



# WINE & BBQ PAIRING GUIDE

As the grill begins to heat up for the 4th of July, and for the rest of the beautiful summertime, the most common question that I get asked is: "What should I pair with BBQ and grilled foods?"

When choosing a wine for your BBQ or grilled foods, you would apply the same wine pairing principles just as you would with any other type of food. You would need to decide whether to match the tastes/flavors and textures of the food to the wine, or to create a contrasting effect between the food and the wine. I often liken this to finding your ideal mate, some people believe that opposites attract, while others believe in finding their complementary match. To illustrate some examples, fish served with a lemon citrus sauce mirrors the tart flavor and light texture of Sauvignon Blanc. However, Sauvignon Blanc's tartness and crispness can also be used to contrast the oiliness and saltiness of stir-fried vegetables. In addition, the variation in ingredients, condiments and sauces would be a big factor in determining what type of wine would pair well with the BBQ or grilled item. There are basic guidelines that can enable you to find the perfect wine match with your specific bbq and grilled dish.

Below are a few basic guidelines to remember when you are deciding which wine to pair with the BBQ and grilled foods:

- Pair fancy wine with fancy food, and simple wine with simple food.
- Consider the type of food, methods of food preparation (i.e. grilling, roasting or frying), seasoning and marinating, and any side dishes.
- Decide whether to match the tastes/flavors/textures of food and wine or to create a contrasting effect. To illustrate, fish served with lemon citrus sauce mirrors the tart flavor and light texture of Sauvignon Blanc. Sauvignon Blanc's tartness and crispness can also be used to contrast the oiliness and saltiness of stir-fried vegetables.
- Moderately spicy and highly seasoned foods pair best with fruity, low tannin and lower alcohol-content wines. Remember that alcohol fans the flame while sugar softens it.
- Smoky foods need strong wines like Grenache, Syrah/Shiraz and Zinfandel that stand up to their powerful flavors. Wine and food should compliment rather than dominate each other.
- Wine is like a condiment - if chilled shellfish uses lemon juice, then a crispy acidic wine like Sauvignon Blanc is also appropriate; if lobster is enhanced by butter, then a buttery Chardonnay makes it even better.

Below are some wine suggestions for common summertime foods, and why they would go good with each item.



**Cantina Villafranca Frascati Superiore**

[Malvasia Blend] 2008 (Frascati, Italy)

**PAIR WITH:**

**Summer Salad & Raw Shellfish on the Half-Shell**

Made from 45% Malvasia di Candia, 15% Trebbiano Toscano, 25% Malvasia del Lazio, 15% Grechetto this is the ideal wine to pair with your summer salad. The Frascati is refreshing with fruity peach and apricot aromas and flavors.



**Cellar Villafranca "Casteller" Cava Brut**

[Sparkling Cava] (Penedes, Spain)

**PAIR WITH:**

**Fish N' Chips**

The bubbly effervesce is a sublime contrast to fried items. For those who have never tried Cavas, they are a softer, more fruit-driven version of Champagne.



**Domaine Saint Lannes Cotes de Gascogne Blanc**

[Columbard Blend] 2006 (Gascogne, France)

**PAIR WITH:**

**Grilled Seafood Items**

75% Colombard, 15% Ugni Blanc and 10% Gros Manseng. A light white that is refreshing and fruity. This wine exhibits citrus, grapefruit and other tropical fruit aromas and flavors. The very long and clean finish enhances grilled fish just as squeezing a slice of lemon on the fish would highlight the fish's clean fresh flavor.



**Viejo Isaias Clasico Malbec**

2007 (Mendoza, Argentina)

**PAIR WITH:**

**Marinated & Grilled Beef Brisket**

Brisket tends to have a robust smoky flavor, so you need a wine that is equally bold with the weight and flavor profile to match up with the savory, grilled and peppery meat. This Malbec has complexity, ripe fruit flavors, spice and a tinge of dry herbs. This is an equivalent match to the bold and scrumptious brisket.



**Bastgen Blauschiefer (Blue Slate) Riesling**

2007 (Mosel, Germany)

**PAIR WITH:**

**Brats, Hot Dogs and Sausages**

In Germany, they often pair their sausages with Riesling. Trust me; it is a sublime pairing, especially if the sausages are spicy like the Spicy Italian or Andouille sausages. This Riesling has a slight effervesce which is a brilliant contrast to the rich and fatty sausages. Drinking this vibrant and clean Riesling will enliven your palate and prepare you for the next tempting bite of the juicy meat. The slight sweetness in the Riesling will help to quell the spicy and hotness and counter-balance the saltiness in the sausages.



