Culinary Institute
of America

Food & Wine Pairing Principles

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DEUTSCH FAMILY
WINE & SPIRITS

Why are we doing this?

Food and Wine Pairing Introduction
An Unintimidating Journey

- Matching food and wine to each other to enhance the quality of a meal can be both simple and difficult

  - **Simple** – if you keep in mind a few basic guidelines and enjoy a moderate degree of gastronomic exploration and experimentation you can't go wrong

  - **Difficult** – there is no "perfect" food and wine combination that is right for everybody, but we are often called upon to come up with this elusive, even impossible combination

- Best approach = somewhere between the two extremes to find your own comfort zone.

  - The casual, spontaneous approach

  - The rigorous, classical approach

- Pairings should be FUN and should serve as useful tools to enhance the enjoyment of virtually any and all meals.

- There are some basic suggested guidelines – not rules!
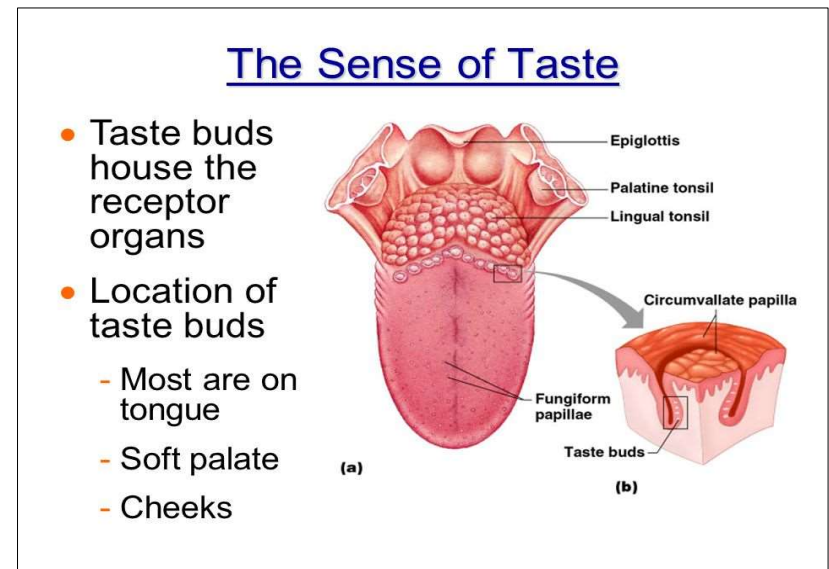
Our Food and Wine Pairing Journey
Agenda

- The Basic Tastes and Sensations

  - Things you may already know, but it's a good review...

- Five Basic Food and Wine Pairing Guidelines

  - Matching Intensity

    - Cooking Methods

    - Sauces and Garnishes

  - Body with Body

  - Flavor with Flavor

    - Complementing and Contrasting Flavors and Textures

  - Bridge/Echo

  - Grows Together Goes Together

- Food and Wine for Thought – additional things to think about with food and wine pairing

  - Fat versus Tannin

  - Vinegar: Acid plus Acid

  - Food and Wine Antagonists

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The Basic Taste Sensations

The Basic Tastes and Sensations

- The human olfactory apparatus can experience innumerable smells, but our palates can distinguish only five basic tastes: sweet, sour, bitter, salty and umami

- Most wines are not really perceived on the palate as salty or shiitake-like, so we are left with <u>sweet</u>, <u>sour</u> and <u>bitter</u> as our three basic tastes in wine

- Food; however, allows us to experience all five tastes, as well as the sensations of <u>heat</u> and <u>cold</u>

  - Heat – experienced as

    - Temperature sensation (food served warm)

    - Spiciness (jalapeño peppers, spicy curries)

  - Cold – experienced as

    - Chilling contrast to heat (cold white wine with fried

      chicken, with its heat escaping from under the

      crispy batter)

    - Cooling extinguisher to something spicy hot

      (fatty sour cream served with spicy chili)

The Sense of Taste

- Taste buds house the receptor organs
- Location of taste buds
  - Most are on tongue
  - Soft palate
  - Cheeks

Epiglottis
Palatine tonsil
Lingual tonsil
Circumvallate papilla
Fungiform papillae
Taste buds
(a)
(b)

The Basic Tastes and Sensations

- The five tastes and the sensations of hot and cold are important when considering what wine to match with what food

- Example – The same wine will taste completely different when paired with various foods...

