

DECEMBER/JANUARY RECIPES

KEY:

- PASTA
- VEGETARIAN
- STAFF FAVORITE

APPETIZERS & SNACKS

- Calamari Toast with Hawthorn Sweet-and-Sour Sauce **p. 75**
- Chorizo Chips **p. 175**
- Gamba Jorim (Soy Sauce-Lacquered Potatoes) **p. 74**
- Lumpiang Sariwa (Fresh Filipino Spring Rolls) **p. 60**
- Miss Kim's Fried Tofu **p. 70**
- Salami Snacks **p. 175**
- Venison Meatballs with Cumberbund Sauce **p. 213**
- Zeytinyagli Yaprak Sarmasi (Vegetarian Stuffed Grape Leaves) **p. 183**

SIDES

- Bivarion Potato Salad **p. 145**
- Braised Red Cabbage with Apples and Rum **p. 142**
- Creamy Parsnips with Brown Butter and Green Apples **p. 77**
- Crispy Spiced Okra **p. 176**
- Korean Steamed Eggs (Cyranjima) **p. 175**
- Microbeaved Eggplant with Scallion-Chile Crisp Oil **p. 176**
- Pretzel and Mustard Dumplings **p. 144**
- Seaweed and Greens Salad **p. 186**
- Speedy Sweet Potatoes **p. 176**

SANDWICHES

- Chicken Sandwich
- Fish Sandwich
- Veggie Sandwich

MAIN COURSES

- Chicken Breast with Sage Butter Sauce **p. 216**
- Pie with Roasted Garlic and Tomatoes **p. 219**
- Roasted "Keblochon" **p. 109**
- Roasted Soy Citrus Sea Bass **p. 57**
- Smoked Mozzarella Macaroni with Braised Onion Sauce **p. 218**
- Smoky Stuffed Chicken with Serrano Ham and Olives **p. 171**
- Sour Cherry-Glazed Goose Legs with Gravy **p. 144**
- Spaghetti with Butter and Brewer's Yeast **p. 192**
- Ultimate Buttermilk Marinated Fried Chicken Breasts **p. 169**
- Umami Mayo Roast Chicken **p. 171**

2014 CHAMPAGNE AYALA LE BLANC DE BLANCS (\$110)

Elegant, precise, and lasting, this Blanc de Blancs from Ayala may not be inexpensive, but it certainly is a thrill to drink. Pop open a bottle with someone you love on New Year's Eve, and pair it—just for fun—with potato chips. Seriously. It's an amazing combination.



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STAFF-FAVORITE PAIRING

FRIED CHICKEN WITH ROOT VEGETABLE ESCABECHE with herb, cherry-inflected Pinot Noir; 2020 Willamette Valley Vineyards Whole Cluster

COCOA COLA BUNDT CAKE WITH AMARENA CHERRIES
p. 187

What Ray's Pouring Now Executive Wine Editor Ray Isle's favorite things to drink this month



2019 LAPOSTOLLE CUVÉE ALEXANDRE CABERNET SAUVIGNON (\$26)

Need an affordable, impressive Cab for the holidays? This Chilean example, full of ripe red- and black-currant flavors, a hint of vanilla, and fine, supple tannins, is just the ticket. It should even improve over the next few years, a rare quality at this price.

2019 TABLAS CREEK ESPRIT DE TABLAS BLANC (\$20)

This gorgeously complex, ageworthy blend of Roussanne and other white Rhône varieties comes from the first U.S. vineyard to achieve regenerative agriculture certification. Owner Jesse Moss let me pour this vintage at our F&W Classic in Aspen this year, and it was a slice of the tasting.

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FOOD & WINE

SPECIAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
DOUBLE

1. DO BASIC BETTER

Build the Perfect Case of Wine

By RAY ISLE

Illustration by
RAPHAËLLE MACARON

MOST OF US BUY WINE OFF THE CUFF. We grab a bottle or two at the store when we're buying groceries or on the way home from work; maybe we visit a winery on a weekend and bring home a few bottles we particularly loved. Totally fine. But here's a different approach: Create a case of wine (12 bottles) that lives in your home, is restocked as needed, and can cover any wine contingency you might have: weekday dinners, special occasions, friends coming over, your name, etc. You'll never have to panic and rush out at the last minute because

you forgot the wine (terrible fate!). Plus, at least initially, you'll benefit from the fact that most stores offer discounts on full cases, sometimes as much as 15%.

