



RED WINE WITH FISH?

ABSOLUTELY, ANSWERS **ERIC RIPERT**, CHEF OF NEW YORK'S RENOWNED FRENCH SEAFOOD RESTAURANT LE BERNARDIN

> What's the deal? Everyone always says you're not supposed to drink red wine with fish. First of all, I want you to know, I drink red Bordeaux with all my fish, no matter what. I don't care.

Really? Why? Because I just like it. I'm the nightmare of every sommelier. They feel embarrassed for me here at Le Bernardin, but it's a fact.

What about the rest of us? When should we drink red with our fish? Fall and winter are generally appropriate, because chefs use ingredients with fish that are more earthy—like meat stocks—and those go well with red wine.

So it's not just the fish but what it's cooked with? Absolutely. But you have some fish that handle red wine better than others. I like monkfish with red

wine because it's meaty. Codfish, of course—it can handle strong spices and flavors, like garlic. And lobster can go well with red wine if you do a red-wine sauce with it. It's very meaty, like monkfish.

If someone is going to drink red wine with fish for the first time, what do you recommend?

Probably Pinot Noir—it's very delicate, and it won't overwhelm a fish.

If you were going to drink an American red with fish, what would you drink? I like Araujo. It's a cult Cabernet from Napa. I drink big wines.

So basically, you drink what everyone thinks you're not supposed to drink with fish. Exactly. *[laughs]* I'm the Antichrist of wine pairings.

—ADAM RAPOPORT



FOUR MYTHS ABOUT WINE

ACCORDING TO **ALAN RICHMAN**

1 RED WINE GOES WITH CHEESE.

In truth, this combination rarely works. Red wine tends to be soft, lush, and velvety, just like cheese. When they go head-to-head, the cheese often obliterates the wine. What you want is a fruity, acidic white wine, such as a Sauvignon Blanc or a Riesling.

2

WINE-SPITTING IS DISGUSTING.

Actually, it's elegant when done well. Learn to spit and you will never be embarrassed by overconsumption at wine tastings. Spitting is a manly art, like knowing how to change a tire.

3

BAD WINE IS FOR COOKING.

In fact, nothing could be worse. When you cook with wine, you boil it down and concentrate the flavors.

What is unpleasant on the palate becomes horrific on the plate.

4

YOU CAN LEARN A LOT FROM A CORK.

In fact, you can only smudge your nose by sniffing a cork. If a sommelier hands you one, smile deprecatingly, say nothing, and gently place it on the table.



THE NEXT GREAT CALIFORNIA GRAPE

ACCORDING TO **JIM CLENDENEN** OF AU BON CLIMAT WINERY, LOS OLIVOS, CALIFORNIA

> "When I began making wine in California in the early '80s, nobody believed it could be as interesting as those from France and Italy. But the fact is, few regions in Europe are as conducive to growing ripe, balanced grapes as California. I'm in the minority on this one, but I think Pinot Noir will become the signature California grape; I think Grenache will become huge, too. The majority of people would argue it'll always be Cabernet, because of Napa's pervasive influence. Here are my favorite five California Pinot Noir producers and their top vintages."

-1-

Calera

2000 Selleck
www.calerawine.com

-2-

Brewer-Clifton

2005 Mount Carmel
www.brewerclifton.com

-3-

Au Bon Climat

2003 Knox Alexander
Estate Grown
www.aubonclimat.com

-4-

Tandem

2003 Keefer Ranch
www.tandemwinery.com

-5-

Littorai

2003 Les Enfants
www.littorai.com
—HOWIE KAHN