

SALTY VIXEN'S HOLIDAY WINE PAIRING GUIDE



SALTY VIXEN

One of the best ways to enjoy holiday meals with friends and family is by having delicious pairings on your table. So much focus goes into prepping and cooking the perfect dishes, and it's easy to forget about what's in your glass alongside your delicious food.

But don't overlook this step! Everything tastes better when paired with the right complement – whether that's a bold red wine, a bubbly prosecco, a hearty stout beer, or even a refreshing lemonade.

In fact, having the perfect holiday pairings can elevate a party, dinner, drinks, or just an evening at home. Many people don't realize that the right flavor pairings can enhance all the elements of your meal. And on the flip side, the wrong pairings can suppress certain flavors.

For example, you may have a succulent pot roast on the table, but did you know that pairing it with a bold, high-tannin red wine can make the flavors taste even better? Or, if you're enjoying it with a delicate white wine, the flavors of the meat might overpower the wine's lovely flavors.

What wine is good for a holiday party? While there are no hard and fast rules for pairing wines with holiday meals, there are a few guidelines for ensuring you're getting the most out of your flavors. Below, we've enlisted the help of our experts to suggest a holiday food and wine pairing guide to give you some direction.

Remember: everyone's palate is different, so some pairings may work better than others for your taste. The best bet is to try a few different options and see what speaks to your tastebuds the most.

The Best Pairings for Holiday Appetizers and Small Bites



If your holiday party or dinner involves appetizers to kick things off, make sure you're pouring a beverage that pairs perfectly with them. In general, since appetizers are on the lighter side light, crisp wines work well to start things off.

For example, light or fresh cheeses pair wonderfully with crisp white wine or sparkling wine. If you have cured meats or bites with garlic, try a light-bodied red or a full-bodied white.

Here are specific wine suggestions for pairing with common holiday appetizers:

Charcuterie board: Sparkling wines — such as Prosecco or Champagne — and crisp white wines work well if your cheeseboard has goat cheese or other fresh cheeses and dried fruits. Rosé wine is a great option alongside cured meats, semi-firm cheese, and mild cheddar.

Deviled eggs: Try pouring Sauvignon Blanc, which has fresh herbal notes that are a great pairing for savory flavors like dill or olives.

Garlic bread: A Sauvignon Blanc has crisp grassy notes that are perfect for garlic and herbs, while a dry Riesling offers fresh floral and citrus notes that will enhance the rich flavors. Other great options include sparkling wine with high acidity to cut through oil, or a light-bodied red such as Pinot Noir or Beaujolais.

Vegetable crudites: The crisp grassy notes of Sauvignon Blanc will work well with assorted raw veggies. Other great white wine options include Gruner Veltliner, Arneis, or Prosecco.

Bruschetta: An elegant, high-acid white wine such as Vermentino or Pinot Grigio will help enhance the flavors of this appetizer. A sparkling rosé or Chianti Classico can pair well with these flavors too.

Bacon-wrapped dates: Pour a full-bodied red wine such as Merlot, Syrah, or Cabernet Sauvignon. The tannins and bold flavors will complement the rich, smokey flavors of the appetizer.

Coconut shrimp: A Prosecco, Pinot Grigio, or off-dry Riesling will be a great match for slightly sweet coconut crusting, and the high acidity works well with the shrimp.

Onion dip: For a rich and creamy dip, opt for a full-bodied white wine with matching rich flavors, such as Chardonnay or Viognier.

Baked brie: If your brie is on the earthy side, try Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, or Pinot Noir for a great pairing. If your brie has honey or sweet notes, an off-dry Riesling is an excellent choice.

The Best Pairings for Holiday Vegetable Dishes and Sides



Vegetables can be a little tricky to pair because oftentimes they have bitter notes that can clash with tannins in wine. Sauces and seasonings can also affect the overall taste of the pairing.

