



November 2010

Grapevine

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A bounty of wines... for Your Thanksgiving Table



Yes, we've come back around to the annual question of what to drink with our fabulous, frenetic, feast — a day of celebrating with plenty of people, food and wine at our Thanksgiving table. It's wise to consider versatile wines that will complement a spectrum of foods and won't be too heavy.

Our meal is well-thought out but informal in the sheer variety of foods, and the wines should reflect this. That is not to say you can't have a few special bottles, but you may also opt for some easygoing crowd pleasers and accept the fact that it is difficult to pair any one wine with this meal; and make peace with the fact that people may just

want to drink what they want to drink.

The options are dizzying. To narrow the field, focus on American wine. (Although, because we are a melting pot, a coalescence of cultures from around the globe, it is also fitting for our wine choices to reflect that. But for now, we'll focus on American wines for our oh-so-American holiday.)

Whites

Owing to the multitude of dishes and flavors and textures of the Thanksgiving meal, there is probably a justification for nearly any wine. For whites, Sauvignon

blanc is a good choice, especially from California because it is dry, crisp and clean and likely not too high in alcohol. Californians are often more herbal and grassy and less citrusy than, say, a typical New Zealander, it will not dominate the food. Oyster dressing would make a beautiful pairing. Charles Krug from Napa Valley, with its notes of white pepper would be a great choice.

An off-dry riesling from Washington State would be a beautiful contrast to a spicy sausage and sage stuffing or a friendly complement to the sweetness of squash. There are some delicious, dry rieslings from the Finger Lakes that are a good buy. And for Chardonnay lovers, a mineral Chard with more butter than oak, like St. Clement '08, would be a nice addition to the table.

Reds

Now for the Reds: Pinot Noir is an excellent choice, and though most Pinot is often more expensive than you might want to spend for a few bottles to grace a long table, Erath from Oregon would be terrific with turkey without breaking the bank.

Merlot from Washington's Columbia Valley would hold its own without packing too much punch.

Zinfandel

The Thanksgiving wine issue has no perfect answer, but many happy solutions. An excellent red varietal is Zinfandel, as long as it's not too jammy or high in alcohol. Its bold fruitiness, when it is balanced with good acidity, makes it a fine match for the sweeter flavors found on the holiday table. Paul Dolan's 2008 Zin would make a beautiful choice and the balanced fruitiness would appeal to most.

We could go on for days deliberating what constitutes the ideal Thanksgiving wine, but there is no single wine for such a food-mingling meal. Most important to remember: You have many options. Second: When it comes right down to it, don't stress, just bring home wines that you know you will enjoy. It's a safe bet that everyone else will, too. ♦

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| Primus Cabernet/Syrah/Merlot/Carmenere 2006..... | 90 pts. WE | Mendoza | \$16.49 | (reg \$18.99) |
| Flechas de los Andes Gran Malbec 2007..... | 92 pts. RP | Argentina | \$14.99 | (reg \$17.99) |
| King Estate Pinot Gris 2008..... | 90 pts. WS | Oregon | \$13.59 | (reg \$15.99) |
| Standing Stone Riesling Ice 2008..... | 91 pts. WS | Finger Lakes | \$18.69 | (reg \$21.99) |
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| Louis M. Martini Napa Cabernet Sauvignon 2006..... | 90 pts. RP | Napa Valley | \$19.99 | (reg \$24.99) |
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| Louis M. Martini Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon 2007..... | 90 pts. RP | Sonoma | \$10.99 | (reg \$13.99) |
| Kaesler Stonehorse Shiraz/Grenache/Mourvedre 2007..... | 90 pts. RP | Australia | \$14.99 | (reg \$17.99) |
| Chalk Hill Sauvignon Blanc 2007..... | 92 pts. WE | Russian River Val | \$19.99 | (reg \$27.99) |
| Concannon Chardonnay 2008..... | 90 pts. WE | California | \$ 9.99 | (reg \$11.99) |
| Artesa Carneros Chardonnay 2008..... | 90 pts. WE | Carneros | \$15.49 | (reg \$18.29) |
| Trimbach Riesling 2007 Top 100 WS..... | 91 pts. WS | Alsace | \$15.99 | (reg \$18.99) |
| La Posta Cocina Blend Malbec 2008..... | 90 pts. RP | Mendoza | \$14.49 | (reg \$16.99) |
| Marquis Phillips Shiraz 2008..... | 91 pts. RP | Australia | \$11.99 | (reg \$14.99) |
| Kunde (Sustainably Farmed) Zinfandel 2006..... | 90 pts. IWC | Sonoma | \$10.49 | (reg \$12.49) |
| Lagone Aia Vecchia 2007..... | 90 pts. WS | Tuscany | \$12.99 | (reg \$14.99) |
| Marques de Casa Concha Cabernet Sauvignon 2007..... | 91 pts. WS | Chile | \$16.99 | (reg \$19.99) |
| Montebuena Rioja 2009..... | 90 pts. RP | Spain | \$10.19 | (reg \$11.99) |
| Kendall Jackson Grand Reserve Chardonnay 2007..... | 90 pts. RP | California | \$16.49 | (reg \$19.99) |
| Penelope Sanchez Tinto Joven Garnacha Syrah 2009..... | 90 pts. RP | Spain | \$10.99 | (reg \$12.99) |
| Perrin Cotes du Rhone Villages 2007..... | 90 pts. WS | Rhone | \$11.99 | (reg \$13.99) |
| Mas Donis Barrica Old Vines 2007..... | 90 pts. RP | Spain | \$10.99 | (reg \$12.99) |
| Thorn-Clarke Terra Barossa Estate Grown Shiraz 2008..... | 90 pts. RP | Australia | \$12.99 | (reg \$14.99) |