    - Medium-bodied dry white wine + grilled fish = good match

    - Same medium-bodied dry white wine + dessert = trouble

        - Sour wine and overly sweet food

    - Same medium-bodied dry white wine + medium-rare rib-eye = you might as well be drinking water

        - Fatty rich meat and leftover grapefruit juice (if the wine has been made in stainless steel)

        - Fatty rich meat and a bitter hunk of wood (if the wine was made in an oak barrel)

- Wine, like food, is composed of various flavors and textures and should be matched with the other elements of a meal based on those flavors and textures; it's as simple – and complex – as that!
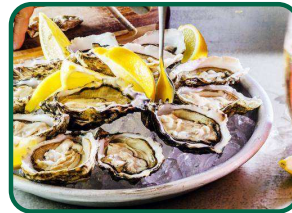
Five Basic Food and Wine Pairing Principles

Five Basic Food and Wine Pairing Principles

Match Intensity

- Match the **power** of the dish with **body** of the wine

Body with Body Compliment

- **Light wines** with light **dishes**, **heavy bodied** wines with **heavy dishes**

Flavor with Flavor

- **Compliment** with like flavors (i.e. earthy with earthy) or **contrast** with opposing flavors (i.e. sweet with heat)

Proprietary and Confidential

Five Basic Food and Wine Pairing Principles

Bridge or Echo

- If a particular wine is used in the cooking process, start by pairing the wine or varietal that was used

What Grows together Goes Together

- Pair foods of a particular ethnicity or region with wines from the same place

Matching Intensity

Match equivalent levels of flavor intensity in both the food and the wine
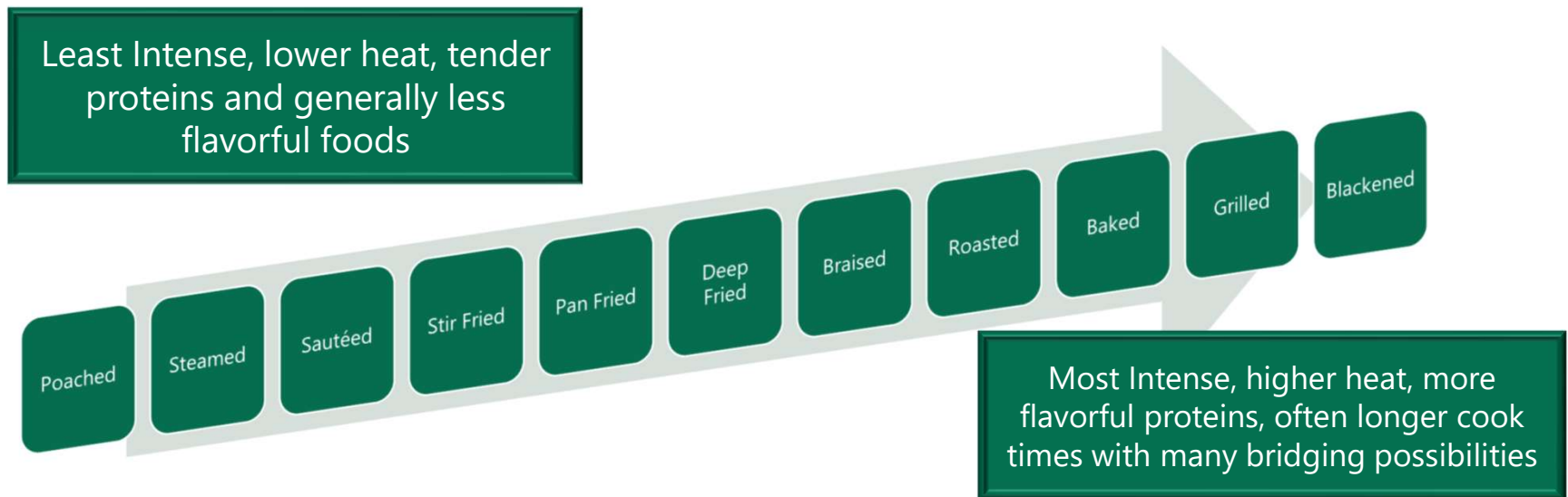
- As food flavor intensifies, so should the flavors in the accompanying wine

