



Grapevine

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Wine and Cheese Pairings to Soothe a Cold Winter

Excellent wine and cheese pairings can be sublime, but knowing how to create those duos yourself can be daunting. There are rules of thumb that can empower you to host your own pairings night.

Heeding the oft-cited *what grows together goes together* is a good start. It's rooted in the idea that terroir nurtures what grows there. Chèvre from the Loire Valley is a prime example because goat cheese is notoriously difficult to pair; but sauvignon blanc, particularly when it's more grassy than grapefruity, goes quite well. **Domaine Raffaitin's 2020 Planchon Sancerre** is reared in flint, chalk and limestone soils, all of which compliment goat's chalky-creamy duality. Floral aromas and a round finish stand up to chèvre's quiet spine. \$22.99

A wine's intensity or delicacy should match that of the cheese. Tannic wines need equally intense cheeses, and those with more subtlety require a similar partner. Understated Gruyère is ideal with the peeled-back refinement of pinot noir. **Kings Ridge's 2019 Oregon Pinot Noir** from the Willamette Valley has notes of cocoa and orange zest that are kindred spirits with Gruyère's nutty dryness. **91 JS** \$14.49



By the same token, an extra sharp cheddar can stand up to a cabernet sauvignon without overwhelming or shrinking from it. The **2018 Hess Select North Coast Cabernet Sauvignon** shows raspberries, currants and baking spices, all of which dance well with the cheddar. They don't compete as much as meet one another head on. **91 WE** \$16.99

Aged cheeses lose moisture and gain richness, making *older bolder*. Regional compatibility with old meets bold births a stellar pairing. First, a Manchego with the **2016 Muriel Reserva Rioja** is a Spanish symphony. Manchego's density and toffee notes are in tune with the coconut, coffee and vanilla notes of this barrel-

aged wine, brimming with body. **92 JS** \$13.59

Second in the old and bold arena is Asiago with **Castello Banfi's 2019 Rosso di Montalcino** from Tuscany. Oak barrel aging followed by six months of bottle aging woos this Sangiovese to sound its operatic notes without drowning out the Asiago. Rather, it seduces with violets and cherries. \$21.49

Opposites attract. It's about the complexity that each brings to the date, fencing with just enough give, just enough challenge. That's where soft, creamy cheeses and sparkling wines ignite a spark. The buttery richness of Brie is both complimented and cleansed by the acidity and carbonation in sparklers

like **Albert Bichot Cremant de Bourgogne Brut Réserve**. Made from Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, its fine bubbles and palate of white flowers makes it a heavenly match for Brie. \$16.99

And for a positively funky-sweet introduction, also of the opposites approach, try a semisoft washed-rind cheese like Taleggio with the **2015 Schmitt Söhne Beeren auslese Riesling**. Formidable and seductive, this cheese can seduce multiple mates, but the Schmitt Söhne's palate of orange blossoms, peaches and honey is a divine counterpart. \$14.49

Winters are long in the Northeast. Whether gathering with a few friends or your favorite explorer, an evening of wine and cheese pairings can warm a cold night. ♦

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When serving several wines, firm nutty cheeses are versatile. Rich and flavorful enough to balance the wines, they won't trample them. For a domestic Swiss, try the **2019 Greg Norman Shiraz**. (\$10.99) With a Dutch Gouda, the **2018 Clos de las Siete Malbec** from Uco Valley will not disappoint. (\$16.99)

With Super Bowl LVI and Valentine's Day this month, we have a few new arrivals to help you kick off the festivities!

