25 Most Common Wine Styles with Definitions and Suggested Food Pairings

# Cabernet Sauvignon

Definition: A full-bodied red wine known for its high tannins and flavors of dark fruits, such as black cherry and black currant.

Suggested Food Pairings: Red meats, hearty stews, and strong cheeses.

# Merlot

Definition: A medium to full-bodied red wine with softer tannins than Cabernet Sauvignon, featuring plum, black cherry, and herbal flavors.

Suggested Food Pairings: Chicken, lamb, and lightly spiced dark meats.

# Pinot Noir

Definition: A light to medium-bodied red wine with low tannins and flavors of red fruits like cherries, raspberries, and strawberries.

Suggested Food Pairings: Salmon, chicken, and pasta dishes with light sauces.

# Syrah/Shiraz

Definition: A full-bodied red wine with bold tannins and flavors of blackberry, mint, and black pepper.

Suggested Food Pairings: Barbecue, game meats, and spicy dishes.

# Zinfandel

Definition: A medium to full-bodied red wine with moderate tannins and high acidity, noted for its jammy, fruit flavors like raspberry and blackberry.

Suggested Food Pairings: Grilled meats, pizza, and hearty pasta dishes.

# Sangiovese

Definition: A medium-bodied red wine with high tannins and acidity, offering flavors of cherry, plum, and fig.

Suggested Food Pairings: Italian dishes like pasta with tomato-based sauces, pizza, and charcuterie.

# Chardonnay

Definition: A full-bodied white wine with a wide flavor profile ranging from apple and lemon in cooler regions to tropical fruits in warmer areas.

Suggested Food Pairings: Seafood, poultry, and cream-based sauces.

# Sauvignon Blanc

Definition: A medium-bodied white wine known for its high acidity and flavors of lime, green apple, passion fruit, and grass.

Suggested Food Pairings: Fish, goat cheese, and dishes with fresh herbs.

# Pinot Grigio/Pinot Gris

Definition: A light-bodied white wine with high acidity, offering flavors of lime, lemon, pear, and white nectarine.

Suggested Food Pairings: Seafood, light pastas, and cheese platters.

# Riesling

Definition: A highly aromatic white wine ranging from sweet to dry, with flavors of apple, pear, and peach.

Suggested Food Pairings: Asian cuisine, spicy food, and fruity desserts.

# Gewürztraminer

Definition: An aromatic white wine known for its lychee, rose petal, and pink grapefruit flavors.

Suggested Food Pairings: Spicy dishes, sweet and sour dishes, and soft cheeses.

# Malbec

Definition: A medium to full-bodied red wine with smooth tannins, featuring flavors of blackberry, plum, and black cherry.

Suggested Food Pairings: Red meats, blue cheeses, and dishes with sweet-spicy sauces.

# Tempranillo

Definition: A medium-bodied red wine from Spain with flavors of cherry, plum, tomato, and dried fig.

Suggested Food Pairings: Tapas, grilled meats, and aged cheeses.

# Nebbiolo

Definition: A full-bodied red wine with high tannins and acidity, known for its rose, cherry, and leather flavors.

Suggested Food Pairings: Truffles, mushrooms, and rich meat dishes.

# Grenache/Garnacha

Definition: A medium to full-bodied red wine with soft tannins and flavors of red fruit, spice, and orange zest.

Suggested Food Pairings: Grilled meats, stews, and various cheeses.

# Viognier

Definition: A full-bodied white wine with low acidity and flavors of peach, tangerine, and honeysuckle.

Suggested Food Pairings: Roasted chicken, seared scallops, and Asian cuisine.

# Chenin Blanc

Definition: A versatile white wine that can be dry or sweet, with high acidity and flavors of quince, apple, and pear.

Suggested Food Pairings: Sushi, roasted vegetables, and glazed ham.

# Barbera

Definition: A medium-bodied red wine with high acidity and low tannins, offering flavors of cherry, strawberry, and plum.

Suggested Food Pairings: Pasta dishes, pizza, and light meats.

# Moscato

Definition: A lightly sparkling, sweet white wine with low alcohol content, featuring peach and orange blossom flavors.

Suggested Food Pairings: Fruit desserts, light pastries, and as an aperitif.

# Sparkling Wine

Definition: A wine with significant levels of carbon dioxide, making it fizzy. Includes Champagne, Prosecco, and Cava.

Suggested Food Pairings: Anything from light appetizers to seafood, depending on the sweetness level.

# Rosé

Definition: Made from red grapes with minimal skin contact, resulting in a pink color, with flavors of red fruit, flowers, and citrus.

Suggested Food Pairings: Salads, light pasta dishes, and seafood.

# Prosecco

Definition: A sparkling white wine from Italy with light, fruity flavors of green apple, honeydew, and pear.

Suggested Food Pairings: Appetizers, seafood, and creamy pasta dishes.

# Cava

Definition: A Spanish sparkling wine made in the traditional method, with flavors of lemon, almond, and green apple.

Suggested Food Pairings: Tapas, seafood, and fried foods.

# Port

Definition: A sweet, fortified wine from Portugal with flavors of raspberry, blackberry, caramel, and chocolate.

Suggested Food Pairings: Cheese, nuts, and chocolate desserts.

# Sherry

Definition: A fortified wine from Spain that ranges from dry to sweet, known for its nutty flavors and complexity.

Suggested Food Pairings: Almonds, olives, soups, and seafood.