November Staff Wine Picks

Sheila: **St. Clement Chardonnay '08 (Carneros) \$16.19 (reg \$19.99)** This beautiful, buttery Chard is a perfect choice for the wide array of Thanksgiving dishes, from simple, creamy mashed potatoes to herb stuffing or the white meat of the butery, crisp-skinned turkey.

Damian: **Michael & David Petite Petit '08 (Lodi) \$13.99 (reg \$16.99)** Inviting violet and plum-like bouquet. On the palate, this medium bodied wine is quite silky and smooth. It displays very jammy black currant-like flavors with notes of dry blackberries and vanilla as well. The finish is dry, and lingers slightly.

Denise: **Erath Pinot Noir '08 (Oregon) \$16.49 (reg \$18.99)** Bright cherry and cranberry notes are lifted by a hint of exotic, zesty spice. The mouth-filling cherry pie, red currant and vanilla-coffee flavors in this lusher-than-most Pinot extend into a subtle smokiness and a long, luxurious finish.

Ian: **Paul Dolan Zinfandel '08 (Mendocino) \$12.99 (reg \$14.99)** 91 Pts (WS) Made from organically grown grapes, this Zin has distinctive spice and leanness. It is a perfect marriage of blackberry and black pepper with refined tannins and good acidity.

Graham: **Stag's Leap Hands of Time '08 (Napa) \$25.49 (reg \$28.99)** A Bordeaux-style blend with coffee and cassis on the palate with bold, dusty tannins. Deliciously full-bodied with a long, smooth finish.

Sale Prices + Mail-in-Rebates = Incredible Savings!

1.5 Ltr Sale

- **Cavit** Pinot Grigio & Pinot Noir \$11.99 (reg \$14.99)
- **Mezzacorona** Pinot Grigio \$11.99 (reg \$14.99)
- **Woodbridge by Robert Mondavi** Chardonnay, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon & Sauvignon Blanc \$11.99 (reg \$14.99)

Buy 6 of either the Cavit or Woodbridge 1.5 liters and get the equivalent of one free with a \$12 mail-in-rebate.

Save up to \$40

- **Simi** Chardonnay \$12.99 (reg \$15.99)
- **Simi** Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon \$16.99 (reg \$24.99)
- **Robert Mondavi** Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon \$19.99 (reg \$24.99)
- **Wild Horse** Pinot Noir \$16.99 (reg \$19.99)

*Additional \$40 off: Buy a case of (12) bottles & receive \$40 mail-in-rebate. Mix 'n Match

1.5 Ltr Sale

- **CK Mondavi** Merlot, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Grigio & Zinfandel \$9.99 (reg \$11.99)

*\$12 mail-in-rebate on (6) 1.5 liter bottles OR \$24 mail-in-rebate on (12) 1.5 liter bottles of CK Mondavi

Save Gas, Save Money, Stay Local

Yellow Tail Reserve

Merlot, Chardonnay, Shiraz

\$78.00 per 12 btl case / \$6.50 per btl
- 24.00 mail-in-rebate

\$54.00 final cost

Regular case price: \$119.99

\$4.50 per btl after discount & mail-in-rebate (reg \$9.99 per btl)

Save \$65.99 after case discount and mail-in-rebate

Michael & David

7 Deadly Zins 2007 90 Pts (RP)

\$156.00 per 12 btl case / \$13 per btl (750 ml btl)
- 36.00 mail-in-rebate

\$120.00 final case cost

Regular Case Price \$191.88 --
Save \$71.88

Final bottle cost \$10 (reg \$15.99)
after discount & rebate
(reg \$24.99: Save \$10.00)

