

Something For Summer

Written by Terry Connor
Tuesday, 13 June 2017 14:41

Summertime is fast approaching and with it comes the summer barbecue season. Grilling on the patio with good food and good friends is very close to the top of my list for summertime relaxation. (I wrote this column two years ago. However this year I wanted to update it to include my shopping trip to some fish stores. All in the interest of research. I am sure that you understand.)

Let's start with Pork. Fortunately for us pork rescued itself from the WWII image of âtougher than combat boots.â It is now a welcome item on restaurant menus and mom's shopping list. It can be purchased pulled, roasted, smoked, barbecued and probably prepared many other ways that a butcher can dream up. Long considered a white meat only, it is now included in the red meat category and this makes it a perfect candidate for a myriad of wine selections to serve at a patio party. Here I suggest not spending a boatload of money on expensive wine. Select a Pinot Noir or a Malbec for around \$15. Although white meat calls for a white wine, the cooking method of the pork can call for a red wine. If a white wine is mandatory because of personal taste, select a Fume Blanc from Robert Mondavi. Fume Blanc is a variation of Sauvignon Blanc and was first introduced by Robert Mondavi in 1968. This is a wine that will give off a gentle smoky flavor.

Roasted red meats are the next choice for our outdoor party. Linda Johnson-Bell, in her book on food matching says it best: Grilled or roasted meats are not difficult to match. Think Sunday roast and July barbecues; think full, ripe and mature wines such as Pomerol, New World Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrahs, Cornas, Hermitage, Chateaufort du Pape, St Emilion and Zinfandel. Both the red meats and the methods of grilling can take heavier textures and weights, so bring on the tannins and acids and plenty of red wine with ripe fruit. No fresh young things allowed here. Ms. Bell is correct and I agree with her. All of the wines mentioned above are full bodied. However, notice from where they originate; Bordeaux, the US, The Rhone, and Australia. You could easily add a rich red from Rioja or a Super Tuscan.

There are so many red meats to select for a barbecue. My own personal favorite is a Filet Mignonâ no bone, no waste, no fat. With the filet I would choose a Napa Merlot; perhaps a Duckhorn. The Filet is subtle in flavor, so I would go for a wine that will not overwhelm the meat and, at the same time, will go well with grilled vegetables.

Ribs are next. Ribs are very popular here in the Lowcountry and are readily available year round. Whether you enjoy your ribs with a dry rub or a rub that is moist, try to find a Shiraz from Australia. In my opinion, Australian Shiraz was born to accompany barbecued ribs. You will find

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that the wine reveals firm tannins and concentrated black fruit that will stand up to the meatiest of ribs.

Let's try fish next. This is where I went shopping. I did this because the retail fish scene has changed considerably here in Beaufort. Sea Eagle Market has moved across the street from their original location, Walmart has opened a new store on Lady's Island, and the big surprise was to find out that Gay's Fish Store NEVER closed. I was convinced that the Hurricane had done him in. No way! He is busier than ever. Allow me to list the fish and add in comments as necessary to match the wine.

SHRIMP: All locations carry shrimp. Pick any white wine, though Sauvignon Blanc is my first choice.

SCALLOPS: All locations carry Scallops. My first choice for a wine match is Pouilly-Fuisse.

CLAMS: I suggest you call ahead. Match with a well chilled Chablis or Pinot Grigio.

GROUPE: Could not find anywhere.

HALIBUT: Could not find. Special Order only! I would match with a single vineyard Chardonnay.

OYSTERS: Plentiful in season. Match with a Chablis, A Muscadet, or a Sparkler. I should mention that the Muscadet may be one the sweet side. Look for a DRY Muscadet.

SALMON: Go red or white. Try Pinot Noir, Burgundy, Chardonnay or a dry Riesling.

I was surprised to find that Sea Eagle carries Swordfish. I gotta get out more often. \$14 a pound. All you need is a grill, some butter, a hot fire and a bottle of Chardonnay, a Sauvignon

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Blanc or your favorite Sparkler.

Do not be bashful about bringing a sparkling wine to the backyard bash. A good sparkling wine is a nice touch, indeed. It can be a sparkling red or white or a Prosecco.

WINESPEAK. Is our list of meats, fish and wine complete for the barbecue? Not even close, but itâs something you can refer to quickly. We live in an area where outside barbecues can be held many months of the year. Use the list as a guide and feel free to experiment with menus and wine selections. Your backyard adventure is limited only by your imagination.

Have fun!Â Â Â Â