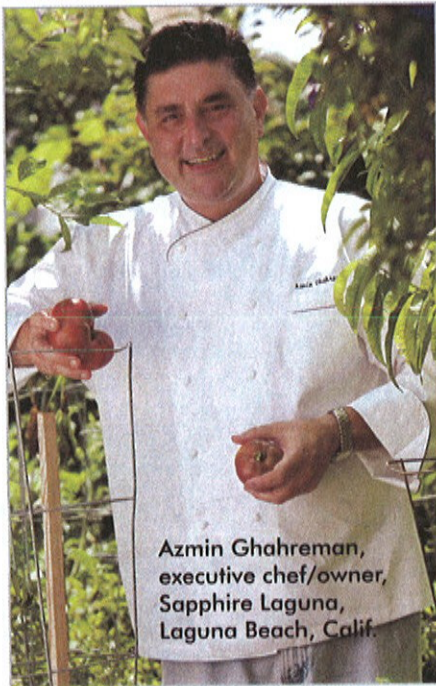


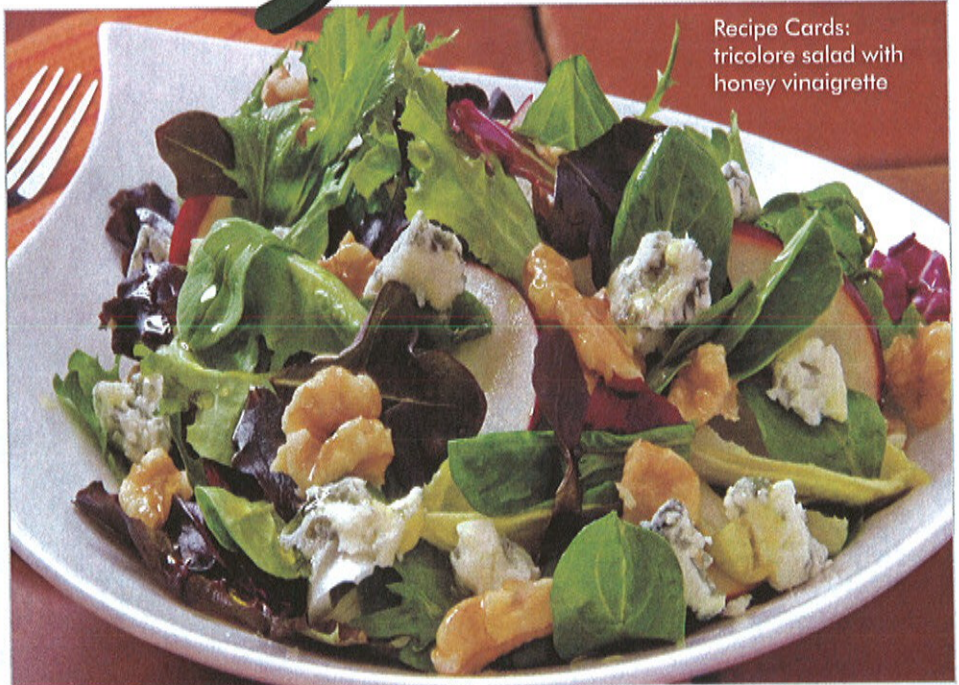
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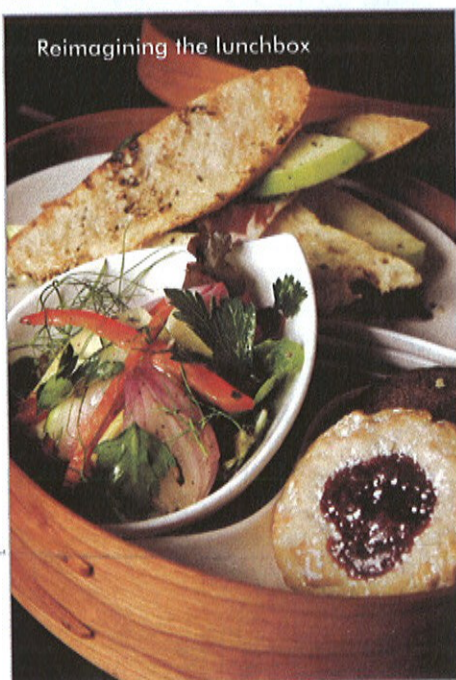
The Magazine for Foodservice Professionals



Azmin Ghahreman,
executive chef/owner,
Sapphire Laguna,
Laguna Beach, Calif.