    - Light-tasting and light-textured dishes with lighter wines

    - Heavier dishes with fuller-bodied wines

Matching Intensity
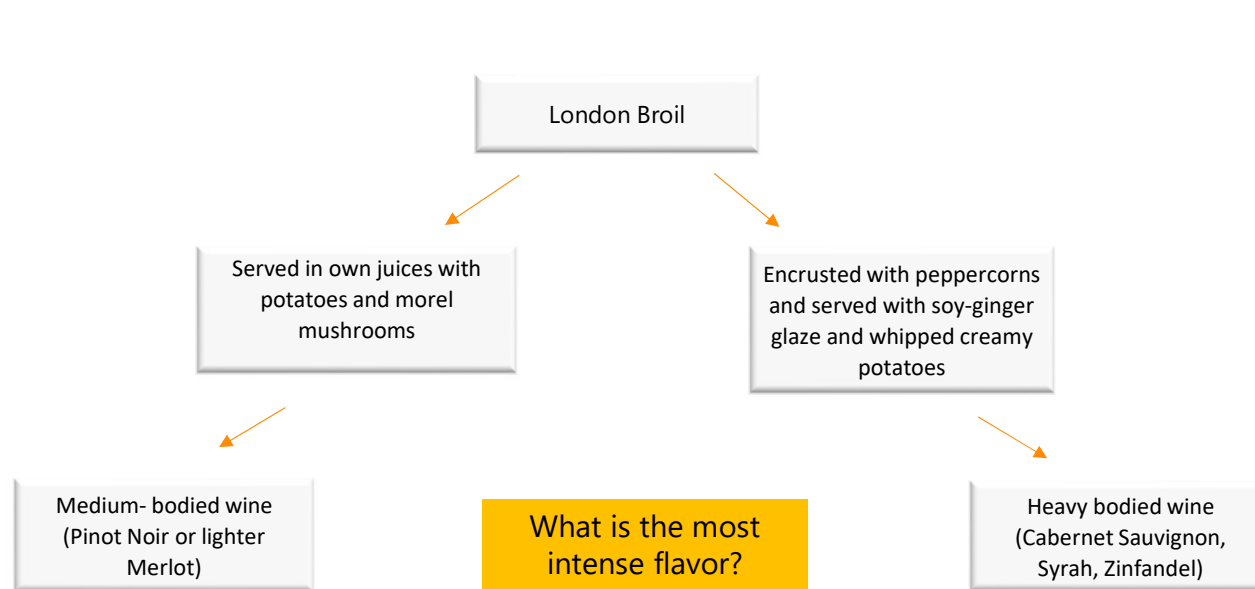Cooking Method helps <u>define</u> intensity

- Cooking method is of paramount importance when matching food and wine

- When dishes are tasted, the flavor intensity changes based on cooking method should be obvious

Least Intense, lower heat, tender proteins and generally less flavorful foods

Poached Steamed Sautéed Stir Fried Pan Fried Deep Fried Braised Roasted Baked Grilled Blackened

Most Intense, higher heat, more flavorful proteins, often longer cook times with many bridging possibilities

Matching Intensity

Sauces and Garnishes can <u>drive</u> intensity

- We typically match wines to the flavor of the main ingredient of a dish. Another approach may be to match a wine to the sauce in the dish or even a garnish, especially when their flavor may be more intense than the main components. Consider these:

London Broil

Served in own juices with potatoes and morel mushrooms

Encrusted with peppercorns and served with soy-ginger glaze and whipped creamy potatoes

Medium- bodied wine (Pinot Noir or lighter Merlot)

What is the most intense flavor?

