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Wines to give thanks for

By PEG MELNIK THE PRESS DEMOCRAT November 19, 2013, 12:47 PM



Some things are meant for each other: Laurel and Hardy, Minneapolis and St. Paul, certain foods and certain wines.

What follows is a range of tasty wines for Thanksgiving. They run the gamut from gewürztraminer to rosé, from sauvignon blanc to pinot noir — and everything in between.

Some of the varietals pair beautifully with a particular dish, like a crisp sauvignon blanc with scallops or an exotic gewürztraminer with pumpkin pie. Others listed — like a full-bodied pinot noir — can be enjoyed solo, either before the feast or after.

Tablas Creek Vineyard, 2011 Esprit de Tablas Rhone Red Blend, 14.5 percent alcohol, \$55. A wine with a lovely earthiness. Notes of mushroom, herbs, cherry and pepper. Lamb would be a particularly good pick.

Lasseter Family Winery, 2012 Enjoue Rosé, 13.4 percent, \$24. This is an exotic rosé, complex and refreshing. It has notes of strawberry, grapefruit and a hint of mango. It's buoyed by bright acidity and has a dry, crisp finish. Gorgeous. (78 percent syrah, 12 percent grenache, and 10 percent mourvedre.) A marinated pork loin would be a tasty food match.

Gundlach Bundschu, 2012 Estate Vineyard Sonoma Coast Gewürztraminer, 14.5 percent, \$22.50. An aromatic wine with layered flavors. Notes of Asian pear, guava and ginger. It's buoyed with bright acidity and it has a crisp finish. Exotic. This wine would be exceptional with pumpkin pie.

Au Bon Climat, 2009 Santa Maria Valley, Harmony Nuits-Blanche au Bouge, Chardonnay, 14 percent, \$22. A bright chardonnay with crisp acidity and good minerality. Notes of bright apple, pear and a hint of lemon. Refreshing. A tasty pairing would be smoked chicken.

Groundwork, 2011 Central Coast, Grenache, 14.7 percent, \$20. A ripe red that's turning heads. It has juicy red fruit, a lush texture and notes of herbs and pepper. A steal for the caliber of wine. This bright grenache would work well with a slow-cooked roast.

Landmark Overlook, 2011 Sonoma County Chardonnay, 14 percent, \$25. A lovely chardonnay with rich, yet bright flavors. Tasty notes of melon, pear, white peach and Meyer lemon. Lingering finish. Baked salmon would play off the bright notes of this wine.

Davis Bynum, 2012 Virginia's Block Russian River Valley, Sonoma County Sauvignon Blanc, 14.5 percent, \$25. Tropical, with notes of lime, grapefruit and citrus. Bright acidity. Great minerality. An impressive match would be grilled calamari.

McFadden, 2011 Potter Valley, Mendocino Gewürztraminer, 13.7 percent, \$17. Floral, with notes of green apple, pear and honey. Light and lively. Zesty. An Asian-inspired appetizer would pair well.

Steven Kent, 2012 "Merrillie" Livermore Valley Chardonnay, 14.7 percent, \$34. A budget-savvy price for the caliber of this chardonnay. Complex and rich, with notes

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of pear, lemon curd and toast. Lingering finish. A tasty pairing would be grilled chicken.

Loring Wine Company, 2012 Rosella's Vineyard, Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir, 14.9 percent, \$50. A jammy, big boy pinot with gorgeous fruit and great concentration. Layered with notes of black cherry, anise and cracked black pepper. A savory match would be smoked squab.

Carmenet, 2012 California Chardonnay, 12.5 percent, \$12. A value chardonnay that has notes of pear, melon and toast. It's not a highbrow wine by any means, but it's well integrated with appealing flavors. An outstanding match for pumpkin risotto.

Vina Mayor, 2012 Rueda Verdejo, 13 percent, \$16. Intense, with crisp acidity and lively flavors of lime, herbs and mineral. It's a refreshing quaff, well worth the price. The best pairing here, hands down, is oysters on the half shell.

Siduri, 2012 Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir, 14.5 percent, \$32. A very tasty pinot buoyed by bright acidity. Layered with notes of Bing cherry, a hint of cranberry and white pepper. Lovely. A great match would be duck.

Flux, 2012 California Rosé, 13.4 percent, \$16. A gorgeous dry rosé with tasty notes of watermelon, mineral and spice. It has bright acid, and the silky texture is a pleasant surprise. Crisp finish. Striking. (67 percent grenache, 28 percent carignane and 5 percent syrah.) A particularly nice pairing would be grilled tuna.

Cliff Lede, 2012 Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc, 14.7 percent, \$23. A tangy, New Zealand-style sauvignon blanc with zesty notes of grapefruit, lime and a hint of jalapeño. Bright acid. Great minerality. A good match would be sauteed shrimp.

Lasseter Family Winery, 2010 Amoureux Red Blend, 14.8 percent, \$54. This is a knockout, pure and simple. It's a complex malbec-driven blend with depth. It has concentrated fruit, herbs and spice. It's a talker. (73 percent malbec, 18 percent cabernet sauvignon, 7 percent merlot and 2 percent cabernet franc.) It would be best to pair this big red with venison.

Austin Hope, 2011 Hope Family Vineyard, Paso Robles Grenache, 15 percent, \$42. A grenache with bright racy fruit — cranberry, raspberry and plum. Balanced, with a black pepper finish. A great match for lamb shanks.

Merry Edwards, 2011 Georganne, Russian River Valley Pinot Noir, 14.4 percent, \$57. Rock star. A pinot with depth and a great concentration of fruit. Striking notes of blackberry, dried cherry, herbs and spice. Lush, fleshy texture. Complex. This wine is a great stand-alone pinot and would be a good one to savor later, well after the feast.

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