Left to right:

Palmer & Co. Rosé Solera Champagne
\$63.99 (reg \$74.99)

Santanera Tequila, 3 varieties:

Kosher Blanco \$83.99

Kosher Anejo \$118.99

Tahona \$100.99



Salmon Burgers with Rémoulade

- 1 ¼ lbs salmon fillet, skin and bones removed
- 2 Tbsp dijon mustard
- 1 Tbsp mayonnaise
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 ½ tsp grated lemon zest
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 2 scallions, chopped
- 1 cup plus 2 Tbsp panko
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 Tbsp olive oil, plus more for brushing
- 4 brioche buns, split and toasted under the broiler
- Rémoulade and crisp lettuce, for topping



Cut three-quarters of the salmon into quarter-inch dice. Put in a large bowl. Cut the rest of the salmon into chunks; transfer the chunks to a food processor with the mustard, mayonnaise, lemon juice, lemon zest and cayenne. Pulse to make a paste. Add the pureed salmon mixture to the bowl with the diced salmon. Add the scallions, 2 tablespoons panko, half teaspoon salt, and black pepper to taste. Gently mix until just combined.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and brush with olive oil. Divide salmon mixture into four mounds on

the parchment. With damp hands, press lightly into patties about four inches in diameter. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 30 minutes.

Preheat the broiler. Spread the remaining one cup panko on a plate. Press both sides of the salmon patties in the panko. Heat the olive oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the patties and cook until browned on the bottom, 3 to 4 minutes. Turn and cook until the second side is browned and the patties feel springy in the center, 3 to 4 more minutes. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate to drain; season with salt.

Serve the patties on the buns; top with rémoulade and lettuce and serve with Carol's pick, below.

Kir Royale

Makes 2 cocktails

- 2 tsp crème de cassis (black currant liqueur)
- Brut Champagne to top
- 2 lemon twists, for garnish



Add a teaspoon of crème de cassis to each Champagne flute. Top each glass with Champagne and garnish with the lemon twists. Toast to the one you love.

February 2022 Staff Wine Picks

Sheila: 2019 Lange Chardonnay Classique (Willamette Valley) **\$16.99** (reg \$19.99) **92 JS** Fermented in stainless steel with no malolactic, the wine is aged mostly in seasoned French oak and a portion in new oak. Bright and minerally with aromas of pears, golden apples and honey, it has a fresh palate of peach, lime and melon. **Pan-seared cod loin with lemon butter and capers*

Ian: 2018 1000 Stories Goldrush Red (California) **\$14.49** (reg \$16.99) A wild blend of Merlot, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Petite Sirah and Zinfandel is aged in French and American oak barrels, and then finished in a combination of new and seasoned Bourbon barrels. Aromas and flavors of red and black fruits, cinnamon, nutmeg and sage. **Oven-roasted pork ribs with Mac 'n cheese*

Brian: 2019 Viña Cobos 'Felino' Cabernet Sauvignon by Paul Hobbs (Mendoza) **\$16.49** (reg \$18.99) Made from 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, it is fermented with native yeasts and aged in American oak for eight months. Aromas of berries and spice are followed by a concentrated berry palate and firm tannins. **Steak chimichurri and roasted potatoes*

Bill: 2019 Loveblock Sauvignon Blanc (Marlborough) **\$16.99** (reg \$19.99) **90 WS** Barrel-fermented mostly in neutral French oak, with a small amount undergoing malolactic fermentation in stainless steel tanks, the bright zingy palate bursts with white peach, cantaloupe and green apple. There's a long, lean finish with balanced acidity. **Grilled shrimp Caesar salad*

Ben: 2018 Arnoux & Fils Vieux Clocher (Vacqueyras) **\$16.49** (reg \$18.99) From the Southern Rhone Valley, Grenache is blended with 25/5 Syrah and Mourvèdre and aged for six months in French oak barrels. The result is garrigue herbs on the nose, then vibrant red and black cherry and a hint of raspberry flavors. **Broiled lamb chops with sage*

Carol: 2018 Lucas & Lewellen Estate Vineyards Pinot Noir (Santa Barbara) **\$15.49** (reg \$17.99) Hand-harvested grapes are aged on the lees for 10 months in seasoned and new French oak. Aromas and flavors of red fruit with naturally bright acidity and good structure. Sultry tannins on the gorgeous finish. **Salmon burgers with rémoulade, above*