

PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



May 2017 – Spanish Whites

A trip to Spain is definitely on my bucket list. It is a wine destination that has it all: red, white, dry, sweet, sparkling and still. They also have amazing food. Oh yeah, they do have some cool cultural things and it's quite pretty there, but in all honesty, I'd primarily go there to eat and drink.

I like to start my meals with sparkling wine, so why not start my trip to Spain in sparkling wine country? Penedés is in the northeastern region of Spain, about an hour from Barcelona. Cava is Spanish sparkling wine, and only wines produced in the champenoise traditional method may be labeled Cava. I find most Cavas to be dry, crisp, and citrusy. It is a terrific partner with just about any food that has lemon as an ingredient or on anything you might be inclined to squeeze a lemon. The Fava Bean Dip listed here reminds me of traditional chickpea hummus, rich and smooth. It gets an additional boost of tartness from goat cheese and lemon. It is great with chips or veggies for dipping.

Enjoy this starter as you make a classic Spanish tortilla. This dish confuses many people because they call it a tortilla even though there are no flour or corn based products used. Others refer to it as an omelet because it uses eggs, but it is often served cold and there is no complicated act of eggs being folded over a cheesy filling. To me, it is most like an Italian frittata, which is basically an egg holding together various ingredients. The classic Spanish version classically incorporates potatoes and onions. The recipe below utilizes sweet potatoes, thyme and a touch of nutmeg. The resulting dish is both sweet and savory. Complement the tortilla with a white Spanish wine called Godello and a side salad made from arugula topped with toasted pine nuts, dressed with a

squeeze of lemon, a drizzle of olive oil, and a sprinkle of salt.

Some consider Godello Spain's answer to Chardonnay. Grown in Galicia, which is in the northwest region of Spain, the Godello grape is versatile and somewhat neutral. This means it is good at reflecting the methods of the winemaker. Producers in Bierzo age Godello in oak barrels, which makes richer, fuller wines. On the other hand, the Godellos from Valdeorras tend to be aged in steel tanks, giving them a fresher, livelier quality. In any case, the base fruit has the same citrus, melon and tropical fruit flavors that are often found in California Chardonnays.

A nutty end to your Spanish evening is a Tarta de Santiago (also from Galicia), which is similar to a Jewish Passover cake. It is possible that this Spanish dessert is related to the classic Passover dish because the Jews came to Galicia in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Its almond flavor is enhanced by the addition of lemon and orange zest. It is delicious with a sweet version of citrusy Cava. Do be sure to ask your retailer for help finding a sweet one since it is often difficult to tell by the label. Or if you can't find a sweet Cava, a sweet Prosecco or Moscato will work.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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Fava Bean Dip

INGREDIENTS

½ cup chopped garlic, cooked until soft, in one tbs. of olive oil

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2-3 lbs. fresh fava beans, shelled and cooked
(about 2 cups)
1 teaspoon lemon zest
2 tbsp. lemon juice
¼ cup water
5 ounces goat cheese
Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS

Place beans, garlic, lemon zest, lemon juice, and water in food processor, pulse until smooth. Stream in a tablespoon or two more of olive oil while puréeing. Add goat cheese and pulse until just combined. Add more water if thinner consistency is desired. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve with fresh cucumbers, red peppers, and jicama.

Yield: 2 cups

Sweet Potato Tortilla (Spanish Omelet)

INGREDIENTS

3 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion
3 sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced into thin rounds
8 eggs
¾ teaspoon sea salt
Freshly ground pepper
¾ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
3 tablespoons chopped parsley
1 small tablespoon thyme leaves

DIRECTIONS

In a 10" cast iron or ovenproof skillet set over medium-high heat, heat oil, and add in onions to caramelize, stirring constantly for 1 minute. Turn down heat to low and cook onions until they begin to turn golden. Add

in sweet potatoes and stir to coat in oil and onion mixture. Cover with lid and cook until sweet potatoes are tender, about 10 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and set aside. Keep skillet over hot flame.

In a small bowl, whisk together eggs, salt, pepper, nutmeg, parsley, and thyme. Pour over sweet potatoes and stir to incorporate.

Add remaining tablespoon olive oil to skillet and pour in sweet potato-egg mixture. Let cook over medium heat until the edges seem to firm up, about 5 minutes, then transfer to oven to cook. Tortilla is ready when all the egg has set, about 20 minutes. Let cool slightly before flipping tortilla over onto a plate and slicing to serve.

Yield: 6-8 servings

(on website)

Tarta de Santiago

INGREDIENTS

½ pound (1¾ cups) blanched whole almonds
6 large eggs, separated
1¼ cups superfine sugar
Grated zest of 1 orange
Grated zest of 1 lemon
4 drops almond extract
Confectioners' sugar for dusting

DIRECTIONS

Finely grind the almonds in a food processor.

With an electric mixer, beat the egg yolks with the sugar to a smooth pale cream. Beat in the zests and almond extract. Add the ground almonds and mix very well.

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With clean beaters, beat the egg whites in a large bowl until stiff peaks form. Fold them into the egg and almond mixture. (The mixture is thick, so you will need to turn it over quite a bit into the egg whites.)

Grease an 11-inch spring form pan, preferably nonstick, with butter and dust it with flour. Pour in the cake batter and bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 40 minutes or until it feels firm to the touch. Let cool before turning out.

Just before serving, dust the top of the cake with confectioners' sugar.

Yield: 8-10 servings