

PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



April 2019 – Easter Picnic

The deep spiritual meaning of Easter is very uplifting, but the idea of a bunny hiding pastel-colored eggs is great fun. So, in the spirit of creating a fun-filled Easter meal to enjoy outside, here is a bounty of finger-friendly foods and beverages to go with them. Of course, if it happens to be raining that day or if you prefer to dine indoors, the meal can easily be transformed into a fork and knife alternative.

When I was a kid, dying Easter eggs was a special activity. I admired all the pretty colors and delighted in finding one in my lunch over the next few weeks. Deviled eggs are now my favorite eat-with-your-hands egg dish. I love the sprinkle of paprika and the hint of tart mustard in the creamy centers. I also love that they give me a reason to open a bottle of sparkling wine. In fact, just about any sparkling wine works with deviled eggs. If you like it sweet and floral, Italian Moscato or Prosecco offsets the vinegar. Or, if you like your bubbles a bit drier and fruit-forward, Spanish Cava or California Brut highlights the savory paprika. Should you feel like splurging, try a toasty traditional French Champagne to match the earthy flavor of the mustard in the yolk.

As a main course, I decided to forgo rabbit and suggest a classic Easter ham. If you are doing a true picnic, ham sandwiches are the way to go, no fork and knife required. If you are eating at home, a large spiral ham is a feast for the eyes. In either case, I like potatoes with ham. Classic potato salad is a traditional side dish if you have access to a fork, or just serve some crunchy chips if you are dining al fresco. A wine with a little extra body is nice to balance the fat in the ham and its potato side dish. Seek out an Auslese Riesling from

Germany to meet this requirement. When Riesling grapes are left to ripen a bit longer on the vine, the resulting Auslese wine is rich and full-bodied with flavors like apricot and honey. The stone fruit flavors and touch of sugar complement a fruit glaze or a wayward pickle that might be a part of a potato salad. If you can't find an Auslese, just about any type of Riesling works well with ham.

A nod to the bunny's chosen vegetable is the perfect sweet ending to a fresh spring meal. Carrot, Coconut, and Zucchini Bread can be sliced from a loaf or baked as a single serving muffin, and it is a delicious way to consume vegetables. Chai tea has flavors of cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, and cloves that echo the spice in the bread. It can be served hot or cold, plain, or with any combination of milk and sugar to suit your palate.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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Classic Deviled Eggs

INGREDIENTS

6 eggs
¼ cup mayonnaise
1 teaspoon white vinegar
1 teaspoon yellow mustard
Salt and black pepper to taste
Paprika, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

Place eggs in cold water and bring to a boil. Cover pot and remove from heat. Let stand 15 minutes, drain, refill with cold water.

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Peel and slice eggs in half. Place whites on a plate, yolks in a bowl. Break up the yolks with a fork, and then add all remaining ingredients except paprika. Mash until smooth.

Yield: 3 loaves or 36 muffins

Spoon yolk mixture into center of whites and top with paprika.

Yield: 12 half-eggs

Carrot, Coconut, and Zucchini Bread

INGREDIENTS

1¾ cup salad oil
5 eggs, beaten
2 cups grated zucchini
1 cup grated carrots
1 cup flaked or grated coconut, unsweetened
3 cups white or brown sugar
2½ teaspoons vanilla
5 cups flour
1½ teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1½ teaspoons salt
4 teaspoons cinnamon
1½ cup nuts (walnuts or your favorite)

DIRECTIONS

Mix oil, sugar, eggs, zucchini, carrots, coconut, vanilla and nuts.

Mix together flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and cinnamon. Then stir dry ingredients into mixture.

Pour into three greased loaf pans and bake for about one hour at 350° F.

Alternatively, makes about 36 muffins. Use cupcake liners. Bake 25-35 minutes.