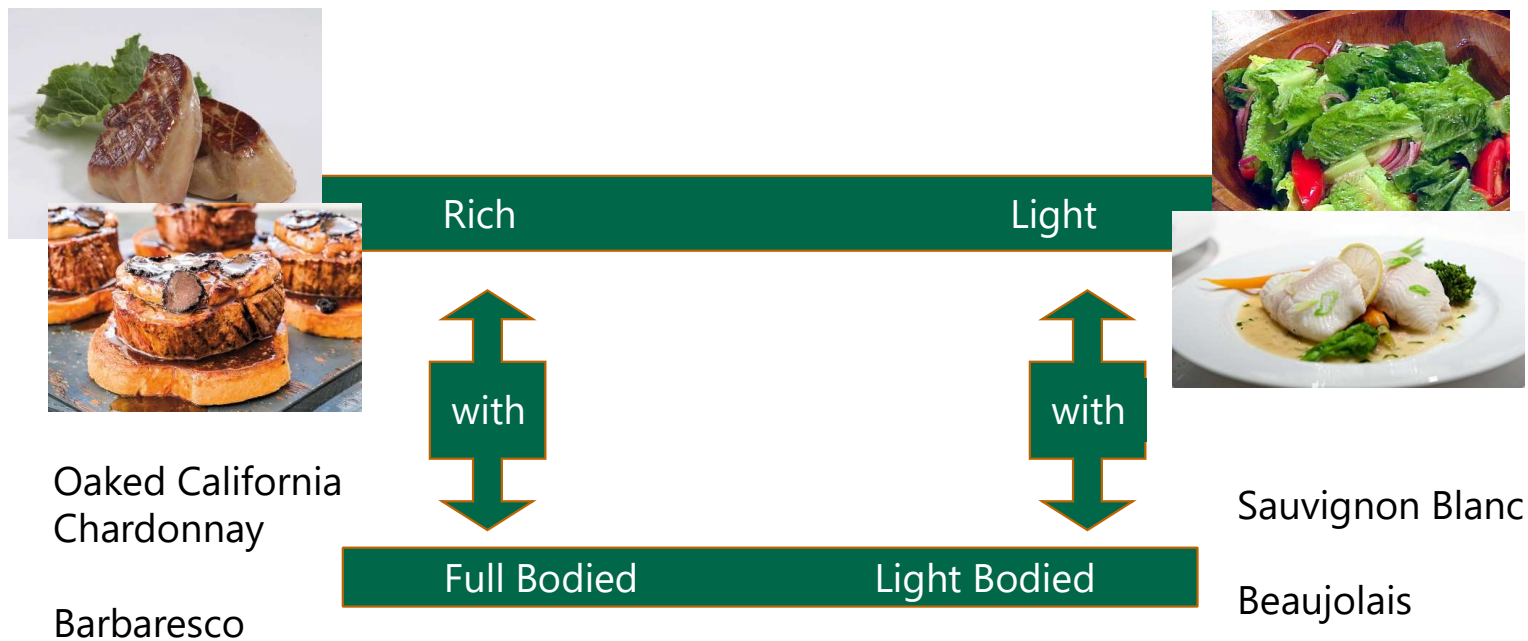Heavy bodied wine (Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Zinfandel)

Body with Body

- Wines and dishes with similar body typically go better together (light with light, heavy with heavy)

- Foods and wines have texture, which is loosely defined as how they feel – on their own and together – in the mouth. This is also called the body of food and wine or "mouth-feel"

  - "Mouth-feel" – highly subjective and largely based on cultural and culinary experience

  - Certain foods and wines seem richer or fattier in the mouth, while others feel more austere or lean

  - Roaming animals vs. more sedentary animals

    - Beef, venison and tuna   Turkey, pork and flounder

  - The "mouth feel" or texture of these dishes will be distinct, and this creates another consideration for matching wine and food

Body with Body

- Consider the texture of the food we want to marry to the wine, but also consider the texture of the wine in the matchmaking process

Rich		Light
with		with
Full Bodied	Light Bodied	

Oaked California Chardonnay

Barbaresco

Sauvignon Blanc

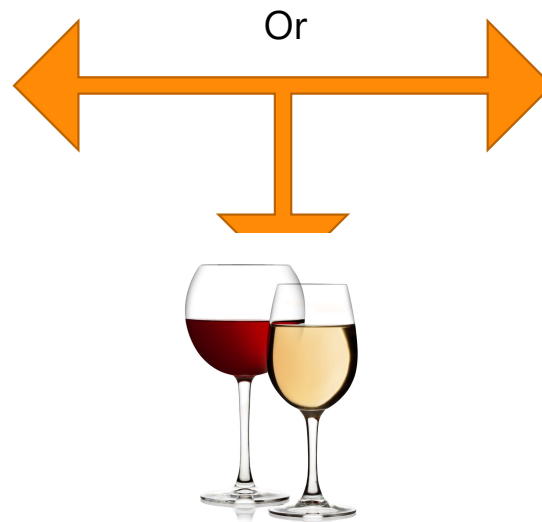Beaujolais

Flavor with Flavor
Complementing and Contrasting Flavors and Textures

- Two approaches to match food with wine – complementing and contrasting flavors and textures

