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WINE & TAKEOUT: THE QUINTESSENTIAL COMBO MEAL

Wine Guru Pairs America's On-the-Go Favorites With Wine

ST. HELENA, Calif. (April 3, 2005) – Carryout. Delivery. Drive-thru. Heat and eat. America is a nation of on-the-go eaters. We're also a nation of wine lovers. But even after 10 steady years of wine consumption growth in this country, only about 40 percent of wine drinkers say they are likely to enjoy wine at home with takeout, according to a new study from the Wine Market Council and Merrill Research.

“Wine and food are meant to be enjoyed together – and that holds true whether you're having a five-course gourmet meal or a takeout burrito,” insists wine expert Andrea Robinson, Master Sommelier and author of *Everyday Dining with Wine* and *Great Wine Made Simple* and host of the new wine pairing/cooking show “Pairings with Andrea,” on the Fine Living Network. Robinson has teamed up with the Wine Market Council to share wine pairings for America's favorite on-the-go eats.

- **PIZZA** – The red **Sangiovese** grape, whether as a varietal or in the classic **Chianti** from Italy, is perfect with pizza. Sangiovese has zesty acidity to complement the tangy tomato sauce and cut through the rich cheese. For white wine lovers, **Sauvignon Blanc**, especially the racy New Zealand style, has lots of lively acidity and grassy/herbaceous character to create flavor fireworks with the tomato sauce, oregano, bell peppers...even the fennel seed in Italian sausage.
- **CHINESE** – Whether sweet ‘n’ sour or stir-fried and soy sauced, Chinese food has lots of crunchy-sweet veggies and sometimes a little kick of spice. Put it with a **Gewürztraminer** and the wine's soft lychee fruit and spice flavors and mouthwatering acidity complement the veggie tastes and contrast the salty soy and spice. For a red, the soft, grapey **Gamay** grape complements sweet ‘n’ sour and hoisin sauces, and has a nice earthiness that brings out the subtle tastes of soy, garlic and fermented black beans in stirfrys.
- **FRIED CHICKEN** – There's nothing better than the scrubbing bubbles of a sparkling wine to cut through the crispy coating of fried chicken, so look for value choices like Spanish **Cava** or American **sparkling wine**. For red wine lovers, a soft and juicy, grapey **Gamay** or **Beaujolais** red has lively acidity and plush fruit – perfect to cut through the richness and showcase the chicken's tenderness.
- **THAI** – Thai chili peppers and curries are some of the hottest, with their heat often toned down by a touch of sweet coconut milk. That makes the hint of sweetness and juicy fruit of a **white Zinfandel** or **white Merlot** a perfect choice. The wine's acidity sets off all the complex layers of curry flavor, while its sweetness and chill cools down fiery curry flavors. Or go a little more

exotic with the floral-scented, peachy-fruited and delicately sweet Kabinett-level German **Riesling**. Known for its delicacy and low alcohol, it won't fan the flames of the chili peppers' kick.

