

PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



July 2011 – Summer Picnic

Picnicking is an inexpensive warm-weather getaway. Fill your basket with fresh produce and a couple of crisp wines to pair with the food and you will experience the height of summer fun.

Caprese salad made with ripe tomatoes is a vibrant way to start this mobile feast. Choose a wine with med-high acid to counter balance the natural acidity found in tomatoes. A rosé will provide acidity and a pretty pink color to complement the red tomato. Look for rosés from colder regions of the world as they will be naturally higher in acid. Northern Italy, southern France and US wine regions that are close to the ocean are all good sources.

Next, chicken is a picnic-friendly protein that can be served hot, cold or at room temperature. I use boneless, skinless chicken breasts to be health conscious and reduce waste. A citrus-based marinade will echo similar flavors in the rosé wine opened with the salad. Or, if you have enough people to warrant opening another wine, how about a chenin blanc? This crisp white wine offers a fresh floral note that will pick-up on the herbs in the marinade. As a bonus, the Lemon Dressed Cole Slaw recipe is one of my favorite pairings with chenin blanc.

Cherry-Apricot Crumble is a brilliant ending to your meal. Stash a small bottle of German trockenbeerenauslese (TBA) riesling deep at the bottom of the ice chest. The designation, TBA, can be better understood by breaking down the word into its three components: trocken = dry, beeren = berry, auslese = select harvest. Made from the selected harvest of dried berries, it is one of the most intensely flavored wines I have ever tasted. Look for flavors like apricot, papaya, and honey. Additionally, TBA is

one of the few dessert wines with enough acidity to stand up to fruit desserts.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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Citrus Caprese Salad

INGREDIENTS

Two large beefsteak tomatoes
1 lb. fresh mozzarella
10-15 fresh basil leaves, torn
2 tsp. balsamic vinegar
3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp. fresh orange zest
Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper

DIRECTIONS

Slice the cheese and tomatoes, wrap and store separately. Mix olive oil and balsamic vinegar, place in leak proof container. Zest the orange and wrap in plastic wrap to make a little packet.

To assemble for service: alternate layers of tomato and cheese; shake-up then drizzle balsamic-olive oil dressing; sprinkle with salt, pepper and orange zest. Toss fresh basil leaves on top.

Yield: 4 servings

Lemon Dressed Cole Slaw

INGREDIENTS

1 cup mayonnaise
3 tbsp. lemon juice
2 tbsp. sugar
1 tsp. salt

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6 cups cabbage or one package ready-pak slaw

DIRECTIONS

Mix dressing, pour over slaw and toss. Chill 1 hour or more.

Yield: 12 servings

Herb Marinated Chicken

INGREDIENTS

1 tbsp. olive oil
1 clove garlic, minced
½ tsp. ground pepper
2 tsp. minced fresh herbs: thyme, rosemary and marjoram
2 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp. soy sauce
1 lemon or lime, juiced
1 tsp. grated lemon or lime peel

2½ lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts

DIRECTIONS

Mix together marinade, toss with chicken and seal in airtight container. Best marinated overnight in refrigerator, but a few hours will do.

Bake at 450° for 30 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Serve hot or at room temperature.

Yield: About 5-6 servings

(on website)

Cherry-Apricot Crumble

INGREDIENTS

Fruit

2 pounds of apricots

¾ pound Bing cherries
2 tablespoons sugar, or more to taste
1½ tablespoons tapioca

Topping

1 cup unbleached flour
½ cup brown sugar
Pinch of salt
½ cup plus 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

DIRECTIONS

Rinse the fruit; then slice the apricots in half and remove the pits. Cut the halves into thick slices or chunks. Apricots often ripen unevenly, but don't hesitate to include those parts that are soft to the point of being mushy. They will cook into a sauce as the crumble bakes. Pit the cherries, or slice them in two and pull out the seeds. Combine the fruit and toss them with the sugar and tapioca. If they are especially tart, add more sugar to taste.

Combine the flour, sugar, and salt in a bowl; then add the butter. Work the ingredients together with your fingers until they are blended.

Preheat the oven to 400°. Pour the fruit into a pie plate or gratin dish with a six cup capacity. Cover it with the topping and bake for 45 minutes, or until the top is browned and there is a thick juice around the edge. Remove the crumble from the oven and let it rest; serve warm or at room temperature.

Yield: 6-8 servings