

# PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



## September 2014 – Tailgate!

September brings to my mind football season and tailgating at the games. As much as I enjoy the excitement of the game, for me, the food and conversation are the best part. I like to keep things as easy as possible at the event so I can partake, not serve. I start by choosing recipes that can be eaten out of hand and need very little on-site preparation. My beverage of choice for tailgates is beer. This menu incorporates two very different styles of beer, each with its own perks. At the end, I serve my husband's favorite, a Scotch Whiskey and a fun, break-apart chocolate-orange ball.

Starting off the meal on the lighter side, Pimento Cheese Stuffed Celery Sticks are delicious with a Pale Lager. Lager, which means "storage" in German, is a type of beer that is fermented and conditioned at low temperatures. It is one of the most popular types of beer all over the world, and you can look for styles like Bock, Pilsner, and Märzen. Pale lagers tend to be crisp and lean, perfect with the slightly bitter, clean flavor of celery. And, the bubbles will offset the richness of the cheese.

Moving up the scale in depth and weight is oatmeal stout beer paired with a pastrami and Swiss cheese sandwich on dark rye with the Apple Sauerkraut recipe below. You can make up the sandwiches ahead of time with mustard on the bread and the meat and cheese in between. Drain off as much of the liquid as possible from the sauerkraut and pack in a separate container, then add right into the sandwich just before serving. This will keep the bread from getting soggy. Pair this substantial sandwich with an oatmeal stout beer, usually made from up to 30% oats. Although oatmeal stouts do not taste specifically of oats, the smoothness of oatmeal stouts comes from the high content

of proteins, lipids (includes fats and waxes), and gums imparted by the use of oats. This smooth texture will offset the acid of the sauerkraut and mustard. The deep, rich, coffee-like flavors will echo the smoky flavors of the pastrami and nutty flavors of the bread.

Bring your tailgate to a smashing end with an orange chocolate ball. I love slamming these baseball-sized round chocolates against the ground or table and then peeling them open to reveal segments of orange-scented chocolate. Enjoy the chocolate with a 10-year-old Scotch Whiskey like Benromach Speyside Single Malt. The fruit, nut, and citrus notes will complement the orange in the chocolate, and the high alcohol will keep you warm when the temperatures drop.

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 Stuffed Celery Sticks

### INGREDIENTS

1 1/4 cups light mayonnaise  
1 (4-ounce) jar diced pimiento, drained  
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce  
1 teaspoon finely grated onion  
1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper  
2 (8-ounce) blocks 2% reduced-fat sharp Cheddar cheese, finely shredded  
6 celery ribs, cut into 4-inch pieces  
Garnish: paprika

### DIRECTIONS

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Stir together light mayonnaise and next 4 ingredients in a medium bowl. Stir in cheese.

Spread 1 tablespoon cheese mixture into each celery rib. Garnish with paprika.

Yield: 12 servings

### **Apple Sauerkraut**

#### **INGREDIENTS**

½ large onion, thinly sliced  
1 tablespoons unsalted butter  
2 pounds sauerkraut, rinsed and drained  
1 Gala, Fuji, or Red Delicious apples, thinly sliced  
½ cup dry white wine  
1 to 3 teaspoons packed dark brown sugar  
Salt and pepper

#### **DIRECTIONS**

Cook onion in butter in a 4-to 5-quart heavy pot over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until golden, about 6 minutes. Stir in sauerkraut, apple, and wine and bring to a simmer.

Cover pot and reduce heat, then simmer, stirring occasionally, until sauerkraut is very tender, about 2 hours.

Stir in brown sugar, salt and pepper to taste.

Yield: about 4 cups