

# Wine Australia fact sheet

## Food and Wine - Matching Australian wine with food



### **Transplanted from Europe, blended over two hundred years from other imported stocks and more recently spiced with the flavours of Asia, Australia is the last great food frontier.**

It is a metaphor for a nation whose people shy from ruled formality and are excited by challenge.

Post World War II refugees from Europe brought with them a love of music, theatre and literature – and a passion for food and wine and an attitude of creativity that had been handed down to them over the centuries.

Of course, there were earlier migrants that had maintained their traditions in tight communities; the exotic Chinatowns of Melbourne and Sydney that sprang up after the 1860s Gold Rush while Germans fleeing religious persecution found sanctuary in South Australia's Barossa Valley. Some 150 years later, their descendents are still making mettwurst (sausage) and kuchen (cake) like their forebears.

The food revolution of the 1950s was different, broad based and pervasive. Italians brought pizza and spaghetti, Greeks brought coffee and moussaka, the Spanish introduced olive oil, Lithuanians became pastry cooks and Yugoslavs knew about coffee.

By the 1960s, Chinese cuisine was flourishing and the arrival of significant numbers of Lebanese migrants added a new dimension to the flavours available in Australia.

Suddenly there were cafés and restaurants to challenge hotel counter meals. Fish and chip shops, transplanted from old London, were pushed aside by pizza.

The food revolution in Australia was the inspiration for the modern Australian wine industry, leading Aussies to embrace table wine instead of beer. Winemakers celebrated and produced sparkling copies of Champagne, lively hocks and robust clarets.

During the 1970s, Australia's food culture received another infusion, this time from the Vietnamese and Cambodian migrants.

Aromatic coriander, fish sauce, noodles, rice, bok choy and hundreds of other exotic and spicy ingredients found their way into inner city markets and speciality stores, and finally to supermarkets. Australians threw down their forks and chopsticked their way into a whole new cultural revolution, which has flowed over to a harmonious appreciation of Asian religion, art and travel.

The blend continues as Afghans and Iranians, Indians, Malaysians, Pakistanis and Indonesians join our cities,

start restaurants and integrate their foods and families.

Wine has continued to be the follower and beneficiary of this boom. As tastes become lighter, more fragrant and subtle, so do wine styles. Rosé, once only found in Spanish restaurants, is now the vibrant salmon-coloured drink on fashionable al-fresco tables everywhere. Crisp varieties such as Sauvignon Blanc now jostle with Riesling and Chardonnay as the after work drink with tapas.

Australian food is certainly fusion food – European, Asian and Middle Eastern influences – ground together with an English and Irish underpinning.

But it is a fusion of more than tastes. It's about absolute freshness and lifestyle. It is also a coming together of passionate people, working with the cleanest, healthiest produce on earth in a climate that demands innovation, relaxation and gastronomic freedom.

Please treat the accompanying recommendations as a guide only – Australians take a less structured approach to food and wine matching. Australians would insist that whatever the combination - if it works then go with it!

### **Wines to accompany a meal**

#### **Pre-dinner (aperitif)**

Botrytis Riesling  
Semi dry and dry white fortifieds  
Sparkling wines  
Sauvignon Blanc  
Rosé

#### **First course**

Riesling  
Rosé  
Sauvignon Blanc  
Dry Muscat Blanc  
Pinot Noir  
Semillon and Semillon blends  
Verdelho  
Chenin Blanc

#### **Fish**

Rosé  
Sauvignon Blanc  
Semillon  
Viognier  
Oaked and unoaked Chardonnay  
Strongly flavoured fish such as tuna and barramundi can partner well with lighter Cabernets, Merlots and Pinot Noir



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## White meat and poultry

Chardonnay  
Marsanne  
Aged Semillon  
Riesling  
Tarrango

Strongly flavoured poultry particularly wild birds such as pheasant, pigeon or quail marry well with lighter cabernets, merlots and pinot noir. If you are having duck try a sparkling red.

