

PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



April 2020 – Vegan Abundance

Veganism is a healthy lifestyle that many people follow. Since I love vegetables, I was inspired by the number of recipes I found that fit the vegan format and did not require a lot of specialty ingredients.

Vegetables can be challenging to pair with wine because they generally have no fat of their own. Wine benefits by pairing with foods that have fat to smooth out the acid and/or tannins, particularly the tannins.

Keep in mind that some wineries use non-vegan products in the production of the wine, like fining (removing solids) with egg whites. So, if you want your pairings to be strictly vegan, you'll need to seek out information on how the wine has been treated before bottling.

Fava beans, also known as broad beans, contain a small amount of unsaturated fat and are filled with vitamins and minerals. I adore the flavor and texture of the paste they produce. This Vegan Fava Bean and Radish Bruschetta recipe is particularly tasty because it combines tart lemon with slightly bitter radish along with a high note of mint and a low note of black licorice from the fennel. The crunchy, umami crostini with olive oil and garlic is the perfect vehicle on which to spread the delicious paste. Just about the only wine that can handle these pungent, verdant flavors is Austrian Grüner Veltliner (groo-ner velt-leen-er). Grüner has bright acidic flavors of citrus with a unique white pepper note. It is the quintessential vegetable wine. If you can't find a Grüner, you could substitute a Sauvignon Blanc, perhaps one from New Zealand for its intensity.

Grüner Veltliner from Austria is made in two formats, regular and Smaragd (smah-rawgt). The Smaragd is a riper version, with more viscosity and richness. This is why I

chose to pair it with the Vegan Artichoke, Asparagus, Pea and Green Onion Risotto. Risottos have a silky texture that comes from the release of the starch from the rice during the slow cooking process.

There are no sure answers as to why we crave sweets at the end of a meal, but I believe it is because when our stomachs are full our taste buds shut down and our brain signals us to stop eating. Since the sweet receptors are likely the last to shut down, the only thing left that tastes good is sweet food and wine! This complex Vegan Upside-Down Cake with Apricot, Cardamom, and Maple is an excellent choice to satisfy the need for sweet flavors. The floral apricot flavor is enhanced by sugary maple and woody cardamom. Nothing less than a super sweet, complex wine like a Beerenauslese (beer-in-ow-slay-seh) from Germany will manage this flavor bomb. Beerenauslese is made from hand-picked grapes that hang on the vine until they are almost raisins. The resulting wine is intensely sweet and very dense. Also, because it is grown in a northern region, it achieves ripeness while retaining its acidity. The result is great sugar levels balanced by high acid levels. A terrific combination.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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Vegan Fava Bean and Radish Bruschetta

INGREDIENTS

- 1-pound fresh fava beans, shelled
- 2-3 medium radishes, julienned (about 1/2 cup)
- 1 tsp. lemon zest

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1 Tbsp. lemon juice
1 Tbsp. chopped mint leaves
1 Tbsp. chopped fennel fronds (optional)
Salt and Pepper
8 (1/2-inch-thick, 3-to-4-inch-long) baguette slices
1/4 cup olive oil
1 garlic clove, peeled

DIRECTIONS

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil and cook fava beans for 2 minutes. Drain and transfer beans to a large bowl of ice water.

Let cool and then drain. Slip the outer skin off each bean and discard the skin. Place the beans in a large bowl and coarsely mash with a fork, leaving some beans whole or in chunks.

Combine the beans, radishes, lemon zest, lemon juice, mint leaves, and fennel fronds (optional). Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Brush olive oil over both sides of the baguette slices and grill or broil. Rub toasts with garlic and then spoon the fava bean mixture on top. Sprinkle a little extra salt on top and serve.

Yield: 8 servings

Vegan Artichoke, Asparagus, Pea and Green Onion Risotto

INGREDIENTS

4 cups vegetable stock
2 cups water
1/4 cup olive oil
1 yellow onion, finely diced
1 1/2 cups Arborio rice
1 1/2 cups shelled peas

12 ounces asparagus (trim tips and slice stalks on a bias)
1 cup green onions, thinly sliced
1 14-ounce can artichoke hearts, drained and halved
Kosher salt
Lemon and minced fresh chives for garnish

DIRECTIONS

In a small pot, heat the stock and water over medium-low heat.

In a large heavy pan or pot, add the olive oil over medium heat. Add the yellow onion and stir often, sautéing for 5-7 minutes.

Add the rice and stir with the onions, cooking for 2-3 minutes until the rice is translucent except for a white center. Now start adding the hot vegetable stock a half-cup at a time while continuously stirring with a wooden spoon. As the stock absorbs, add another half cup. Continue until all the stock is absorbed and the rice is cooked to al dente. This should take about 20 minutes.

In the final 5 minutes, add the peas and asparagus and stir in. At the very end, gently fold in the artichoke hearts and green onions. You may need one last addition of stock just before serving to make sure the risotto is loose. It should not clump up and should spread out like porridge in the bowl. Season to taste with kosher salt, sprinkle with fresh chives, and serve with lemon wedges.

Yield: 4-6 servings

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Vegan Apricot Upside-Down Cake

INGREDIENTS

¼ cup melted extra-virgin coconut oil, plus
1 Tbsp. for pan
¾ cup maple syrup, plus 1 Tbsp. for pan
18-20 small apricots (1 quart), halved and
pitted
3 cups large flaked dried unsweetened
coconut
1¼ cup flour, divided
1¼ tsp. ground cardamom
¾ tsp. baking powder
¾ tsp. baking soda
2 oz. whole almonds with skin, ground fine
2 Tbsp. flax seeds, ground fine
¼ cup water
2 tsp. vanilla extract
2 tsp. apple cider vinegar
¼ tsp. salt

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 °F.

Line the bottom of a springform pan with parchment paper. Spread 1 Tbsp. of coconut oil over the bottom and up the sides of the pan. Add 1 Tbsp. maple syrup and spread it over the bottom of the pan. Arrange apricots in circles, cut side down, on the bottom of the pan. Set aside.

Add coconut to a food processor and add a handful of the flour. Blend until coarsely ground and set aside. Place remaining flour, cardamom, baking powder, and baking soda into a medium bowl. Add almond meal and ground coconut, stir to combine, and set aside.

In another bowl, whisk together flax seeds and water, then add maple syrup, oil,

vanilla, vinegar, and salt, and whisk again. Pour into dry mixture and stir until just combined. Pour over apricots and gently spread batter evenly over the fruit. Place cake on baking sheet and bake for 45 to 50 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Yield: 6-8 serving