

Fish Dishes and White Wine

White wines, although sometimes dismissed by red wine aficionados, can be the elegant companion to a fish dinner. Compared to red wine, white wine tends to be slightly sweeter and lighter, and usually is served with less complex fare. However, on occasion a glass of white wine is welcome even to the most dedicated red wine drinkers, if only to remind them of the wide variety of tastes and textures that a single grape can produce. Surprisingly, while many white wines are best in their youth, a few rare breeds get better with age.

Pinot Grigio has become one of the most readily identifiable white wines. The grape used to produce Pinot Grigio is a mutated version of the darkly complex red wine Pinot Noir, giving Pinot Grigio a slightly weightier taste than other white wines. Comparable to the sensation of inhaling the vapors of a burbling freshwater river, Pinot Grigio initially presents with a smooth, feathery taste. A perfect accompaniment for very delicately spiced food, such as a perch or sea bass dish, this wine will not overwhelm the flavor of the fish, but will contribute to an overall feeling of joviality and camaraderie. Pinot is best drunk soon after bottling.

Due to the tenacity of the grape from which it is produced, Chardonnay is enjoyed worldwide. Known for its dryness and slightly fruity highlights, this wine pairs exceptionally well with saltier meals, including pork and garlic dishes. Some vintages emphasize Chardonnay's buttery flavor. Usually best when served during its youth, Chardonnay provides an elegant balance for a rich meal.

In certain specialized regions of the world, Chardonnay can be refined into what is arguably the finest wine, the white burgundy. Depending on the particular vintage, a white burgundy will become more flavorful and complex with age. Such varieties as Grenouilles, Les Preuses and Blanchot are best after ten years, and make exquisite additions to a meal of sauteed trout. For the most memorable experience, a fine white burgundy is best stored in a specialized wine refrigerator, which will maintain a specific temperature and minimize vibration.

Many connoisseurs will agree that an occasional foray into the realm of white wine will enrich the senses. As always, however, the quality of the wine is ultimately enhanced by the caliber of the company drinking it.

<http://www.kessickwinecellars.com/>