However, with the right choices, you can successfully elevate the flavors of both the veggies and the wine to create a perfect holiday pairing.

Brussels sprouts: For a recipe with lighter sauce or seasoning, try a crisp white wine that highlights the fresh green notes, such as Sauvignon Blanc or Gruner Veltliner. If your dish has creamy or rich sauce with bacon, try a full-bodied white wine such as a Chablis, or a Syrah or Tempranillo to highlight the meat.

Green beans or spinach: A light-bodied, high-acid red wine like Pinot Noir or Beaujolais can help elevate the flavors, while a crisp Gruner Veltliner or Semillon can complement the earthy, green flavors in the dish.

Glazed carrots: A full-bodied white such as Riesling or Viognier with floral notes can highlight the sweet flavors in roasted carrots.

Sweet potatoes: Try a rich, full-bodied, oaked Chardonnay to match the sweet and buttery notes in sweet potatoes.

Mashed potatoes: Choose a wine that will match the rich, buttery notes of mashed potatoes, such as a full-bodied Chardonnay with buttery, oaky notes and high acidity to cut through the rich flavors.

The Best Pairings for Holiday Entrees



When it's time to sit down and enjoy the main event, make sure your guests' glasses are filled with drinks that will enrich hearty entrees and complement bold flavors.

Rich meat-based dishes tend to pair perfectly with red wines that have bold flavors and high tannins, although some additional options can offer great flavor combinations too. Here's a wine pairing guide for those holiday meals.

Honey glazed ham: Pour a wine with a bit of body and a hint of sweetness to play off the honey, such as an off-dry Riesling, or a fruit-forward red like Shiraz or Pinot Noir.

Juicy roast turkey: A rich, fruity Chardonnay or Viognier works well for pairing with delicate flavors in white meat. A medium-bodied red with high acidity such as Pinot Noir or Gamay can bring out the flavors in heartier sauces. Meanwhile, a jammy and juicy Zinfandel works wonders with darker cuts of meat.

Roasted pork tenderloin: To emphasize the succulent and rich flavors of the pork, open juicy red wines like fruity Pinot Noir, spicy Syrah, or a bold Zinfandel.

Rack of lamb: For tender cuts of lamb, a Pinot Noir or Bordeaux blend will go perfectly with the delicate meat. If the lamb is seasoned with Italian herbs, a Chianti Classico can also be a great match.

Roast chicken: While the perfect pairing can vary depending on the seasonings, a Pinot Noir or Beaujolais is a great all-around option for poultry. With richer roasts, try a ripe Syrah. For delicate seasonings, an oaked Chardonnay, or a Golden or Blonde Ale beer can be great options.

Roast beef: For beef roasted in a rich sauce, try a full-bodied red wine such as Cabernet or Syrah. If you have a lighter gravy, a Bordeaux blend, Rioja, or Porter beer can be delicious too.

Meat pie: A Tempranillo with bold flavors and a hint of spice will work wonders with this dish, as will a Syrah with dark fruit notes to complement a hearty filling.

Shepherd's pie: Go with a classic English Ale, Stout, or Porter for this hearty dish. You can also opt for a Bordeaux or Sangiovese blend to highlight the variety of flavors.

Pot roast: A bold Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, or Malbec with velvety tannins can work beautifully with roasted meats, while an earthy Barolo is a great choice if there are mushrooms or other vegetables in the roast.

Classic meatloaf: For hearty meat dishes, a juicy, rustic red like Syrah or Zinfandel can be a perfect complement. Other great choices include Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Syrah.

The Best Pairings For Holiday Desserts and Sweets



We've saved the best for last! Any great holiday meal has a sweet finish, and it's only right to have the perfect drinks to match.

While it may seem counterintuitive to pair a sweet drink with sweet foods, you'd be surprised how well they work together. The sugar in the dessert counterbalances the sweetness in a wine, leaving you with all the beautiful flavors of the meal.

Here are some fantastic wine pairings with holiday favorites that will leave everyone asking for seconds.

