

PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



June 2018 – Berry Good Zin

June is such a glorious month. Kids are graduating, folks are getting married, and we are all celebrating the wonderful men we call Dad. My dad is very special to me. We have very similar taste, and he taught me about wine. One thing we both love is Zinfandel. It has tons of berry fruit flavor and is neither too tannic nor acidic. It tastes great on its own and pairs well with food.

White Zinfandel wine is made from red Zinfandel grapes. You will find it ranges from light to dark pink in color, depending on how much time the colorless juice spends in contact with the red skins. White Zins range from bone dry to quite sweet and tend to be fresh and fruity. I like off-dry Zins with foods that are slightly sweet or a bit spicy. For these reasons, an off-dry Zin is my pick for Raspberry Biscuits, Blue Cheese Butter, and Raspberry-Rhubarb Jam. The raspberries are both sweet and sour, calling for a wine with both acidity and a bit of sugar. On the other hand, the fruitiness of the wine counters the ginger, celery, and shallot in the jam, as well as the slight funk of the blue cheese butter.

What could be better with biscuits than sweet, spicy BBQ? You can continue to enjoy the White Zinfandel with these Berry Spicy Ribs or switch to a classic Red Zinfandel. The berry flavors in Red Zinfandel are even stronger than in the pink version. The berry flavors in the wine complement the floral blackberries and fruity balsamic vinegar in the sauce. If you like a Zin with a little residual sugar, it will tame the spicy ginger and hot pepper sauce. And finally, since most Red Zins are aged in toasted oak barrels, the smoky aromas echo the smoke from the BBQ.

Begging forgiveness, this meal finishes with another pie. Observant readers will

notice that the only difference between this month's pie recipe and last month's is the fruit. This month's blend of raspberries and blackberries is my absolute favorite. It is the perfect combination because each fruit adds a different benefit. The raspberries add tart flavor and almost completely break down in the baking process to create the terrific glaze. The blackberries have a sweet floral flavor and stay intact, giving the pie substance. The wine? A late harvest Zinfandel, of course. Its high sugar content is necessary for the sweet pie, and its intense berry flavor makes it the obvious choice.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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Raspberry Biscuits with Blue Cheese Butter and Raspberry-Rhubarb Jam

INGREDIENTS

Biscuits

2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 cup unsalted butter, cut into cubes
1 tablespoon vegetable shortening
3/4 cup cold buttermilk
2 tablespoons crème fraiche
1/2 cup raspberries
1/4 cup walnut pieces, toasted
1 large egg, beaten

Blue Cheese Butter

1/4 lb. smoky blue cheese
2 sticks butter, at room temperature

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Pinch ground cayenne pepper

Raspberry and Rhubarb Jam

1½ teaspoons olive oil
1 tablespoon minced shallot
1 tablespoon minced ginger
2 cups small diced rhubarb
¾ cup sugar
2 tablespoons lemon juice
½ teaspoon celery seed
2 packages raspberries
1 celery stick, diced small
Pinch salt

DIRECTIONS

Biscuits

Preheat oven to 400°F. Whisk flour, baking powder, salt and baking soda in a large bowl. Add butter and shortening. Use a pastry blender or two knives to incorporate butter and shortening until mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs.

In a separate bowl, mix together buttermilk and crème fraiche and add to flour mixture. Turn mixture out onto floured surface. Gather and knead 2 or 3 times. Sprinkle dough with raspberries and walnuts and knead gently 1 to 2 more times. Shape into a disk. Cut into biscuit rounds and transfer to a parchment lined sheet tray. Brush with beaten egg. Bake 20 to 25 minutes rotating halfway through.

Blue Cheese Butter

Mix all ingredients in a food processor.

Raspberry and Rhubarb Jam

In a small heavy pot, heat olive oil over medium-low heat. Add shallot, ginger, and rhubarb. Sauté until soft. Add celery, sugar, lemon juice and celery seed. Cook on low

for 10 minutes. Add raspberries. Cook an additional 10 minutes. Remove and let cool. Adjust seasoning with lemon juice and salt as necessary.

Yield: 12 biscuits

Berry Spicy Ribs

INGREDIENTS

4 teaspoons chili powder
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 teaspoon salt
2 slabs baby back pork ribs (about 2 pounds)

2½ cups fresh blackberries or frozen, thawed
½ cup ketchup
½ cup honey
½ cup minced peeled fresh ginger
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
2 teaspoons hot pepper sauce

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 250°F. Mix chili powder, garlic, and salt in small bowl; rub mixture into ribs. Place ribs on the large rimmed baking sheet, meaty side up. Wrap ribs tightly in foil and cook for 2-4 hours. Ribs will be very tender.

Meanwhile, puree remaining ingredients in a blender until almost smooth. Strain blackberry puree into heavy medium saucepan; discard solids in sieve. Cook puree over medium-high heat until reduced to 1 cup, stirring frequently, about 5 minutes. Season sauce to taste with salt and pepper.

Place ribs on the BBQ and baste with sauce. Cook until sauce browns and forms a thick glaze, about 10 minutes longer. Cut slabs

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between bones into individual ribs. Cook remaining blackberry sauce 10 minutes over medium heat and serve alongside.

Razzleberry Pie

INGREDIENTS

Dough

2½ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon kosher salt
2 tablespoons sugar
12 tablespoons chilled, unsalted butter, cut into small chunks
8 tablespoons chilled all-vegetable shortening
5 tablespoons ice water

Filling

3 cups fresh raspberries
3 cups fresh blackberries
2 teaspoons lemon juice
½ - 1 cup sugar
3 - 4 tablespoons minute tapioca
2 tablespoons butter

DIRECTIONS

When making a pie, work quickly and keep everything cold. Keep ingredients or components not in use in the refrigerator.

To make the pie crust:

Mix flour, salt, and sugar in a food processor with steel blade. Turn on processor and alternate dropping butter and shortening into the processor shoot. Pulse until mixture resembles fine cornmeal. Turn on again and add ice water through the shoot. The mixture will quickly come together into a ball. Roll out the top and bottom pastry from the dough.

To make the pie:

Heat oven to 400°F. Toss the fruit with the other filling ingredients except for the butter and let sit for 15 minutes.

Place bottom pastry into 8-9" pie dish. Add the fruit and dot with butter. Place top pastry and crimp edges.

Set pie on a baking sheet, place oven, turn oven down to 350°F and bake for one hour. Check after 35 minutes and rotate as needed. Remove when the juices are bubbling and the pie is evenly browned. Let the pie cool before serving.

Yield: 6-8 servings