

PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



October 2013 – Fall Soup-n-Salad

I throw a Halloween soup party every year, and this year I have a new soup and salad combination I am really excited about. After a long summer of white wines, I am happy to say that both recipes pair with red wines; this, I know for many of you, is cause for celebration.

To start is a warm salad with sautéed onion, mushrooms, and raisins, which are all wine friendly ingredients. The dressing has just a touch of lemon juice, which brings freshness without over powering the wine. Then the salad is topped with Manchego cheese, another wine friendly additive. You may remember that Pinot Noir is usually my go-to wine with mushrooms, but Grenache (or Garnacha as they call it in Spain) is a great substitute for Pinot Noir. It has softer tannins than wines like Cabernet, Zinfandel or Syrah and offers bright berry fruit with substantial acidity, two qualities that will work with this salad.

Following the salad comes the soup. Every year one of my favorite Livermore Wineries, Fenestra Winery, does a Soup & Wine event on the “football-free” weekend in January. The Garlic Sherry Cream of Mushroom Soup, courtesy of Blue Sage Catering, makes it onto the menu almost every year. The substantial amount of cream gives it body, which makes it just right for a bold red wine, as does the meaty texture and taste of the chopped mushrooms. Fenestra’s recommended pairing is a delicious Fenestra Cabernet Sauvignon. Deep, red and black fruits offset the pungent garlic, and the contrasting colors of white soup against the red wine are a beauty to behold. Serve warm crostini sprinkled with truffle salt on the side. It is perfect for dipping and adds a welcome crunch.

Usually, I make a trip through the Caldecott Tunnel to find Vin du Bugey-Cerdon. It is a sweet, pink, bubbly wine and the only wine I pair with milk chocolate. Much to my dismay, none of my usual suppliers had any in stock this year! The good news is that it can be purchased online. This year I am going to focus on pairing it with Twix. I think the caramel, chocolate and cookie crunch will be terrific with the sweet strawberry flavors of the fruit and toasty bakery flavors courtesy of the yeast, which turned the sugar into alcohol!

So, go on, Pair Up!

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Sautéed Mushroom Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoons + 1 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 small onion, halved and sliced
- ¼ cup raisins
- 1 pound crimini mushrooms, quartered
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme, or 1/2 teaspoon dried
- 3 tablespoons dry sherry
- 2 tablespoons + 1 tsp. lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 8 cups salad greens like arugula, frisée or blend
- ½ cup grated Manchego cheese

DIRECTIONS

Heat one tablespoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add onion and raisins and cook until softened, about three minutes. Add mushrooms and

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cook, stirring, until they release their juices, 10 to 12 minutes.

Add garlic and thyme and stir until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add sherry and cook until mostly evaporated, about another minute. Stir in the remaining one tablespoon oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper and turn off heat.

Just before serving, toss greens in a large bowl with one teaspoon olive oil and one teaspoon lemon juice and a sprinkle of salt. Then add warm mushrooms/onion/craisin mixture and toss again. Sprinkle with Manchego cheese.

Yield: 6 servings

Garlic Sherry Cream of Mushroom Soup

INGREDIENTS

1 cube salted butter
6 cloves garlic, chopped
½ pound crimini mushrooms, chopped fine
1 cup cream sherry
½ gal heavy cream
¾ tablespoon chicken base (next to the chicken bouillon)
½ teaspoon fresh ground white pepper
Salt to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a large stock pot, sauté garlic in butter until caramelized. Add mushrooms and sauté briefly (30 seconds). Add cream sherry reduce liquid to almost half. Add heavy cream. Season with chicken base, white pepper and salt to taste. Reduce about 20% or until soup reaches desired consistency.

Yield: 6 servings