



**CHOOSE YOUR
WINE
IN 7 SECONDS**

Instantly Understand Any
Wine With Confidence

UNIVERSE

PAIRINGS AND MISMATCHES

Because of their texture or aromas, there are certain dishes that are hard to pair with wines, but they are few and far between. Other dishes will only pair with certain wine categories.

A FEW GUIDELINES TO KEEP IN MIND



Green vegetables

Green vegetables “harden” wines, particularly when they are contained in water-based soups. Green vegetables served on their own do not make for thrilling pairings with wine, even if they can content themselves with crisp, fruity whites; light, fruity reds; and dry rosés. However, since vegetables are often served as sides to meat, the pairing is made with the main component of the dish. Asparagus, which have a very pronounced taste, alter the flavor of many wines, with the exception of some crisp, fruity whites, like dry muscats.



Shellfish and fish



Raw oysters and shellfish, and highly iodized sea fish, do not go well with red wines. Some fans of these foods, though, like them with very dry rosés. You can make your selection among the crisp, fruity white wines. When these ingredients are cooked with cream or butter, the dish pairs well with full, round whites, and when they’re cooked with olive oil, rosés work well.



Red meat

(beef, lamb, duck)

Red meat—whether grilled, roasted, or served with a sauce—does not pair well with white wines. However, it goes wonderfully well with slightly tannic reds, reds that are fleshy and fruity, and any that are strong and balanced.



White meat

(veal, pork, chicken, turkey)

White meats of all types are very accommodating, pairing well with most wine categories. Since these meats have a delicate taste, the only thing to avoid is putting them face-to-face with strong, well-structured wines and the firmest of the ripe wines.



Eggs

The texture of eggs lines the palate, and so egg will only tolerate lively wines, which you should select among the crisp, fruity whites; dry rosés; light, fruity reds; and the least tannic of the fleshy, fruity reds.



Spices and condiments

Spices, used in many cuisines around the world, pair with a good number of wines—in particular, ripe, spicy reds as well as rosé wines. However, when spices are liberally used, they tend to flatten out the taste of the most robust crus. And the same is true of condiments, such as garlic, used in excess. Wine has a couple of “enemies,” including vinegar and mustard. You can use a few drops of balsamic vinegar, though. In gastronomy, just as in wine tasting, it’s excess that spoils everything!



Cheese

Strong-tasting cheeses, like blue cheeses and soft cheeses like camembert, will ruin many wines. Generally speaking, they don’t pair at all with low-alcohol and low-acidity wines, and they have little affinity for tannic, well-structured wines (with the exception of sweet reds, like port). On the whole, there is less risk of making a blooper if you select a white wine—dry or sweet—as long as it is sufficiently ample and acidic.



Desserts

Avoid pairing sweet desserts (creamy cakes and Middle Eastern pastries) with dry wines, including Champagne and other sparkling wines—they will come across as aggressive. The exception is demi-sec and sweet sparkling wines, as well as a few rosés. Of course, you can always pair desserts with wines, even with a sweet wine, but it will be heavy and add calories. Dry wines, with or without bubbles, may be paired with fruit.

FOOD AND WINE: CLASSIC PRINCIPLES FOR PAIRING

	Red Wines	White Wines	Rosé Wines	Sparkling Wines
Locavore pairings	Bordeaux and porcini from Bordeaux Beaujolais and Lyon sausages	Riesling from Alsace with sauerkraut and pork	Côte de Provence and ratatouille	Champagne and Chaurouche cheese
Complementary matching	Rich, unctuous Banyuls (natural sweet wine) and chocolate cake	Fleshy, well-rounded Meursault and white meat with sauce	Fruity, suave Cabernet d’Anjou and dessert with red fruit	Suave Clairette de Die and crepes flavored with orange blossom water
Bring opposites together	Sweet white wine (liquoreux) and salty blue cheese with a bitter taste	Lively Touraine Sauvignon and fatty charcuterie, such as rillettes	Lively Côte de Toul with quiche	Champagne Brut and fish dish with sauce

WINE AND DINE: OUR SECRETS FOR SUCCESSFUL PAIRINGS

The art of pairing wine and food is not all that complicated. Each category of wines has an affinity for particular types of recipes, and there are certain dishes with which some wine categories should not be served. If you’re not an experienced sommelier,

it’s best to avoid the following pairings: white wine with red meat; red wine with iodine-rich dishes like shellfish and raw fish; and brut sparkling wines with desserts. Here’s a quick recap of the principles you should keep in mind (see pictograms key, pg. 218).

	Red wines: light and fruity	Red wines: fleshy and fruity	Red wines: powerful, balanced	Red wines: ripe and spicy	Red wines: sweet	Rosés
Nibbles and starters						
Fish and other seafood						
Mushrooms						
Cuisines from around the world						
Meat and poultry						
Cheese						
Desserts						

	White wines: crisp and fruity	White wines: full and round	White wines: sweet	Sparkling wines: dry	Sparkling wines: semi-dry & sweet
Nibbles and starters					
Fish and other seafood					
Mushrooms					
Cuisines of the world					
Fish and other seafood					
Meat and poultry					
Cheese					
Desserts					

The main categories of dishes



aperitif



barbecue



grilled beef



duck



mushrooms



charcuterie



shellfish



scallops



custardy desserts



crustaceans
(small)



foie gras



soft cheese



washed rind
cheese



pressed cheese



blue cheese



goat milk
cheese



feathered game



furred game



oysters



sushi, raw fish



fish with
sauce



grilled fish



quiches and
savory tarts



truffles



white meat



red meat
with sauce



roasted
red meat



poultry