## Red meat

Barbera  
Cabernet Sauvignon  
Grenache  
Grenache/Shiraz/  
Mourvedre blends  
Merlot and Merlot blends  
Nebbiolo  
Pinot Noir  
Sangiovese  
Shiraz  
Tempranillo

## Cheese (soft)

Merlot  
Sauvignon Blanc  
Chardonnay  
Semi-dry or dry white fortifieds

## Cheese (hard/blue)

Cabernet Sauvignon  
Grenache  
Shiraz  
Botrytis Semillon/Riesling  
Petit Verdot  
Zinfandel

## Dessert

Late picked or Botrytis styles of:

- Riesling
- Semillon
- Sauvignon Blanc

Sweet white fortifieds

## With coffee

Liqueur Muscat  
Fortified white (Tokay style)  
Tawny wine styles

## Varietals and their best food matches

### Barbera

Red meat  
Strongly flavoured poultry, pheasant, pigeon, quail  
Meaty fish i.e. tuna or barramundi (with tomato based sauces)  
Strong Cheeses (blues, vintage cheddar) and strongly flavoured creamy styles  
Main courses in French, Italian, Greek, Indian cuisines

### Cabernet Sauvignon

Red meats  
Lighter styles may be teamed with strongly flavoured poultry, pheasant, pigeon, quail  
Meaty fish i.e. tuna or barramundi  
Strong Cheeses (blues, vintage cheddar)  
Strongly flavoured legume based vegetarian dishes featuring chickpeas or faba beans

Main courses in French, Italian, Greek, Indian cuisines

### Chardonnay

Fish  
White meat and poultry  
Main courses in Chinese, French, Italian and Greek cuisines

### Gewürztraminer

White meats and poultry  
Main courses in Indian and Thai cuisines

### Grenache

Red meat  
Strong cheeses (blues, vintage cheddar)  
Main courses in French, Italian, Greek and Spanish cuisines

### Merlot

Red meat  
Strongly flavoured poultry, pheasant, pigeon, quail  
Meaty fish i.e. tuna or barramundi (with tomato based sauces)  
Strong cheeses (blues, vintage cheddar) and strongly flavoured creamy styles  
Main courses in French, Italian, Greek, Indian cuisines

### Nebbiolo

Red meat  
Strongly flavoured poultry, pheasant, pigeon, quail  
Meaty fish i.e. tuna or barramundi  
Strong cheeses (blues, vintage cheddar) and strongly flavoured creamy styles

Main courses in French, Italian, Greek, Indian cuisines

### Pinot Noir

Red meat  
Strongly flavoured poultry, pheasant, pigeon, quail  
Meaty fish i.e. tuna or barramundi (with tomato based sauces)  
Strong cheeses (blues, vintage cheddar)  
Main courses in French, Italian, Greek, Indian and Chinese cuisines

### Riesling

Pre-dinner (botrytis styles)  
First courses  
White meat and poultry  
With Chinese, French, Greek, Indian, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, Thai and Vegetarian cuisines

### Rosé

Whiter meats such as veal  
Poultry

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## **Sangiovese**

Red meat

Strongly flavoured poultry, pheasant, pigeon, quail

Meaty fish i.e. tuna or barramundi

Strong cheeses (blues, vintage cheddar) and strongly flavoured creamy styles

Main courses in French, Italian, Greek or Indian cuisines

## **Sauvignon Blanc**

First courses

Soft cheeses

With Chinese, French, Greek, Japanese, Spanish, Thai and Vegetarian cuisines

## **Semillon**

First courses

Fish

White meat and poultry (aged styles)

Hard or blue cheese (botrytis styles)

Desserts

With Chinese, French, Greek, Spanish, Thai and Vegetarian cuisines

## **Shiraz**

Red meat

Strongly flavoured poultry, pheasant, pigeon, quail

Meaty fish i.e. tuna or barramundi

Strong cheeses (blues, vintage cheddar)

Main courses in French, Italian, Malaysian, Thai and Spanish

## **Sparkling White**

Any occasion! Pre-dinner or with first courses from Chinese, French, Italian and Thai cuisines

## **Sparkling red**

Game meat

Strongly flavoured poultry, duck, goose pheasant, pigeon, quail

Meaty fish i.e. tuna or barramundi

A sparkling red can replace a sparkling white at any time - pre-dinner or with first courses in French, Italian, Chinese, Thai or Greek cuisines

## **Tempranillo**

Red meat

Strongly flavoured poultry, pheasant, pigeon, quail

Meaty fish i.e. tuna or barramundi

Strong cheeses (blues, vintage cheddar) and strongly flavoured creamy styles

Main courses in French, Spanish, Italian or Greek cuisines

## **Tawny fortifieds**

Pre dinner

With strong or creamy cheeses

## **White fortifieds (sweet, semi-sweet and dry)**

Pre dinner

With strong or creamy cheeses

## **Verdelho**

First courses

Poultry

## **Viognier**

Fish

With Chinese, French and Japanese