

PAIRING FOOD AND WINE

So here you are at our restaurant .. well, not exactly a restaurant (OK, maybe a restaurant...) and now you want to order your wine. But - what to choose? Would a red go with this or wood (if you'll pardon the pun) a white be more appropriate? Fear not! Because we've come up with some guidelines to help you - as long as you obey the two cardinal rules: (1) it's all about enjoying yourself. And (2) whatever you do - it's always done better with Attitude here on the 34th Parallel.

APÉRITIFS

The aperitif - from the Latin 'aperire' (to open) is intended as a prelude to dinner. It should stimulate the appetite and awaken the digestive juices. Traditionally, aperitifs were bitter, herb based liqueurs - like Campari, Vermouth, or Pernod - but whisky, gin, vodka, and brandy are now all considered appropriate because they do the necessary just as well.

WHERE IS WHAT ON THE PALATE?

As humans, we're able to discern five basic taste sensations: Sweet, Sour, Salt, Bitter, and Umami (a flavour that's only recently been described and comes from savoury foods like mushrooms, tomatoes and soy sauce).

Salty and sour tastes in food make wines taste milder (fruitier and less acidic), whilst sweet and savoury (umami) flavours make wines taste stronger (in other words - drier and more astringent).

HOW TO PAIR FOOD AND WINE

Your wine and the food with which you pair it should be similar in 'weight' - so pair foods like salad with fruity Chenins or Sauvignons (but definitely not with an in-your-face Chardonnay).

Consider how the dish is prepared: grilled, poached, roasted or baked - each one will determine the style of wine you chose. And balance flavour and intensity. Light dishes call for light-bodied wines and more full-bodied wines go best richer, more flavourful dishes.

DELI ITEMS: pair vinegar-based foods with Sauvignon Blanc.

OYSTERS: Bubbly!!! Bubbly!!! Bubbly!!!

SOUPS: if you're going for the chicken, try a Pinot Noir, whilst the tomato soup will thank you for a Sauvignon Blanc.

34 SOUTH SMØRREBROD: calls for a Chenin Blanc or a very young and (blush) fruity red.

SALADS: definitely a Sauvignon or a dry white like Chenin Blanc.

FROM THE OCEAN: choose a Chenin or an unwooded Chardonnay. But for the salmon, you want a nice, big, oaky Chardonnay.

SPICY or CURRIED FOODS: a wooded Chardonnay or a Rosé.

PASTA or RICE DISHES: dry white or a fruity red.

MEAT: a Merlot, a Cabernet blend or a sturdy Shiraz - take your pick!

SHELLFISH: Chardonnay or Sauvignon Blanc.

SUSHI: Pinotage will complement the wasabi and ginger - or go wild and try a Sauvignon Blanc.

ATTITUDE: you can safely pair Attitude with ANY wine from 34 South.