1.5 Ltr Sale

- **Monkey Bay** Sauvignon Blanc \$14.49 (reg \$16.99)
- **Mouton Cadet** Red & White \$12.99 (reg \$15.99)
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- **Ruffino** Chianti \$12.99 (reg \$15.99)
\$3 mail-in-rebate on 1-bottle purchase

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Mix 'n Match

Wines from Around the World

- **Colores del Sol** Malbec \$7.69 (reg \$9.99)
- **Cellar No. 8** Merlot, Pinot Noir, Zinfandel, Chardonnay 3/\$24.99 (reg \$9.99ea)
- **Penfolds Koonunga Hill** Shiraz/Cab, Shiraz, Chardonnay \$8.49 (reg \$9.99 ea)

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Look for *Winter Wonderland Wines* in the December 2010 issue of *Grapevine!*

Wine Tastings Fri, 4-8 & Sat, 2-6

Sat 11/13, 11/20, 11/27: New Arrivals: Our latest finds; **11/13:** Svedka Vodka (flavors) & Bailey's Irish Cream.

Fri 11/12: Wines from the 90s Club & Vodka Tasting: We'll taste more of those 90s-rated gems, and we'll have a tasting of Rokk, Absolut Acai and Brooklyn Vodkas.

Thursday 11/18: Beaujolais Nouveau: It's that time again to taste this year's Beaujolais Nouveau. Don't miss it!

Fri 11/19: Wines for Thanksgiving: Ideas for your Thanksgiving feast & hors d'oeuvres by Perfect Blend Café.

Fri 11/26: Wines for Holiday Leftovers: Friendly and easygoing wines for your Thanksgiving leftovers.

Fri 12/3: November Staff Picks: These delicious staff picks are the perfect segue into the December holidays.

Food & Wine Pairing Menu

Apple-Sausage Stuffing With Cranberries and Brandy

(Adapted from New York Times)

- 1 cup dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup brandy
- 4 pounds ground pork or turkey
- 5 1/2 tsp kosher salt, more to taste
- 5 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 T ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground cloves
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 1/2 tsp grated ginger root
- 6 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 4 medium leeks, white and light-green parts, diced
- 2 celery stalks, sliced
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 1/2 tsp whole coriander seed
- 4 medium apples, peeled, cored and cut into 1/2-inch chunks
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar.



1. In a small pot, bring cranberries, brandy and 3 Tbsp water to a simmer. Turn off heat and let stand until ready to use.

2. In a large bowl, mash and squeeze together pork, 5 tsp each salt and pepper, cinnamon and cloves until evenly distributed. In a small bowl, mix together the garlic and ginger root.

3. In a very large skillet, heat 3 Tbsp oil over medium-high heat. Add leeks, celery, bay leaves and coriander; cook, stirring, until vegetables are almost softened, about 4 minutes. Stir in apples and remaining 1/2 tsp each salt and pepper. Cook 2 minutes, reduce heat to medium, cover and cook until just tender, about 3 minutes more. Transfer mixture to a bowl, and add vinegar.

4. Add 1 Tbsp oil to same skillet over medium-high heat. Add 1/3 of garlic-ginger mixture and cook for 30 seconds. Add 1/3 of pork and brown, breaking up with a fork, until cooked through, about 5 minutes. Add 1/3 of the cranberries and liquid; cook, scraping up browned bits from bottom of pan, until liquid has evaporated. Spoon pork into bowl with apple mixture; repeat two more times with remaining ingredients. Toss everything together and serve.

Wine News, Events or Musings

Wines on Our Minds...

The World of Zinfandel

Zinfandel is widely considered the all-American wine. It is made from a grape varietal that has been a great source of confusion and disagreement. Until recently, Zin was thought to have migrated from southern Italy, where Primitivo, a genetically similar variety is grown. Most experts now believe that both Zinfandel and Primitivo are descendants of the Plavic Mali grape from Croatia.

Zinfandel is grown throughout California. Depending on the climate and soil in which it is grown and the winemaker's touch, Zin can be jammy and plush or spicy and tannic. Typically, though, it is one of the highest alcohol wines because of the sugars naturally present in the grapes — and because sugar converts to alcohol, the resulting levels are sometimes reason for a big meal to go along with it. Speaking of which, it is a great partner to a variety of foods from the spiciness of Thanksgiving turkey and stuffing to big hearty steaks and ribs: American fare for our quintessentially American wine. **Paul Dolan's 2008 vintage, rated 91 Pts by Wine Spectator, is spectacular and only \$12.99.**

Cocktail of the Month: *The Original Fig-tini*

- 4 oz Figenza (Mediterranean Fig Flavored Vodka)
- Slice of fresh fig

Pour Figenza on the rocks and serve with a straw. *The perfect holiday drink!*



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