

## **Wine and Food Pairing... Bon Appétit**



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Let's talk about wine and food pairing. You can create terrific food and wine combinations without being a wine expert, or a chef. All you really need is a basic understanding of wine and food. The simplest explanation would be to pair light flavored foods with light flavored wines, and strong flavored foods with stronger flavored wines. You want to achieve a balance with your palate. And if you plan on tasting more than one wine, always start with the lightest and work your way towards the heaviest. By light and heavy, I am referring to the body and flavor of the wine. If you tilt your wine glass on a forty five degree angle (don't spill) then return your glass to an upright position you will see traces of wine on the sides of the glass moving towards the bottom. A light wine speeds to the bottom, and a heavy wine moves slower causing streaks, or LEGS on the side of your glass. Now what in the world does any of this have to do with food and wine? Everything! Assume you are drinking a Pinot Grigio. You might want to pair your Pinot Grigio with some mozzarella cheese. This is an example of a good food pairing. The cheese is light and the wine is light. If

you were to have a Syrah you would not want the mozzarella. Try some sharp cheddar, or dark chocolate. By the way, dark chocolate and red wine is the perfect pairing, and they both lower you cholesterol!

The most important thing to remember is that the wine and the food should compliment each other. Book store shelves are inundated with wine and food pairing guides. I'm not saying don't get one. They can be a valuable resource, but don't assume that because Irma Expert says have wine A with food A, you can't mix it up and have wine A with food C. Remember the old adage: Red wine with red meat, white wine with poultry and fish. Well that's not really true anymore. There are so many choices of wine now that you can have a white with red meat, and a red with chicken and fish. The most important thing to remember is: If you like it, that what's good. And don't listen to any wine snob who tries to convince you otherwise. You're the one eating, and drinking it. Not them!

Now with that in mind going contrary to the old rule can be an exciting adventure. Never be afraid to experiment with different wines. After all, if bar tenders never made mistakes none of the most popular mixed drinks would have been invented. So remember the big pairing secret is light wine with light food strong wine with strong food. Try some Shiraz with your steak cooked on the BBQ.

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