
Food & Wine Pairing 200: Acidity & Salty Foods

Pairing Guidelines:

- Acidity in wine decreases perception of saltiness in food
- Saltiness in food decreases perception of acidity in wine
- Adding salt or acid to a dish can help bring it into balance with an acidic wine

Today's tasting components:

- Shrimp tempura with scallion pancake batter
- Beef and pork sopapillas
- Crispy pig ears and shishito peppers

1) El Maestro Sierra Fino - Jerez, Spain

- Fino is the lightest, most delicate style of sherry; made from Palomino grape (whose must is actually acidified, as the grape itself has very low natural acidity)
- Characteristic salty, apple and almond notes
- Known for pairing well with salty dishes: oysters, Marcona almonds, cured ham, olives
- El Maestro Sierra is a small, old-school bodega with very old soleras, owned by 90-something-year-old grandmama Pilar Pia Pechovierto

2) La Caravelle Blanc de Blancs NV - Épernay, Champagne

- Sparkling wine tends to have very high acidity, as the grapes are often grown (as in Champagne) in cold climates
- Blanc de blancs is 100% Chardonnay: tends toward citrus and green apple notes
- Very versatile, though classic "salty" pairings include caviar, French fries, popcorn
- La Caravelle was a famous NYC *haute gastronomie* restaurant that opened in 1960; it closed in 2004, but their proprietary Champagne remains

3) Pépière Les Gras Moutons Muscadet Sèvre et Maine '11 – Pays Nantais, France

- Muscadet, aka Melon de Bourgogne, is a high acid grape with briny, lemony notes
- Grown close to the Atlantic in the Loire Valley's far western Pays Nantais
- Great salty pairings with Muscadet include salads with vinaigrette, oysters, chips and guacamole
- Pépière is one of the region's headliners greatly increasing quality and the overall grape's and region's reputation



4) Dönnhoff Estate Riesling Trocken '11 - Nahe, Germany

- Riesling well-known for its very high acidity (which is why it also works so nicely sweet)
- *Trocken* is German for “dry”; a salty dish will nicely balance its acid
- Dry Riesling is very versatile; classic salty pairings include ham, smoked salmon
- Dönnhoff is one of the Nahe’s — not to mention Germany’s — very top producers, known for a richer (and often sweeter), extroverted style of wines

5) Bechtold Silberberg Pinot Gris '10 - Alsace, France

- Alsace is a sunny and dry climate, despite its northerly location, due to the rain shadow from the Vosges Mountains; this translates to richer styled wines
- Pinot Gris is slightly fuller in body with riper fruit and spice notes, medium acidity
- Ideal pairings include roasted fish, scallops, mild cheeses
- Domaine Bechtold is run by fourth generation Jean-Marie Bechtold, who works with minimal intervention in winery and is converting estate to biodynamic viticulture

6) Carussin Barbera d’Asti Asinoi '11 - Piedmont, Italy

- Barbera known for high acidity, lower tannins, sour red fruits and slight savory notes
- Grown in Piedmont and thought to have originated in the Monferrato hills
- Great salty pairings include prosciutto, bacon cheeseburger, pizza
- Carussin is a family farm in its fourth generation; they focus on organic farming (including growing produce and raising animals, plus making wine... and craft beer!)

7) Domaine Coillot "Les Boivins" Villages '09 - Marsannay, France

- Marsannay is the northernmost region of Burgundy’s Côte d’Or; they grow both Pinot Noir and Chardonnay
- Marsannay reds (Pinot) known for being pale-colored, light-bodied and high in acidity
- Classic red Burgundy pairings include duck, mushrooms, and roast beef
- Domaine Coillot focuses on sustainable farming, very low yields, late harvesting

8) The Winner's Tank Shiraz '10 - Langhorne Creek, Australia

- Langhorne Creek is in South Australia—a warm climate, which usually translates to riper wines and lower acidity
- South Australia Shiraz is rich, almost sweetly fruited with herbal notes and medium acid and tannin
- Ideal pairings for Shiraz include barbecue ribs, blue cheese, beef chili
- This is named after a water tank in the corner of the vineyard; each year the local winning football team gets to paint the tank with its team colors

