

# Pour Decisions

By Brett Chappell

## White wines for fall fare

As summer passes, we crave and cook heartier foods. Yet fall in Pine Knoll Shores is more of a continuation of a temperate, enjoyable summer than a rush to winter, and October often bears more resemblance to May and June than to November. Fall wines need to pair with our abundant squashes, root vegetables and meatier fishes. Don't count out whites because you need a sturdier wine for these foods. Try a few of these less-popular selections.

If you are you a diehard bubble fan, add a little weight to your normal fizz by selecting an opulent style. Most champagne is a blend of three grapes: Chardonnay, Pinot noir, and Pinot meunier. The first is a white grape, and the other two reds. If all the grapes used are red, then the wine is known as a "Blanc de Noir," or translated, White of Black. Champagnes based on red grapes are usually richer and often have aromas and flavors of sous bois, or forest floor. Think smoke, fallen leaves and mushrooms. A meal of grilled sausages would be transformed by a Pinot heavy champagne. A good choice: *Champagne Pol Roger Reserve*, \$60.

Chenin blanc is a Loire Valley grape that delivers all the fall orchard flavors you could ever want. The apple and pear notes you find in these wines are rich, spicy, and baked like a savory pie filling. Honey and beeswax aromas and flavors give depth. Add to that a lemon custard acidity that keeps it lively. Chenin blancs may be sweet, but most sold in the U.S. are dry. No matter which style, the wines are intense in flavor and mouthfeel. They pair well with hearty fish and white meat dishes and almost all cheeses, including fondues. You will be pleased with *Remhoogte Honeybunch Chenin Blanc South Africa 2019*, \$25.

One of the newest pets of wine drinkers is a style called orange wine. The term refers to the color; no oranges are harmed. White grapes are picked and skins are left on to macerate and ferment like red wines. This skin contact time allows for some color transfer, strengthening of flavor and development of tannin structure. These wines are whites that act like reds in feel and intensity. Orange wines play best with fat and salt. Rather than suggesting particular foods, heavier preparation styles are best to pair with orange wines. Rich butter and cream sauces and cured and highly caramelized meats are sufficiently robust for them. Okay, one gimme here . . . country style ham. Caveat: I recommend easy going with orange wines; some can be very intense. A safe place to start: *Field Recordings Skins Central Coast 2019*, \$22.

Riesling, specifically from Alsace, France, is a wine for the fall. This grape, like the Pinot noir, tells much about where it was grown. Riesling, often misunderstood, should be revered. The grape is capable of being dry as well as sweet. Alsace's intense sun gives way to mainly dry, yet weighty, Riesling. These wines have smoky, mineral qualities paired with intense bright floral and citrus that marry well with fall's rich root vegetables, squashes and cabbage. Likewise, Riesling will pair beautifully with sausages and pork dishes. Give this one a try: *Jean-Luc Mader Riesling, Alsace*, \$20.

The white wines of Sicily are powerful in structure and stand up well to hearty foods. Her wines stand on a tripod of elements. The first smoky, slightly sulfurous whiff of any Sicilian wine expresses the volcanic soil. The grapes used are acid driven and have exceptional body and weight because they see intense sun and

## P.E.O. Pecans

By Jacquie Pipkin

It's that pecan time of year again. P.E.O.'s (Philanthropic Educational Organization) annual pecan drive has begun. Proceeds from the sale of fresh pecans (never frozen or cold stored) go toward providing grants, loans and scholarships to support the education of women at all levels, from high school to the doctoral level and everything in between. To find out more about P.E.O. visit [peonc.org](http://peonc.org) [peointernational.org](http://peointernational.org).

Please submit your order and check as shown below. Contact Karen Askew at 252-671-0522 or [karenanntoo@yahoo.com](mailto:karenanntoo@yahoo.com) if you need more information.

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desiccating winds. Both the mineral and tangy notes are heightened by a salinity that is the result of the vineyards' proximity to the sea. The delicate fruit flavors tend toward preserved citrus and exotic tropical fruits like passionfruit or guava. Being island wines, they complement seafood, such as uncomplicated preparations like mackerel grilled with citrus and herbs. A perfect choice for your fresh seafood: *Ayunta Nerello Mascalese Bianco 2018* \$25.

Because the nights are cooling, don't discount white wines as all light, breezy, and summery. Try a few new varieties, and look for wines with more mineral, less fruity, notes. The more savory qualities will pair nicely with the fall's bounty.

*Brett Chappell is a certified sommelier and wine educator with 30-plus years of experience in all aspects of the wine and restaurant industries. He and his wife, Jen, who is a wine and spirits education trust level two, escaped from Northern Virginia to Pine Knoll Shores to "retire" by opening MF Chappell Wine Merchant in Atlantic Beach during COVID-19. MF Chappell Wine Merchant is located at 407 Atlantic Beach Causeway in Atlantic Beach, and the phone number is 252-773-4016. If you have a wine question, email [brett@mfchalleppwine.com](mailto:brett@mfchalleppwine.com).*