

Holiday Entertaining

Pairing Holiday Foods With Festive Beverages

(NAPSA)—It doesn't take a special gift to pair the right holiday foods and drinks—just a little knowledge.

Experts say you are no longer tied to serving the traditional recommendations for wine, beer or spirits. Instead, they say to simply go with what you like.

Appetizers

Begin your holiday gathering with appetizers such as a seasonal cheese plate or prosciutto accompanied by a refreshing cocktail like a Miracletini. It features apple cider and ginger. Just mix 2½ oz. SVEDKA vodka, 1 oz. Merlot, 1½ oz. apple cider, a pinch of ground ginger and ½ teaspoon of chai tea powder. Serve chilled.

Entrées

There are a number of red and white wines available that complement the traditional holiday entrée.

- Turkey: If a red is preferred, select a medium-weight wine that enhances, not overpowers, the flavor of the bird. If guests prefer white wine, a Kim Crawford New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc complements the bird's flavor with grapefruit and tropical notes. The wine also goes well with seafood and is a great complement to appetizers such as fresh oysters.

- Ham: White wines such as a Riesling, Gewurztraminer or Chardonnay are the best options to enhance the meat and sweet glazes. But if you want to offer a red, a more fruity variety like an Estancia Pinot Noir or a Zinfandel are good options.

- Roast: For traditional holiday fare such as a rib roast, lamb or venison, try a dry, full-bodied red like Blackstone Sonoma Reserve Merlot 2005. It offers



The right food and drink pairings can help make holiday meals even more memorable.

pleasing aromas of fresh raspberry, black currant, clove and vanilla with a hint of earthiness. The wine is full bodied with layers of bright red fruit, coffee and clove, finished with a velvety mouthfeel.

Another red option is Woodbridge 2006 Cabernet-Merlot. This wine has the vibrant aromas and opulent, dark, fruity flavors laced with spice and warm vanilla nuances. Other good options are Ruffino Chianti, a classic old world wine from Italy, and Alice White Cabernet-Shiraz, from the heart of south eastern Australia.

- Seafood: To enhance but not overpower seafood, select a white wine such as Monkey Bay Sauvignon Blanc produced in the Marlborough region of New Zealand. It's light with flavors of tropical fruit, herbal tones and mouthwatering acidity. If a red is desired, it's best to avoid tannic wines, so choose a lighter fruity wine like a Pinot Noir or Beaujolais.

Beverages & Desserts

When thinking of what beer to serve, remember that a number of craft and bold dark beers complement foods and are found in unexpected places like after-dinner drinks and desserts. A rich St. Pauli Girl Dark from Germany with its creamy espresso flavor can be served with the meal and as an after-dinner drink on the rocks with a splash of coffee liqueur.

Beer can also be used in desserts such as a luscious espresso fudge cake made with Negra Modelo from Mexico.

Pleasing Palates

Remember that each person has his or her own individual preferences for beverages. Offering a number of options to complement special meals makes the occasions even more memorable. With more than 250 brands of wine, beer and spirits sold in approximately 150 countries, Constellation Brands offers an extensive portfolio of beverages for every occasion. For more information, see www.cbrands.com.