The following selection covers almost every base. Of course, if you hate sparkling wine and love rosé, just adjust the numbers up or down. And remember: When storing wine, temperature is key. The best place is a wine fridge or a cool cellar. After that, an inside-closet, the worst place? Anywhere hot-like, for instance, your kitchen.

1 BOTTLE OF SPECIAL OCCASION RED

When the boss abruptly invited them or herself home, or you left out the new crowd (oops!) which shopped before a special dinner party, having a spare bottle of top-flight red on hand is a lifesaver. Why not a Bordeaux? Like the **2018 Château Bourgneuf (\$35)** from Pomerol?

3 BOTTLES OF EVERYDAY RED

Randomly decide to make burgers? Hankering for a steak? Just want a good glass of red wine? You'll move through these bottles regularly, so keep several on hand. Follow your own taste—could be Cabernet, could be Chianti, could be an Aussie Shiraz. But if you like robust reds, the nonvintage **Marietta Old Vine Red (\$15)** is a perennial steal.

3 BOTTLES OF EVERYDAY WHITE

An everyday white is exactly that: a Wednesday night, work-wine-me-and-bottle you can open without thinking. For wine, that's a Pinot Grigio, for some, a Chardonnay or Sauvignon Blanc—your choice. But the crisp **2020 Rodney Strong Chardonnay (\$28)** is a strong contender.

1 BOTTLE OF EVERYDAY SPARKLING

Bubbles just make life better (proven scientific fact), and having bubbles on hand that you can enjoy without worrying about the cost, even more so. Value for money, it's hard to beat. Look for sparkling wine of choice. The **2019 Navenan Cava Brut (\$20)** is a great choice.

1 BOTTLE OF SPECIAL OCCASION WHITE

Occasionally, you need to impress someone, even if it's just yourself. Wine therapists can't be wrong: the greatest white wines (plus, they age well, so no need to rush into preparing the cork). Look for the layered **2018 Joseph Drouhin Côte de Beaune Blanc (\$62)**.

1 BOTTLE OF PRICY SPARKLING

When a special occasion does come along, Champagne—the real stuff—is the answer. Don't go to the store day-of; instead, keep at least one bottle of something sublime, like the nonvintage **Bollinger Special Cuvée Brut (\$79)** in your stash.

1 BOTTLE OF DESSERT WINE

Once in a while, a glass of good sweet wine is the absolute right thing for the moment, and that almost never coincides with having any on the house. In this, winemakers from Italy, like the **2007 Castello di Monsanto La Chimera (\$50)**, are one to savor late into the night.

1 BOTTLE OF GOOD ROSÉ

Have one on hand for the friend stopping by who just loves-likes-likes rosé. But not all rosé is created equal, so spend a little (not a lot) on a top producer from Provence. The **2020 Château Minuty M de Minuty (\$23)** won't disappoint.



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NEW SKILLS FOR A
NEW YEAR

BOTTLE SERVICE



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BOTTLE SERVICE

Old Chatham Shepherds Hudson Valley Cazenovia

2020 DOG POINT SAUVIGNON BLANC (\$25)

Dog Point's Sauvignon impeccably balances its buoyant grapefruit juiciness with hints of flint and lime zest. This wine with some ripe Humboldt Fog? Terrific.

A H, CHEESE AND WINE. Those cubes of rubbery cheddar speared on toothpicks, those plastic glasses of something red from a jug. The perfect pairing, right? Well. Maybe if you're at a poetry reading in the 1970s. Otherwise, let's rethink this situation.

There are hundreds of great artisanal cheeses sold in the U.S. these days, and thousands and thousands of different wines available on store shelves. And cheese and wine do love one another—just not always.

For one thing, cheeses vary widely in flavor and texture. First, there are different milks. As Kent Torrey of The Cheese Shop in Carmel, California, says, "Any mammal that gives milk, you can make cheese from it. I've even got an Australian camel's milk cheese right now. It's like a feta. And great for hump day." (I mean, dad jokes are supposed to be cheesy, but...)

There are also different families of cheese: soft, creamy cheeses; pungent washed-rinds; firm, aged cheeses; mold-veined blues. Michaela Wetzler at NYC's Murray's Cheese says, "With wine, I think the family actually matters more than the milk. A washed rind sheep cheese won't go with the same wine as a young Manchego, even though they're both made from sheep's milk." She adds, "Tannins in wine matter a lot, too," which is why big reds can overpower many cheeses.

