

Wine Tips for Thanksgiving



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The wide range of foods that are served at the Thanksgiving meal can make it challenging to pair wines. This is especially true when we think about the side dishes which can range from the mundane such as mashed potatoes to the truly exotic cranberry salad or the new wave roasted Brussels Sprouts. Below are some tips and thoughts about having wine with your Thanksgiving meal.

Give People Options

It is okay to have more than one type of wine open at any one time. If your Aunt only drinks sweet white wine then by all means have that sweet white wine available. Many Texas Rieslings would fit this bill. If your Uncle only drinks Australian Cabernet Sauvignon then tell him to sit down and try some Texas Cabernet Sauvignon. Options make life easier.

White Wines

Rieslings and Pinot Grigio wines can be great choices. Many of them have floral notes and are low alcohol. Some of the exotic spices that are used in side dishes such as cloves and nutmeg can make a high alcohol wine seem hot on the palate. Nobody wants a hot palate for Thanksgiving. It is best to avoid white wines (usually Chardonnay) that have been aged in oak barrels as the oakiness can overpower some of the flavors found at the Thanksgiving table.

Rose Wines

One of the most versatile wines at the Thanksgiving table is a dry Rose. They are easy to drink and usually have some nice fruit flavors that can mingle with ease with the turkey and the cranberry. They normally have some good acids which makes them nicely balanced and they don't dominate the food's flavors.

Red Wines

We are looking for food friendly wines since there are a wide range of foods and meats at the Thanksgiving table. These are wines that are relatively low in tannins, usually not aged in oak barrels where they can pick up tannins, have some good acid structure and are not boldly flavored. Many of the Italian varieties fit this bill such as Sangiovese or Dolcetto. Pinot Noir is another natural fit for many Thanksgiving tables.

Enjoy your Thanksgiving meal and be thankful.