannins and harmonious flavors of red fruit, coffee and warm spice will meet mushrooms' savory, woody taste

without overpowering it. **92 WE**

If your Easter table features a Spring lamb as its dinner centerpiece, look no further than the **2016 Equinox from Crozes-Hermitage** in the northern Rhone Valley. Made from 100% Syrah, the wine is lighter bodied than warm climate Syrahs, though with robust enough tannins to dovetail with lamb's weighty juiciness, while the black fruit, peppercorn, anise and clove flavors will compliment the meat's subtle gaminess. \$16.99

With the arrival of Spring comes an abundance of fruits and vegetables and sunshine — the promise of which gets us through the cold, dark days behind us — and we're ready for all of it. So lighten up and join us on a food and wine pairing journey through the season. ♦

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**Did you know...** Food and wine pairing considers components such as acidity, fattiness, bitterness, saltiness, sweetness and alcohol level to achieve harmony and balance in flavor and texture.

## Wine Tastings Fridays, 4-7 & Saturdays, 2-5

*Days not mentioned will feature New Arrivals.*

**Fri 4/5:** Spanish wines to make you fall in love

**Fri 4/12:** Spring pairings from page 1 of this newsletter

**Fri 4/19:** April staff picks...a 'you don't want to miss'

**Sat 4/20:** Wines to pair with Easter dinner, along with our traditional ham and pineapple kebabs

**Fri 4/26:** Value 90s Wines

**Fri 5/3:** A special Margaritas tasting along with Spanish and South American wines for your Cinco de Mayo fête

### Fresh Pea Soup with Ham

*Adapted from Food & Wine Magazine*

A vibrant, elegant Spring greeting

- 1 T unsalted butter
- 1 small fennel bulb—thick stalk discarded, bulb thinly sliced
- 1/2 medium onion, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- Kosher salt
- 3 cups whole milk
- 1 cup light cream
- 4 cups fresh or frozen peas, thawed
- 1/2 cup diced smoked ham hock
- 1 T minced shallot
- 1/2 T chopped chives
- 1 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 tsp sherry vinegar
- Pea tendrils or baby arugula, for garnish



In a large pot, melt the butter. Add the fennel, onion and garlic and season with salt. Cook over moderate heat, stirring, until the vegetables are tender but not browned, 8 to 10 minutes.

Add the milk and cream, then simmer for 12 to 15 minutes. Add the peas and simmer until tender, 7 to 8 minutes.

Working in batches, puree the soup in a blender. Strain it through a fine sieve set over a large bowl. Season with salt.

In a small bowl, combine the ham with the shallots, chives, olive oil and sherry vinegar. Spoon the ham mixture into 4 bowls. Ladle the warm soup over top, garnish with the pea tendrils or arugula and serve with Sheila's pick, below.

### April Showers Limoncello Collins

Makes 8 cocktails

- 12 oz Boodles Organic Gin
- 16 oz limoncello
- 8 oz fresh lemon juice
- 16 oz club soda
- 1 lemon, sliced crosswise into 8 slices
- 8 mint sprigs



In a pitcher, combine the gin, limoncello and lemon juice. Cover and refrigerate until chilled. Serve in Collins glasses over ice, topped with club soda. Garnish each glass with a lemon slice and a mint sprig. Sip while you watch the April sunset.

## April 2019 Staff Wine Picks

**Sheila: 2016 Poseidon Estate Grown Chardonnay** (Carneros) **\$22.99** (reg \$26.99) **92 WE** Cool morning fog and warm afternoon sun nurture slow ripening and long hang time for the grapes, yielding a full-bodied and plush wine with a palate of ripe pears, baking spices and buttered toast. \*Fresh pea soup with ham, see above

**Ian: 2015 Writer's Block** (Lake County) **\$13.99** (reg \$16.99) Grapes from three prized Lake County vineyards are aged in new and seasoned oak for 13 months. Aromas of blueberry pie and damp earth are followed up by flavors of boysenberries, cocoa and tobacco, culminating in a smooth finish. \*Grilled ribeye and thickly sliced portabellas

**Brian: 2016 Collusion Red Wine** (Columbia Valley) **\$17.99** (reg \$20.99) Nearly half Merlot is blended with Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec and a touch of Syrah. It has scents of blackberry jam, vanilla and cedar, and a palate of ripe, dark cherries and cloves, with a long finish. \*Cast iron skillet bone-in pork rib chops with garlic and sage

**Ted: 2017 St. Antonius Kreuzenacher Kronenberg Riesling Kabinett** (GER) **\$8.49** (reg \$9.99) A wine made for the transition from cooler to warmer days, it is a light-bodied, off-dry Riesling with flavors of apricots and nectarines with a streak of fresh squeezed lime acidity...a perfect accompaniment to spicy Thai dishes. \*Thai red chicken curry

**John: 2017 Domaine de Bel-Air 'Les Granits Bleus' by Jean-Marc Lafont** (Beaujolais-Villages) **\$11.99** (reg \$13.99) **93 JS** Made from sustainably farmed Gamay grapes from a vineyard in the village of Quincié, it is aromatic with violets emanating from the glass and tastes of black currants with a silken mouthfeel. \*Ham, mushroom and Gruyère quiche

**Tony: 2016 1000 Stories Bourbon Barrel-Aged Zinfandel** (California) **\$15.29** (reg \$17.99) Zinfandel grapes from select areas of Mendocino and Sonoma counties are enhanced by touches of Petite Sirah and Syrah, igniting it with notes of black and white peppercorns and a streak of smoke from Bourbon barrel-aging. \*Barbecued ribs