  - The approach used depends on what flavors and textures you wish to highlight

    - **Complement** flavors by matching:
      - Intensity
      - Richness
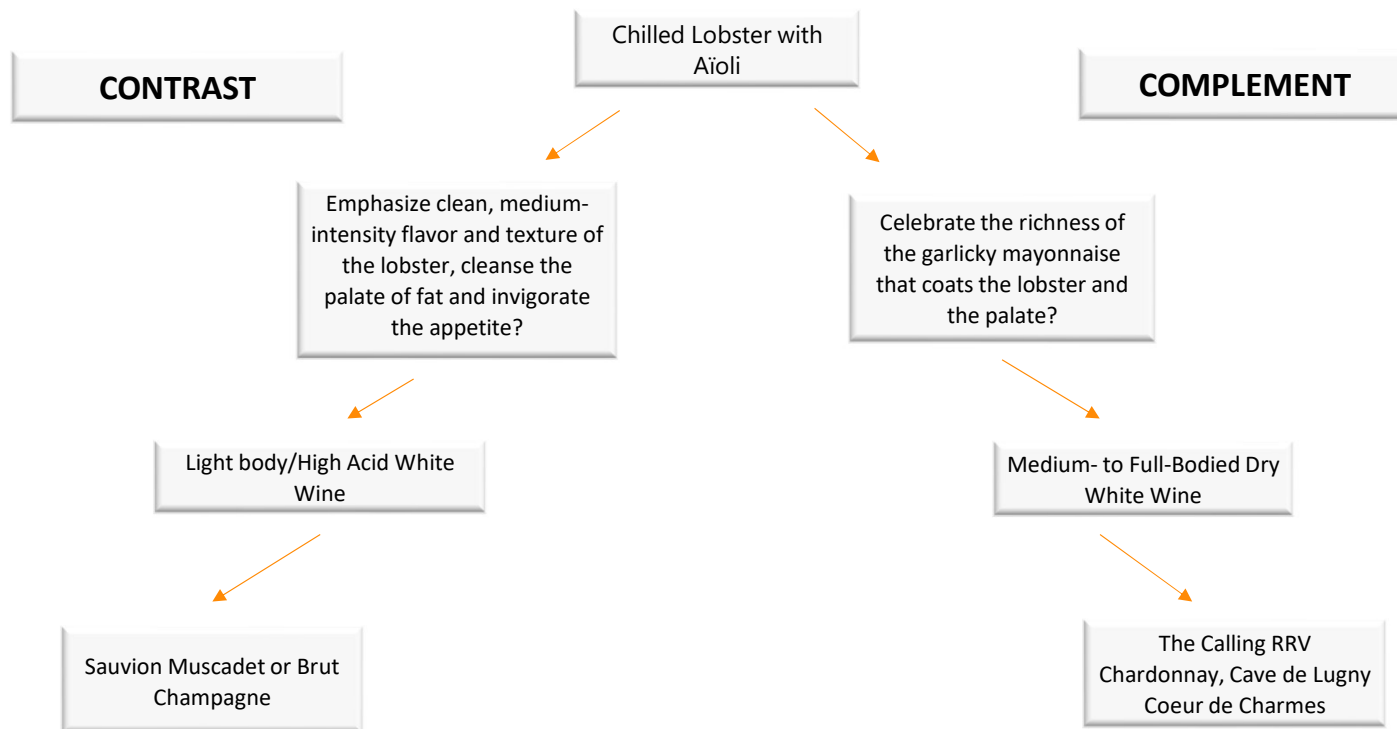   - Power
      - Flavors

    Or

    - **Contrast** by playing off:
      - Tannin vs. Fat
      - Fruit vs. Spice
      - Complex vs. Simple

Flavor with Flavor
Complementing and Contrasting Flavors and Textures

CONTRAST	Chilled Lobster with Aïoli	COMPLEMENT

Emphasize clean, medium-intensity flavor and texture of the lobster, cleanse the palate of fat and invigorate the appetite?

Celebrate the richness of the garlicky mayonnaise that coats the lobster and the palate?

Light body/High Acid White Wine

Medium- to Full-Bodied Dry White Wine

Sauvion Muscadet or Brut Champagne

The Calling RRV Chardonnay, Cave de Lugny Coeur de Charmes

Bridge/Echo

"Wine in the sauce, wine in the glass"

- Bridging = matching the wine in the food to the wine in the glass

    - Food prepared with wine should be served with the same type, style or grape variety of wine to reemphasize and highlight the wine in the dish

- Never cook with a wine you are unwilling to drink

- Wine used in cooking need not be of the same quality, region, vintage or price as the wine served

"I enjoy cooking with wine, sometimes I even put it in the food..."
- JULIA CHILD

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Grows Together Goes Together

"The analogy of "what grows together, goes together" holds true in those wine growing regions of the old world, where chefs and families still cook classic cuisine. Even though an International Modern style is making inroads, European countries like France, Spain, Italy and Germany still have strong local wine and food traditions."

