

PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



April 2011 – Spring Greens

In springtime, a sommelier's thoughts turn to lighter foods paired with vibrant white wines. The albariño grape makes an adaptable wine that can start the meal and continue through the main course. Then, end your evening with an icewine from Canada that is fresh and fruity.

Albariño is a grape that is classically found in Rias Baixas (pronounced: rhee-us buy-shus) in the northwest region of Spain. You can find many well-priced imported albariños or seek out California producers. Albariño is similar to sauvignon blanc but has less grassy flavors. Instead, you will notice floral and peach flavors. It is a delicious salad wine and will pair nicely with spring greens tossed with an herbal fennel dressing. Up the ante by adding some bright red beets, a few crumbles of goat cheese and toasted almonds.

The main dish pasta is also highlighted by fresh herbs. Toasted nuts add depth and shallots provide a subtle garlic-onion flavor. With lemon juice and zest providing a little zip, you have a great entrée that will continue to work well with your bottle of Albariño.

A pear tart would be lovely for dessert. Choose one with an almond filling and apricot glaze to echo the common flavors found in a many dessert wines. One of my favorite dessert wines is icewine. Icewine is made in many of the colder wine regions of the world where the grapes can freeze on the vine. In Ontario, it is commonly made from the vidal grape. A tough outer skin makes vidal resistant to botrytis and prevents the grapes from bursting when frozen. When

Vidal is aged in oak it takes on rich overtones of vanilla, almonds and oven baked bread. The high sugar and high acid found in icewines preserve the wine and add to their ability to age. However, many suggest that icewine is most enjoyable young when its apricot and pineapple flavors are at their peak.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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Creamy Fennel Dressing

INGREDIENTS

½ cup olive oil
½ cup mayonnaise
¼ cup white wine vinegar
2 tbsp. fresh fennel fronds, chopped
2 tbsp. parmesan cheese
½ tbsp. distilled white vinegar
½ tbsp. sugar
1 clove garlic, chopped fine
½ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. pepper

DIRECTIONS

Blend all ingredients together. Chill.

Yield: 1½ cups

Pasta with Lemon, Pine Nuts & Fresh Herbs

INGREDIENTS

1 lb. dry pasta (rotelle/penne)
8 oz. sugar-snap peas
½ cup mixed coarsely chopped fresh herbs:
Marjoram, basil, lemon thyme, Italian

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parsley, chervil, or hyssop (any combination, include flowers if available)
1 tsp. grated lemon zest
2 tbsp. lemon juice
3 tbsp. olive oil
5 tbsp. pine nuts
4 shallots, chopped
1 tsp. tiny capers (optional)
½ cup softened sun-dried tomatoes, cut into thin strips
Salt & pepper

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl combine herbs, 2 tbsp. olive oil, lemon zest, lemon juice, capers and sundried tomatoes.

Sauté pine nuts in 1 tbsp. olive oil until they begin to color. Add shallots and continue to cook until shallots are soft and pine nuts are light brown. Add to bowl.

Micro cook peas until crisp-tender. Boil pasta 6-8 minutes. Drain both. Add to bowl. Salt & pepper to taste. Toss well to coat.

Yield: 12 cups

(on website)

Pear Tart

INGREDIENTS

Crust:

One butter crust recipe (follows)

Filling:

1/3 cup almond paste (not marzipan)
2 teaspoons of sugar
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 tablespoon of flour
1 egg
pinch of kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon of almond extract
3 large Bosc pears

lemon juice

Glaze:

1/4 cup apricot jam
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
piece of lemon peel
2 tablespoons water

DIRECTIONS

Prepare the butter crust. Roll it out to a 13-inch circle and press it into a 10-inch tart pan with a removable bottom (if you don't have a tart pan, a pie plate is just fine). Fit the dough into the edges and then trim off the excess dough leaning over the top. Put the crust in the freezer to chill for a half hour. Preheat the oven to 375 F.

To prepare the frangipane beat together the almond paste and sugar to break it apart. Beat in the butter. Mix in the egg, flour, salt, and almond extract and beat until light and fluffy.

Peel and core the pears, and slice thinly, about 1/8 to 1/4-inch thick. Place the slices in a bowl with the lemon juice to help preserve their color.

Spread the frangipane over the bottom of the tart shell and arrange the pear slices in a circular pattern. Bake for 30-35 minutes or until the pears take on a bit of color and the edges of the tart shell are golden brown. Cool on a wire rack.

While the tart bakes, place the apricot jam, lemon peel, vanilla extract, and water or Riesling into a small sauce pan and warm over medium heat for 5 to 8 minutes, constantly stirring. Once it has reduced and thickened take it off the heat and set it aside.

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After removing the tart from the oven, brush the apricot glaze over the pears.

Yield: 6 servings.

Butter Crust

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour, plus extra for rolling
- 8 Tbsp (1 stick) unsalted butter, very-cold, cut into 1/2 inch cubes
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar (increase to 1 1/2 teaspoons if for a sweet recipe)
- 4 to 6 Tbsp ice water, very cold

DIRECTIONS

Start by cutting the sticks of butter into 1/2-inch cubes and placing in the freezer for at least 15 minutes (preferably an hour or longer) so that they become thoroughly chilled.

In a food processor, combine flour, salt, and sugar, pulse to mix. Add butter and pulse 6 to 8 times, until mixture resembles coarse meal, with pea size pieces of butter. Add water 1 Tablespoon at a time, pulsing until mixture just begins to clump together. If you pinch some of the crumbly dough and it holds together, it's ready, if not, add a little more water and pulse again.

Remove dough from machine and place on a clean surface. Carefully shape into a discs. Do not over-knead the dough! You should still be able to see little bits of butter in the dough. These bits of butter are what will allow the result crust to be flaky. Sprinkle the disc with a little flour on all sides. Wrap

the disc in plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 1 hour.

Remove the crust disk from the refrigerator. Let sit at room temperature for 5-10 minutes. Sprinkle some flour on top of the disk. Roll out with a rolling pin on a lightly floured surface to a 12 inch circle; about 1/8 of an inch thick. As you roll out the dough, use a metal spatula to check if the dough is sticking to the surface below. Add a few sprinkles of flour if necessary to keep the dough from sticking. Gently fold in half. Place on to a 9-inch pie plate, lining up the fold with the center of the pan. Gently unfold and press down to line the pie dish with the dough.

Yield: (1) 9" crust