

# PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



## *January 2011 – Couch Potato Comfort*

Kick back and take it easy as the New Year rolls in and the flurry of activity from the holidays is a distant memory. This is a menu that will be ready when you are.

Early in the day, mix up a cheese ball and put it in the fridge. That way when the game is on you can settle in on the couch with a knife, crackers and a cold beer. Pair this piquant cheese ball with a brown ale. Flavors of nuts and caramel in the beer will echo the nuts in the dish. But ales are not wimpy beers and will not be overpowered by the roasted pepper and sharp cheddar cheese.

After your cheesy snack, you might not be too hungry for dinner. But if you have planned ahead and made a big pot of chicken stew, when your appetite returns, you will be all set. Caramelized onions and chunks of chicken with spicy ginger, cumin and garlic are balanced by fresh green cilantro. Add a bit of white rice to the bowl and you have a complete meal. To match these flavors, the wine needs a bit of unctuous body, moderate-high acid and a little spice. A rich Alsatian or Oregon pinot gris will fill these requirements.

Look for a dessert that is warm and comforting to end this evening. If it is an evening for two, pick-up a little apple tart or if you have a group at home, get a whole pie. I think sweet, cinnamon-scented apples would be just the right flavors to end this relaxing night. And, don't try to over think the pairing, go with a hot cup of coffee.

So, go on. Pair Up!

*Maria Terry is a Certified Sommelier and Wine Educator in the San Francisco Bay Area. [www.LaSommeliere.com](http://www.LaSommeliere.com)*

## Pimento Cheese Ball

### INGREDIENTS

1 jar (5 oz.) pimientos, with juice  
1 cup mayonnaise  
1 lb. med-sharp or sharp Cheddar cheese, grated  
½ cup coarsely chopped pecans  
Salt and pepper

### DIRECTIONS

Combine pimientos, juice and mayo and mix thoroughly. Mix-in cheese and then nuts. Season to taste and form into 1-cup balls or one long log. Serve with crackers.

Yield: 4 cups

## Garbanzo Bean Chicken Stew

### INGREDIENTS

2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, 2" dice  
1 tbsp. butter  
1 tbsp. olive oil  
2 small onions  
2 large garlic cloves  
½ tsp. ground ginger  
1½ tbsp. ground cumin  
½ tsp. red pepper flakes  
4 cups chicken broth  
2 cans garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained  
1 cup fresh cilantro, chopped  
1 clove fresh garlic, chopped

### DIRECTIONS

Sauté diced chicken and onion in butter and olive oil until chicken is cooked through and onion is soft, seasoning with salt and pepper. Add the garlic, spices and pepper flake. Pour in broth and add beans. Simmer until chicken is tender. Mix cilantro and garlic

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together and add as garnish to each dish when served.

Yield: one big pot of stew, about 6-8 people