- Joyce Goldstein

Food & Wine Pairing
"A regional match is almost always your best match." -Steve Jones, Cheesemonger

Crottin de Chavignol (goat cheese)
Goat cheese made in the town of Chavignol 2 miles from Sancerre in the Loire Valley of France.

Sancerre (sauvignon blanc)
Vincent Delaporte vineyards are just outside Chavignol, France.

WineFolly

Grows Together Goes Together

- Culinary tradition – certain wines are always paired with certain dishes; because, they come from the same region, and have traditionally been served together

  - Spain: fino sherry with serrano ham

  - France: foie gras with Sauternes (Beaujolais region)

- Sense of place – the same place

  - Piedmont: agnolotti del plin with Barolo and Barbaresco (the wines of the region)

  - Marseilles: seafood stew with tomatoes and saffron with Provencal Rose

  - Oregon: local salmon with Oregon Pinot Noir

Food and Wine for Thought

Additional things to think about with food and wine pairing

- Fat versus Tannin

- Vinegar: Acid plus Acid

- Food and Wine Antagonists

Fat versus Tannin

Fatty Food + Tannic Wines = ☺

- If tannins are prominent in the flavor of a wine, the food should be somewhat creamy-texture – i.e. contain fat/fatty

- **Do:** Use creaminess of fat to cut tannin, and the fruit and spice of a full-bodied wine will be emphasized and the tannin will be moderate

- **Don't:** Pair with a lighter bodied, simple wine with a fatty dish, it may lend to the loss of flavor and texture of the wine

- **Fish:** even the fattiest like salmon has a lower fat content than a well-marbled cut of beef or leg of lamb; therefore, will not be able to support an intensely flavored, high-tannin wine

  - **Avoid:** High tannin wine + fatty fish = wine and the food tasting metallic and unpleasant

  - **Use:** Low to moderate tannin and low alcoholic in flavor wine (crossover wine) + broiled, grilled, blackened fatty fish = better pairing/no metallic taste

Vinegar: Acid plus Acid

High Acid Food + High Acid Wine = ☺

- Acid matched with acid deemphasizes the acidity of the wine and food match and highlights the other flavors in the food and the wine

- **Do:** Match acid in a dish with acid in the wine, resulting in the flavor on the palate being less acid, not more

  - Ex: a thin, fruity wine high in acidity (Chenin Blanc) with tuna ceviche

- **Don't:** Use overly tannic wines, as acid makes tannin taste sour

- **Rule of Thumb**: strike a balance of flavors

Food and Wine Antagonists
Spicy foods

Intense Spice + Tannin or Alcohol = 🚫

- Very spicy foods (with fiery hot chiles) overwhelm many wines

  - Asian-influenced dishes: Kung Pao Chicken, Szechuan Pork, Lamb Vindaloo, fiery vegetarian curries

- **Do:** use white wines that are spicy or have assertive fruit and acidity

  - Gewürztraminer or off-dry Riesling

- **OR**, low-alcohol, low-tannin, fruity reds

  - Côte du Rhone or Pinot Noir

- **Don't:** use overly tannic or alcohol driven wines

wine with THAi fooD

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Food and Wine Antagonists

Salty foods

- Salty taste can come from the salt from the table or ingredients such as soy sauce or anchovies

- Highly salted foods can emphasize the taste of alcohol in the wine, making even 11-12% ABV wines taste unbalanced and overly alcoholic

- **Rule of Thumb:** If a dish is overly salty, then use bubbles or wines that have slight sweetness and bright acidity

  - Bubbles cool and cleanse the palate, while slightly sweet, acid driven wines can create a sweet and sour flavor on the palate

Food and Wine Antagonists
Vegetal Veggies

Asparagus

- Asparagusic acid (an organosulfur carboxylic acid) makes wine taste metallic and harsh

- **Avoid** pairing with tannic red or oaky white wines

- **Use:** Citrus, herbaceous, unoaked wines

Artichokes

- Cynarin acid makes wine taste sweeter

- **Avoid** pairing with tannic red or dry white wines

- **Use:** Light and fruity red or white wines

Last Thought

- Food and wine pairing is a journey – the ideas and guidelines we discussed today will help you to make judgments about what wines to match with what foods. Remember these were suggested guidelines, not rules to food and wine pairing.

- Questions/Comments?

Reference: Rev. ed. Of: Exploring Wine/Steven Kolpan, Brian H. Smith, Michael A. Weiss. c1996

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Cheers!