What to do? Run back to those rubbery cheddar cubes, buy a box of toothpicks, and call it a day? No. Just trust your own palate. Jean Mason at Curds & Co. in Boston says, "If you buy the cheese you like, and you drink the wine you like, they're probably going to go together." Wise words.

Even so, doing a deep dive into how some cheeses taste amazing with some wines is both fun and palate-rewarding. Some great combos are classic (the lemony notes of a fresh chèvre with a tart Sauvignon Blanc); sometimes they're more modern and decadent. (Wetzler suggests a truffled triple-cream cheese with Champagne, to which I say, "Sign me up.") And sometimes they're just wildly surprising. "Pinot Noir, Bayley Hazen Blue from Jasper Hill Farm, and Whoppers—the malted milk balls—that's an amazing combination," says Mason. "People are like, 'This is funny,' and I'm like, 'Nope, trust me—this is really, really good.'"

Brebrousse d'Argental

Cypress Grove Humboldt Fog

THE CREAM BOMBS

THESE ARE THE SOFTIES of the cheese world, the Bries and Camemberts, the burratas, the triple creams like Brillat-Savarin and Saint-André, and American versions like Four Fat Fowl's sumptuous and absurdly delectable St. Stephen. Creamy, soft cheeses like these love bright, zesty wines. Michaela Wetzler at Murray's Cheese in NYC says, "I prefer either sparkling wine, to break up the fat of the cheese, or something really crisp and acidic, like a Loire Chenin Blanc."

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Dog Point's Sauvignon impeccably balances its buoyant grapefruit juiciness with hints of flint and lime zest. This wine with some ripe Humboldt Fog? Terrific.

2019 LANG & REED MENDOCINO CHENIN BLANC (\$30)

Pioneer John Sloop took inspiration from the dry Charnais of the Livermore Valley for this fragrant California wine. It's a crisp result with notes of honey and white peaches.

NV CHAMPAGNE DELAMOTTE BRUT (\$66)

This nonvintage brut is everything you'd want it to be: delicious and lightly chafy, with floral, citrus, and stone fruit notes—a perfect partner for old triple-cream cheeses.

produced by RAY ISLE, photography by JUSTIN WALKER

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COCOA CA
BUNDT CA
WITH AMAL
CHERRI
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FOR
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CHEESE
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DE

BOTTLE SERVICE

FEELING FUNKY, FEELING BLUE

"ÉPOISSES IS A COMMITMENT CHEESE," says Jenn Mason of Boston's Curdbox cheese club, a statement that could extend to a lot of washed-rind cheeses. Washed rinds are made by moistening the outside of the cheese with liquid—anything from salty water to brandy, cider, and other alcohols—as it ages. They range in intensity from mellow to intriguingly aromatic to straight-up, in-your-face stinky. The wines that go best with them vary because of that, but a dry or off-dry Riesling is almost always a good choice.

The other polarizing category is blue cheeses. If you are a blue cheese fan, "That's when you go for the sweet wines," says Kent Torrey. "The classic pairing with Roquefort is a Sauternes—you get this elixir ofunctuous apricot and peach flavors that offsets the acidity and saltiness of the cheese." Same for the equally classic pairing of Stilton and port, where the sweet intensity of the wine balances the salty, tangy, umami of the cheese.

WASHED-RIND

2019 CHATEAU MONTELENA POTTER VALLEY RIESLING (\$35)

After 2018, when Montelena couldn't make any Riesling due to smoke, the 2019 is an electric comeback, its lemon-peach fruit lifted by bright acidity.

2018 ALBERT BICHOT FIXIN ROUGE (\$53)

When Burgundy grands crus run upward of \$400 a bottle these days, a complex village red like this one from Fixin (at the northern end of the Côte de Nuits) is a total pleasure to find.

BLUE

NV GRAHAM'S SIX CRAPES RESERVE PORT (\$27)

Six Grapes lives up to Graham's 201-year history with rich, dark flavors of plum and blackberry and round, velvety tannins. Hard to imagine a better wine for Stilton.

2019 CHATEAU CLIMENS CYPRES DE CLIMENS BARSAC (\$57)

The more affordable second wine from this acclaimed Barsac chateau is rich with candied citrus peel, honey, and golden caramel notes.

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Curdbox
Each monthly shipment from this top-notch club has a theme and includes specially food pairings. \$60 per month. curdbox.com

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