**San Elias Cabernet Sauvignon**

2008 (Colchagua Valley, Chile)

**PAIR WITH:**

**Hamburgers**

This intriguing medium-bodied 100% Cab has notes of cedar, spice, and smoke that intertwine with ripe black fruits. The hint of mint in the finish plays up the flavor of a grilled burger so fabulously. The grapes for this Cabernet Sauvignon are selected from the best vineyards in the Central Valley; exuding mint, cocoa and gentle red and black fruit sweetness poised by fresh acidity and fine tannins. I chose this Cabernet because it has enough acidity to contrast the richness of the burger. When choosing a Cab with your burger, make sure not to choose something too big or else it will be too heavy and drown out the taste of the burger.



**Brusco Lambrusco**

2007 (Reggio Emilia, Italy)

**PAIR WITH:**

**Memphis Barbecued Ribs**

Believe it or not, this is the quintessential BBQ wine. The bubbles in the Lambrusco provide a revitalizing contrast to the richness and fat component of ribs. The slight sweetness with the bright acidity of the Lambrusco complements the sweet and tangy components of the barbecue sauce. This is a highly addictive pairing. Please remember to chill the Lambrusco before drinking it.



**Yasa Tinto Old Vines Garnacha**

2005 (Calatayud, Spain)

**PAIR WITH:**

**Vegetarian Grilled Vegetables,  
Polentas & Quesadillas**

This red Garnacha is made from 50 year-old vines; the age of the vines attributes to the complexity, peppery spice and dark red fruit flavors that make this wine so tasty. When paired with grilled vegetables such as: Portobellos, peppers, and onions, this wine will

harmonize with the natural sweetness in these veggies.



**Chateau de Pech Redon "Les Cades" Rouge**

2006 [Grenache/Syrah] (Languedoc-Roussillon, France)

**PAIR WITH:**

**Grilled Lamb**

The wine's aromas & flavors of roasted herbs, sweet charcoal and cherry-scented edge highlights the game & lamb meats beautifully. The smoky and spicy profile of the Syrah and Grenache brings out the roasted herbs and charred gamey goodness of the lamb.



**Conundrum White Table Wine**

2007 (California)

**PAIR WITH:**

**Grilled Seafood with a Sweet N' Sour Sauce**

When you are in a conundrum as to which wine to pair with seafood, especially those with a savory sweet n' sour marinade or sauce, this wine is the solution. The Sauvignon Blanc grapes in this wine create that citrus lift, while the Chardonnay and Viognier adds the body and the perfume-floral, fruity and spicy flavors to this wine. The Muscat Canelli adds the orange zest and sweetness to the wine which can play up the sweet n' tangy profile of the sauce but won't overpower the seafood items.



**Aromas de Turis Sangria Red 1 Liter**

(Valencia, Spain)

**PAIR WITH:**

**Grilled Teriyaki Chicken & Korean BBQ Ribs**

The Sangria is made from red wine with all natural, essential fruit oils of peaches, apricots, pears, apples, and grapes. Its perfect balance of fruit, sweetness, and acidity makes the perfect warm weather sipping beverage with notes of red berries and citrus. Sauces and Glaze such as Teriyaki are quite sweet and the Sangria is a great complement; at the same time it is a refreshing contrast to the deliciously sticky grilled meats.



**Domaine des Varinelles Cremant de Loire Brut**

(Saumur Champigny [Loire Valley], France)

**PAIR WITH:**

**Pulled Pork**

Pulled Pork is full of rich flavors and benefits well from a pairing that can bring forth a refreshing contrast to this flavorful dish. The sauce for pulled pork tends to be both sweet and tangy, so this refreshing sparkler will engage with the two opposites on the flavor spectrum. Cremant de Loire is slightly sweeter and has more fruit tones than Champagne (Champagne can only be called Champagne if it is made in the same region). If you are having coleslaw, this will contrast the richness and correspond with the crunch of the slaw.



**Toso Moscato**

**2008 (Piedmonte, Italy)**

**PAIR WITH:**

**Applesauce & Desserts**

The apricot, honeysuckle and rose petal aromas and flavors of this tantalizing, sparkling Moscato makes this the perfect choice for applesauce or any fruit compote.

This wine is slightly sweet yet it has the bubbles and clean acidity to balance it out so that it is not cloyingly sweet. This is also great with spicy sweet Asian sauces, Indian foods and dried fruit.