

# PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



## July 2018 – Umami Tsunami

There are five flavors: sweet, sour, bitter, salty, and umami (read: savory). One of the reasons I like pairing wines with recipes that have umami flavored ingredients is because their savory flavors balance sour flavors found in the wine. Mushrooms, meats, and nuts are all great examples of foods that are dominated by the umami flavor, and they all go quite nicely with wine.

One of my most memorable pairings was fresh mushrooms dipped in ranch dressing paired with a refreshing Chenin Blanc. I wanted to start this menu off with a spin on that pairing. I found the recipe for Marinated Mushrooms and felt I had hit the jackpot. On its own, this recipe is beautifully balanced. It has sour vinegar, sweet brown sugar, savory garlic and mushrooms, as well as bitter and spicy black pepper. Furthermore, the mushrooms are light, won't ruin your appetite, and have virtually no calories. As a pairing, the savory mushroom and herbs enhance the fruity quality of the Chenin Blanc.

As the main course, Bacon-Wrapped Venison Tenderloin comes with directions for roasting indoors. However, if you enjoy outdoor cooking during the summer, it can easily be completed on the grill. Even the Garlic Cream Sauce can be whipped up in a pan over the coals. Venison is a game meat with intense umami flavor. Game is defined as the meat of any animal that is hunted as food instead of raised on a farm. It is generally higher in protein and lower in fat yet higher in the healthy omega-3 fats. It has a full and rich deep flavor that is finer in texture than beef. Pair it with a full-bodied Syrah. The meaty, umami flavor in the meat will complement the meaty flavor in the Syrah.

Banyuls is one of my favorite dessert wines made in the south of France. It is made primarily from Grenache grapes. The method for making Banyuls is called "mutage." Alcohol is added to the fermentation process when there is still a fair amount of sugar left. The alcohol kills the yeast and stops the fermentation. The resulting wine is sweet and slightly less alcoholic than Port (about 16% vs. 20%). The nutty, fig-like flavor goes well with desserts that include nuts. These Salted Caramel and Chocolate Pecan Pie Bars are perfect for eating out of hand, sitting outside on a warm summer's eve while sipping a lightly chilled Banyuls.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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## Marinated Mushrooms

### INGREDIENTS

1 cup red wine  
1/2 cup red wine vinegar  
1/3 cup olive oil  
2 tablespoons brown sugar  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes  
1/4 cup red bell pepper, diced  
1 pound small fresh mushrooms, washed and trimmed  
1/4 cup chopped green onions  
1/4 teaspoon dried oregano  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

### DIRECTIONS

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In a saucepan over medium heat, combine the wine, vinegar, oil, sugar, garlic, bell pepper, red pepper flakes, and mushrooms.

Bring to a boil, cover and set aside to cool. Once cooled, stir in the green onions, oregano, salt, and pepper. Serve chilled or room temperature.

Yield: 1 pound of mushrooms

## Bacon-Wrapped Venison Tenderloin with Garlic Cream Sauce

### INGREDIENTS

6 thick slices bacon, partially cooked but still flexible  
2 (3/4 pound) venison tenderloin roasts  
2 teaspoons olive oil, divided  
1/4 teaspoon onion powder, divided  
Kosher salt and ground black pepper to taste  
2 tablespoons butter  
1 (8-ounce) package sliced cremini mushrooms  
2 cloves garlic, chopped  
1 tablespoon chopped green onion  
1/2 cup heavy whipping cream

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375 °F.

Brush venison tenderloins with olive oil and season with onion powder, salt, and black pepper. Place tenderloin roasts side by side and wrap them together in strips of partially cooked bacon. Place into a roasting pan. Roast until bacon is browned and an instant-read meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the tenderloin reads at least 145°F, about 1 hour.

Heat butter in a saucepan over medium heat; cook and stir mushrooms and garlic in hot butter until mushrooms are soft, 8 to 10 minutes. Stir green onion into mushroom mixture; pour in cream. Cook, stirring often until sauce is heated through. Serve sauce with tenderloins.

Yield: 4-6 servings

## Salted Caramel and Chocolate Pecan Pie Bars

### INGREDIENTS

#### Crust

1 cup all-purpose flour  
1/4 cup confectioners' sugar  
1 tablespoon cornstarch  
Pinch salt, optional and to taste  
1/2 cup cold unsalted butter, cut into chunks

#### Filling

8 ounces roasted salted pecans, halves or pieces okay; about 2 cups (I used Trader Joe's roasted salted halves)  
1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips  
1/2 cup unsalted butter (1 stick)  
1 cup light brown sugar, packed  
1/3 cup whipping cream or heavy cream  
1 tablespoon vanilla extract  
1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350F. Line an 8-by-8-inch baking pan with aluminum foil, spray with cooking spray; set aside.

#### Crust

In a food processor, combine all dry crust ingredients and pulse a few times to evenly combine. With the processor running, drop cold butter chunks through shoot until

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evenly distributed and pea-sized lumps and sandy bits form.

Turn mixture out into prepared pan and pack down firmly with a spatula or hands to create an even, uniform, flat crust layer.

## Filling

Evenly sprinkle crust with the pecans.

Evenly sprinkle pecans with the chocolate chips; set pan aside.

In a large, microwave-safe bowl, combine 1/2 cup butter, brown sugar, whipping cream, and heat on high power for 1 minute to melt. Remove bowl from microwave and whisk until mixture is smooth. Return bowl to microwave and heat for 1 minute on high power. Remove bowl from micro and whisk until mixture is smooth. Whisk in the vanilla and salt. Slowly and evenly pour the caramel sauce over the chocolate chips and pecans.

Place pan on a cookie sheet and bake for about 30 to 32 minutes or until caramel is bubbling vigorously around edges. Allow bars to cool in pan on a wire rack for at least 3 hours, or overnight (cover with a piece of foil and/or put the pan inside large Ziplock) before slicing and serving.

Yield: 9-12 servings