Cheesecake: A lovely pairing for cheesecake is a dessert wine with honey and stone fruit notes, such as Sauternes or late-harvest Riesling or Sauvignon Blanc. If the cheesecake has extra zesty lemon flavors, a Moscato d'Asti or ice wine with citrus notes can be a delicious choice.

Chocolate tart or brownies: For ooey gooey chocolate desserts, a dry red like Merlot or a ruby port with sweet fruit notes can offer a delicious complement.

Apple pie: Moscato d'Asti has delicious citrus and apple notes that work perfectly with apple pie, while a tawny port offers caramel notes that will create a caramel-apple-like flavor.

Pumpkin pie: Try an aged tawny port with dried orange, fig, and spice notes that offer a perfect pairing for pumpkin pie spices.

Pecan pie: For the sweet and nutty flavors of a pecan pie, open a light-bodied red wine with juicy and spicy notes, such as a Gamay.

Pound or Almond cake: Try a sweet or late-harvest Riesling with bright floral notes, or a bubbly Moscato d'Asti.

Lemon meringue pie: A slightly sweet Prosecco or Moscato d'Asti can be a great option for balancing the acidity of the citrus and highlighting the delicate flavors of this dessert.

The Sweetest Gift by Salty Vixen

Arriving home from work after a particularly trying day, I found a note on the kitchen counter. In his firm, strong handwriting, Sean wrote that dinner was warming in the oven and I was to eat and relax, then join him for dessert.

I ate the lasagna he'd thoughtfully prepared for me, then took a long, luxurious shower. Wrapping a towel around me, I walked into our bedroom to find it had been turned into veritable fairyland, aglow with dozens of candles. Sean sat on the huge bed, a tray in front of him. As I moved toward him, I saw what the tray contained and nearly swooned.

Chocolate, acres and acres of dark, rich, heavenly chocolate in every possible permutation filled the tray. Slices of cake dabbed with whipping cream; crystal stemware filled with mousse, topped with shaved chocolate and perfect raspberries; dozens of luscious truffles; a copper bowl filled with warm, velvety fondue. A large bowl of whipping cream, nested in a bowl filled with ice; several large, juicy strawberries, chunks of fresh pineapple and banana; and two icy bottles of La Grande Dame Veuve Clicquot champagne completed the stunning array.

"Will you join me for a taste?" I let the towel fall from my body and walked to the bed, climbing up next to him. I reached for something and stopped, unsure of which delight to try first.

"May I?" As he posed the question, his fingers dipped a strawberry in the velvet of the fondue and brought it, dripping in chocolate, to my lips. I ate, my enjoyment of that perfect combination of tastes so complete as to be surreal. The fondue dripped from Sean's fingers onto my breast, his hand stopping mine as I reached to wipe it off.

"Leave it, Brianna. It only enhances your beautiful tits." I shivered and did as he asked, awaiting yet another taste sensation.

"What shall it be next, or should I surprise you?"

"Surprise me, I think." He poured us each a glass of champagne and we drank slowly, savoring the bubbles and the richness of the drink.

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He set his glass upon the tray and reached for something on the night table. "Indulge me, Brianna. Let yourself go." He passed a cloth of black satin across my nipples, then brought it up to my face.

"I think I'll make it a true surprise for you." He tied the cloth around my eyes, immediately making my other senses more aware.

"Try this." I felt something cool and creamy against my lips and opened to taste. The intense chocolate flavor of mousse filled my mouth as more mousse was painted onto my body.

And so it went, the tasting of each morsel and the subsequent placing of its companion somewhere on my body.

"I'm hungry now too, Brianna, and longing for a taste of the sweetness you've been enjoying."

"Will you allow me to feed you as you've done for me?" I reached to remove the blindfold so I could return the sensual favor to Sean. His hand stopped mine.

"Oh, you'll feed me, Brianna. Lay back and let me feast. I believe I'll begin with a truffle."