- **SUSHI/JAPANESE** – The super-fresh seafood and seaweed flavors of sushi and sashimi are right at home with the foamy bubbles of a French **Champagne**. Look especially for the demi-sec style, its touch of sweetness is the perfect contrast to the pungent wasabi dipping sauce. Or for a value alternative, try the affordable and festive Italian sparkling wine called **Prosecco**. You can even mix in a little peach nectar and turn it into a refreshing classic drink – the Bellini – with your bento box.
- **BURGERS** – When you're picking up burgers or grilling your own, bring on the big bold red **Shiraz** grape. It's got lots of jammy fruit and peppery spice to stand up to big, juicy beefy flavors. For white wine lovers, a barrel fermented California **Chardonnay** is perfect because the toasty-smoky flavors coming from the barrel sing with the char flavors of the grill.
- **ITALIAN** – Surprised by the suggestion of a great California **Cabernet Sauvignon** with pasta? The proof is in the pesto! Earthy garlic, herbaceous basil and olive oil, and rich pine nuts and parmigiano cheese, are tailor-made for a cedary-herbaceous, velvety-textured, deeply fruited California Cab. For a white, the lively, crisp flavors of an Italian **Pinot Grigio** will zig right through the pesto's cheesy-nutty richness.
- **MEXICAN** – Mexican and Tex Mex have spunky flavors that need a lively yet rich wine to beat the chili heat, complement the spark of lime and yet match the richness and body of avocado and cheese. Rich-but-racy California and Washington **Fumé Blanc** styles are perfect. It's the Sauvignon Blanc grape, with lively acidity and a nice cilantro-like herbaceousness, but with richness from barrel fermentation and aging (Fumé Blanc is a common name for Sauvignon Blanc wines that have been barrel fermented). Another great alternative is dry **rosé**, which has the fruit intensity and spice of the red grapes from which it's made, but the lively acidity and refreshment of a white.
- **DELI SANDWICHES** – Pile it high, Dagwood, because smoky-salty deli cold cuts and nutty-sharp cheeses will be delicious with a Chilean **Carmenere**. This red grape has a meaty-smokiness of its own, and plenty of body to stand up to a big, meaty sandwich. And if you'd prefer a white that cuts the mustard, look for Spanish sparkling **Cava**. The perky bubbles and acidity will cut through the richness of the deli fixins, stand up to the tang of the mustard on your sandwich and even the pickle on the side!
- **SALADS** – With salads and wine, it's all about matching the acidity in the dressing, and the earthy-fresh tastes of the lettuces and veggies. French Loire Valley white wines such as **Sancerre**, **Pouilly-Fumé** and **Muscadet** all have the racy acidity, subtle fruit and delicate mineral quality to do the job perfectly.
- **INDIAN** – Stick your nose in a glass of white **Viognier** wine and you may well find some of the same scents you find on the plate with Indian fare – sweet curry, cardamom and mint. That's because Viognier is an exotic white grape with the perfect aromatics to match up to all those exotic tastes. And for smoky tandoori meats, earthy lentil dishes and samosas, try an earthy-smoky Washington state **Merlot**.

- **BARBECUE** – Ready for this? **Riesling** is the best with barbecue. The concentrated fruit of the white Riesling grape stands up to even the heaviest meats (seriously – try it!) and the hint of sweetness hopes to tame the tingle of spices in dry rubs and sauces. For red wine fans, the big and bold **Zinfandel** grape is the perfect barbecue buddy; plenty of body to match the meatiness, and lots of smoky and spicy flavors to stand up to the barbecue’s bite.

What Are You Saving It For?

Just over 32 percent of Americans drink wine. While the vast majority say wine is appropriate for most occasions, nearly one-fourth say they still reserve drinking it for special occasions. According to the Wine Market Council, many people still have misperceptions about wine that keep them from enjoying it more often. They offer the following advice to simplify the process:

- **Trust your gut.** Like pizza versus sushi, it all boils down to personal preference. Drink what you like, red or white, with the foods that you like.
- **Check the grocery aisle.** When you’re at the store buying a frozen dinner, take a quick trip down the wine aisle where you’ll find a wide variety of affordable selections.
- **Don’t worry about the glass.** Whether it’s a tumbler or stemmed – any glass can be a wine glass.
- **Look forward to leftovers.** According to Wine Market Council research, almost half of America’s wine drinkers don’t realize that, just like pizza, wine can stay fresh for 2-3 days in the refrigerator.
- **Follow the 15-minute rule.** Take white wine out of the refrigerator about 15 minutes before serving and put red wine in the refrigerator about 15 minutes before serving.
- **Stock your shelves.** You don’t need a fancy wine cellar to keep several of your favorite wines on hand. Just store bottles of food-friendly standbys in a spot away from heat and light.

For more information, tips and wine pairing advice, check out wineanswers.com.

Internet survey of 1,398 wine drinkers was conducted in July 2005 for Wine Market Council by Merrill Research, an independent research firm.

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Wine Market Council is an independent, non-profit trade association of grape growers, wine producers, importers, wholesalers, retailers and other organizations affiliated with the wine industry. For more information, visit winemarketcouncil.com or wineanswers.com.