

PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



August 2016 –Endless Summer Night

In Spain, dinners often start late and can last for hours. I like this idea because hanging out with people I love is truly the highlight of my life. Here is a meal that could easily be enjoyed over a period of six hours or more. Additionally, all the food can be prepared ahead and brought out to serve or grill as needed, a hostess's dream.

I think it is fun to try new wines. My latest find is Godello, a white grape that comes from northwestern Spain. This particular grape is easy to pronounce and reminds me of its local compadre, Albariño. It tends to be dry and zesty, with crisp citrus, apricot, and peach flavors. Its refreshing acidity is perfect to serve cold on a warm August day. I can't imagine a more idyllic situation that sitting out of doors and enjoying a cold glass of Godello with an overflowing Spanish "antipasto" tray with cheese, meat and veggies. Select three Spanish cheeses, like firm, nutty Manchego, buttery Mahón Tierno, and pungent blue Crema de Cabrales, to assure you have something for everyone. Add two Spanish cured meats, like prized Jamón Ibérico and spicy Chorizo de León for depth. Sprinkle around some olives, marinated artichoke hearts and sundried tomatoes for color and punch, as well as Marcona almonds for crunch. Finally, a slab of membrillo quince paste or fig jam will add a touch of sweetness to complement the salty meats and cheeses. Don't forget some flatbread crackers or a sliced baguette as a vehicle to get it all to your mouth.

Plan to wait until nightfall to regain your appetite before grilling up some marinated lamb chops. The marinade recipe listed here is great for all kinds of meats and even fish or vegetables. This will also be the right time to open a red, Rioja Reserva. These

wines are aged for a minimum of three years (two of which must be in the barrel). Reservas have layered, complex flavors that are dusty and earthy with rich, dried red fruit notes. Simple accompaniments, like the Asparagus Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette and fresh, soft bread will keep the focus on the wine and conversation.

It may actually be past midnight by the time you get around to dessert, so keep the party going with a boost of sugar. Try a sweet Moscatel de Alexandria, a white grape grown on the southern coast of Spain in a region called Málaga. Moscatel de Alexandria is often blended with Pedro Ximénez, resulting in wines that can range in color from amber all the way to dark garnet brown. Dessert Moscatel de Alexandria usually has around 10% alcohol, which is low for a dessert wine, and flavors of caramelized apricots, peach jam, and tropical fruits. The low alcohol makes it a wonderful partner to a summery peach cobbler.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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Fresh Garlic Marinade

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp. black pepper
- 2 tbsp. seasoned salt
- ¼ cup white sugar
- ¼ cup chopped dried onions
- ¼ cup chopped fresh garlic
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- ½ cup lemon juice
- ½ cup soybean oil
- 4 lbs. protein (or equivalent for vegetables)

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DIRECTIONS

To make the marinade, mix all of the ingredients in a mixing bowl and place the protein or veggies in a large plastic bag. Pour $\frac{3}{4}$ of the marinade over the meat or veg and reserve remainder for basting. Allow to marinate for a period of time (longer for meats, shorter for fish or vegetables).

Yield: 8-10 servings

Asparagus Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette

INGREDIENTS

1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon chopped fresh marjoram or 1 teaspoon dried
1 teaspoon minced garlic
2 pounds asparagus, tough ends trimmed, cut on diagonal into 2-inch pieces
1 small red bell pepper, diced
1/3 cup chopped pecans, toasted

DIRECTIONS

Boil vinegar in heavy small saucepan over medium heat until reduced by half, about 3 minutes. Pour vinegar into large bowl. Whisk in oil, mustard, marjoram and garlic. Season dressing to taste with salt and pepper.

Cook asparagus in large pot of boiling salted water until crisp-tender, about 4 minutes. Drain; rinse with cold water and drain again. Add asparagus and bell pepper to dressing; toss to blend well. Sprinkle with pecans and serve.

Yield: 4 servings

Peach Cobbler

INGREDIENTS

4 cups peeled, sliced peaches
2 cups sugar, divided
1/2 cup water
8 tablespoons butter
1 1/2 cups self-rising flour
1 1/2 cups milk
Ground cinnamon, optional

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Combine the peaches, 1 cup sugar, and water in a saucepan and mix well. Bring to a boil and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat.

Put the butter in a 3-quart baking dish and place in oven to melt.

Mix remaining 1 cup sugar, flour, and milk slowly to prevent clumping. Pour mixture over melted butter. Do not stir. Spoon fruit on top, gently pouring in syrup. Sprinkle top with ground cinnamon, if using. Batter will rise to top during baking. Bake for 30 to 45 minutes.

To serve, scoop onto a plate and serve with your choice of whipped cream or vanilla ice cream.

Yield: 8-10 servings