

PASTAS AND PAIRINGS

Wine Market Council and Sam Gugino Pair Pastas and Wines for National Pasta Month

America is a nation of pasta lovers. Last year alone, we consumed approximately 1.1 billion pounds of pasta¹. While shapes and sauces abound, marinara is the nation’s favorite sauce, followed by Alfredo and Bolognese². October is National Pasta Month and the perfect occasion for “pastaphiles” and rookies alike to celebrate pasta choices from around the globe. Whether you prefer your pasta baked, boiled, stir-fried or stroganoff, Sam Gugino, Contributing Editor for Wine Spectator Magazine and author of “Cooking to Beat the Clock,” proposes simple wine pairings to enhance the flavors of your favorite pasta preparation. Of course you can’t go wrong pairing the foods that you like with the wines that you like, but if you’re looking for suggestions, Sam offers the following advice.

PASTA	WINE PAIRING TIPS
Spaghetti Marinara	Because tomatoes are famously high in acidity, you need a snappy wine that won’t wimp out with this classic Italian tomato sauce. Try a crisp, fruity Barbera or a lighter version of the ever popular Chianti . A Sauvignon Blanc will also stand up nicely to marinara sauce.
Fettuccine Alfredo	The cream, butter and cheese in this dish demand a wine that can cut through the richness such as a tangy Pinot Bianco from Northern Italy, or a Pinot Grigio . Valpolicella , with its tart cherry fruit and hint of bitterness, is a good red wine alternative, as is Cabernet Franc .
Lasagna Bolognese	Hearty wines are required for this rib sticking pasta. A fleshy Montepulciano d’Abruzzo from Central Italy is the answer. A full-bodied and spicy Syrah or Shiraz will also handle the bold flavors nicely.
Macaroni and Cheese	Wine with mac n’ cheese? Sure! If you feel like red, a mellow, light to medium bodied Merlot won’t overpower this rich dish. White wine fans should try a medium-bodied, apple and citrus flavored Chardonnay with this creamy, cheesy comfort food.
Beef Stroganoff	One of the featured ingredients in beef stroganoff is mushrooms. And no wine goes better with mushrooms than Pinot Noir . A light to medium-bodied Zinfandel is another good choice.
Classic Pasta Salad	This American favorite usually has lots of vegetables in it. The crisp, herbal Sauvignon Blanc is the undisputed champ when it comes to matching wine with veggies. Almost any dry rose will also be a nice companion to this dish.
Stir-fried Asian Noodles (lo mein, chow fun)	The aromatic qualities and tartness of Sauvignon Blanc matches up with an amazing variety of foods and this dish is no exception. Pinot Grigio can be a more delicate companion. If red meat or other hearty ingredients are used, drink Pinot Noir .
Asian Noodle Bowls (Japanese Ramen)	Though many think of beer or sake with Japanese food, wine works superbly. If the dish has seafood or light meats, try a refreshing Riesling or a light sparkling wine such as Prosecco . Fruity, easy drinking Beaujolais is a good pick with more substantial presentations.

¹ – National Pasta Association

² – Olive Garden Restaurants