He nudged my thighs apart and I could feel him place the sweet between my swollen pussy lips. "I've always thought chocolate would taste best when dewed by the juices from your cunt."

His head went between my legs and his lips and tongue slowly removed all traces of the chocolate from me. I squirmed at moved my hips at the incredible sensations, so much so that Sean had a difficult time licking the last from me.

"Now, Brianna, it wouldn't do at all to miss some of my dessert, and you're making it very hard for me by wriggling around. I think I'd best do something about that, don't you?" The bed shifted as he moved from it. He returned in moments to take one of my hands.

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"Feel the softness and the inherent strength of the silk, Brianna. It's amazing that a creature so small can spin a fiber so strong, isn't it?" He tied my hand lightly to the bed post, moving around to secure the other. "That takes care of the problem of your hands getting in my way, now it's time for those beautiful feet of yours."

Moving to the end of the bed he picked up a foot and began licking each toe, his tongue warm and wet and the feeling sending shivers of lust down my spine. More silk was wrapped around my ankle and secured to the bed. My other leg was given the same loving treatment.

When he finished with the ties, I lay there spread to him, still blindfolded. Every nerve and muscle in my body was aquiver in anticipation. He began at my hands, drawing each finger into his mouth and sucking. His lips moved down my arm, licking and nipping as he went.

He moved down my body, lightly caressing the side of a breast with his beard, avoiding for now the nipples that were hard, pebbly and eager for his touch. His tongue used my belly button as a bowl for his mousse, licking it clean. No centimeter of skin was left untouched by his mouth, every nerve ending fully aroused.

I was writhing and straining against the bindings by the time he got to the chocolate that covered my breasts. His mouth dove in, and as soon as he started tugging on my nipples I screamed and came in a rush of pleasure. He didn't relent, yet continued his feast, sucking hard and pulling with his teeth. I came again and again as his mouth and tongue continued their magic and at last his fingers joined in.

He separated the lips of my pussy and I could feel something cold and firm being pushed inside. My well-sucked nipples were saddened for a moment when he left them, only to find the pleasure increased as he ate what I felt to be strawberries from my pussy, his tongue making sure there was no trace of the fruit left behind.

"I'm thirsty, Brianna, and I think I know just what will quench me." A shock of cold, fizzy champagne drizzled on me, making me shudder as rivulets rolled down my breasts and belly, the bubbles delightfully ticklish on my clit. He licked and sucked until the champagne disappeared as the chocolate had, bringing me to orgasm after orgasm and leaving me limp with satisfaction.

The Sweetest Gift by Salty Vixen

The sheer number and intensity of my orgasms exhausted me, and I fell asleep for a while.

I awoke, still blindfolded and bound, as Sean spread something cool and smooth over and between my breasts.

"I'm going to untie your hands now, Brianna, but I want you to touch only what I tell you. Will you promise me that?"

"Oh, yes, Sean, I'll promise you whatever you want!"

He freed my hands and I immediately tried to touch him. "No, Brianna." he said firmly. "You must touch only what I tell you! Squeeze your tits together tightly for me."

I did so eagerly, and my reward was to feel him kneel over me and place his hard cock between my breasts. He fucked my tits mightily, thrusting hard enough to have the head of his cock, dripping with precome, rub my throat. The whipping cream he'd coated me with provided the perfect lubrication and as his breathing grew ragged I knew I was going to be coated in a cream far more delicious.

Sean removed the blindfold to allow me the pleasure of watching his semen jet forth, covering my chest, my chin and my face. He held his now satisfied cock and rubbed it in his come, then brought it to my lips to taste from him. As perfect as the dinner, the chocolate and the wine had been, they paled in comparison to the taste of Sean.

He untied my feet and we dozed, waking again that night to continue enjoying every part of each other.

Salty Vixen
Author. Musician. Deep Thinker.
saltyvixenstories.com

