

# PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



## December 2020 – The Elegance of White Wines

Red wines often take center stage at winter parties. Along with those red wines, you frequently find heavier, red meat dishes. This holiday meal features beautiful white wines and a menu that is decadent and satisfying but won't leave you feeling over-stuffed.

Orange-Fennel Salad is perfect for the holidays with its dark green bed of arugula, bright-red dried cranberries, and delicate white crescents of fennel bulb. The salad is a lovely mix of acid from the red wine vinegar and oranges, bitterness from the fennel and arugula, and sweetness from the fruit. A Chenin Blanc from France called Vouvray is a white wine made with no oak contact. It is particularly good with fresh herbal flavors and a delicate partner to start the meal.

In northern California, Dungeness crab comes into season just in time for the holidays. Served cold over salad or warmed with drawn butter, it is a true delicacy. Our family's favorite way to eat crab is roasted with garlic and olive oil. And, since dipping is fun, try this Herbed Aioli to take the flavor up another notch. Chardonnay is a classic pairing with crab, sparkling or still, and the richness of chardonnay-based wines brings out the sweet flavors of the crab.

Eiswein is the German word for icewine. It is a luscious dessert wine made from grapes that froze on the vine. Since only the water freezes inside the grape, and the pressed grapes result in a liquid that is concentrated and sweet. Many different grapes are made into icewines. In Germany, the most common grape used for Eiswein production is Riesling. Canada is known for using Vidal and Cabernet Franc. Other notable icewine grapes are Gewürztraminer, Pinot Blanc, and Chenin Blanc. Any white

icewine pairs well with this sugar-dusted Asian Pear Bundt cake. The combination will have you dreaming of snow-capped mountains!

So, go on. Pair Up!

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### Orange-Fennel Salad

#### INGREDIENTS

large fennel bulb, trimmed and thinly sliced  
2 medium oranges cut into supremes  
(wedges with pith and membranes removed)  
1 Tablespoon olive oil  
1 Tablespoon red wine vinegar  
Salt and pepper  
2 Tablespoons sweetened dried cranberries  
4 cups baby arugula

#### DIRECTIONS

Place the sliced fennel and oranges in a salad bowl. Drizzle with olive oil, red wine vinegar, and salt and pepper, and toss to distribute. Place on top of a bed of arugula and sprinkle with sweetened cranberries.

Yield: 4 servings

### Roasted Crab

#### INGREDIENTS

1 large Dungeness crab, cooked  
6 cloves garlic, finely minced  
2-3 Tablespoons extra light olive oil  
1 teaspoon kosher salt

#### DIRECTIONS

Clean the crab and break the body into fist-sized sections. Break the legs and claws into sections. Toss crab sections in garlic, drizzle

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with olive oil, and sprinkle liberally with salt. Roast in 400°F oven for 10 minutes until just heated. Watch the garlic to keep it from burning.

Yield: 2-4 servings, depending on what else you are eating

## Herbed Aioli Dipping Sauce

### INGREDIENTS

1 cup mayonnaise  
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard  
1 clove garlic, finely minced  
Juice of ½ lemon  
1 Tablespoon chopped basil  
1 Tablespoon chopped cilantro  
½ teaspoon chopped tarragon  
1 teaspoon kosher salt

### DIRECTIONS

Add mustard, garlic, and lemon juice to the mayonnaise. Stir in the basil, cilantro, and tarragon and add 2 or 3 tablespoons warm water to thin the mayonnaise and make a fluid sauce. Season with salt.

Yield: about 1 cup

## Asian Pear Cake

### INGREDIENTS

*For the Fruit Mixture:*

3 cups Asian pears (diced)  
1 cup pecans (chopped)  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/3 cup sugar

*For the Cake:*

1½ cups all-purpose flour  
¾ cup whole wheat flour  
1 cup brown sugar (packed)  
½ cup sugar

2 teaspoons cinnamon  
½ teaspoon nutmeg  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1 teaspoon salt  
½ teaspoon baking soda  
¾ cup vegetable oil  
2 teaspoons vanilla  
3 large eggs

### DIRECTIONS

Grease and flour a 12-cup Bundt pan. Heat oven to 325°.

Combine diced pears, pecans, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, and 1/3 cup granulated sugar; toss. Cover and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the flours, brown sugar, 1/2 cup granulated sugar, 2 teaspoons cinnamon, nutmeg, baking powder, salt, and soda. Mix to blend thoroughly.

With an electric mixer on low, stir in oil, vanilla, and eggs until well blended. Stir in the fruit and nut mixture until blended.

Spoon the batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 50 to 60 minutes, or until a toothpick or cake tester inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean.

Cool in pan on a rack for 15 minutes. Turn out onto the rack to cool completely.

Transfer to a serving plate and dust with powdered sugar.

Yield: 16 servings