Recipe Cards:
tricolore salad with
honey vinaigrette



Reimagining the lunchbox

Creating cool treats in-house



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White wines for hearty fare

Chilly weather doesn't limit you to red wines

by Marlene Rossman

Although the weather may still be cold in many parts of the country, that doesn't mean you have to drink only heavy red wines. White wines can be a refreshing change even during cooler weather—not icy, nearly frozen wine that has just come out of the fridge, but lightly chilled, richer whites that are satisfying even in the late winter and early spring.

But not all white wines are suitable for chilly weather. A lean New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, although delicious in summer with oysters on the half shell, is not what you are looking for now. Lighter, aromatic whites, such as Argentina's Torrontes, Spain's Albarino and Austria's Gruner Veltliner, are all thirst-quenching in summer, but will not pair well with that hearty, New England clam chowder in March. A better companion to the chowder is a big, buttery California Chardonnay.

Chardonnay's many faces

Chardonnay is a member of the Pinot family. It's related to Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc and the rarely seen Pinot Meunier. The Pinot family originated in France, but has traveled to many places around the world, including not only the usual suspects of California, Oregon and Washington, but also New York, Idaho, Virginia, Australia, New Zealand, Italy, South Africa, Argentina, Chile, Israel, Slovenia, Spain and Austria. It is just about the most popular white wine on the planet.

Chardonnays are rich, medium- to heavy-bodied, dry white wines produced in many styles. Classic Chardonnays display apple, ripe fig and tropical fruit flavors. Other Chardonnays feature even richer, creamier flavors such as butter, butterscotch, smoke, toast, hazelnut, vanilla, oak, yeast and spice.

Chardonnay can be made in two styles: If it's fermented in oak, it has a round, full mouthfeel and creamier flavors; if it's made in stainless steel, it's lean, light and crisp. Oaked Chardonnays are better with heavier fare; for summer sipping, look for labels that say "naked," "inox" or "metallico."

Due to its wide range of styles, Chardonnay has the potential to be paired with many kinds of foods. It works beautifully with shellfish, salmon, tuna, swordfish, roast chicken,

bouillabaisse, egg-based dishes like frittatas and quiches, and pastas with cream sauces. But you can even enjoy some of the following Chardonnays with meat—a big, buttery California Chardonnay is a great match for a grilled veal chop or pork chop.

Old World pick: Faiveley Mercurie "Clos Rochette" 2007 (France)

Pinot Blanc has even been called "the poor man's Chardonnay." Many of the preps that work well with Chardonnay go beautifully with Pinot Blanc.

New World picks: Adelsheim Chardonnay "Caitlin's Reserve" 2007 (Oregon), Argyle Chardonnay "Nuthouse" 2007 (Oregon), Blackstone Chardonnay Reserve 2008 (California), Chamisal Chardonnay "Califa" 2007 (California), Clos du Bois Chardonnay 2008 (California), Domaine Serene Chardonnay "Dijon" 2007 (Oregon), Frank Family Vineyards Chardonnay 2008 (California), Hope Estate Chardonnay 2008 (Australia), Lemelson Chardonnay Reserve 2007 (Oregon), Ponzi Chardonnay Reserve 2006 (Oregon), Raymond Chardonnay Reserve 2008 (California), Rex Hill Chardonnay Reserve 2007 (Oregon), Robert Mondavi Chardonnay Reserve 2007 (California), Tsilian Chardonnay 2008 (Washington), Wente Chardonnay "Riva Ranch" 2007 (California), William Hill Estate Chardonnay 2007 (California)

More great winter whites

Pinot Gris. Another popular member of the Pinot family, Pinot Gris is also made in a number of styles. Alsace is the French home of Pinot Gris, where it is made in a rich style that is worlds apart from the Italian style known as Pinot Grigio. Great Pinot Gris tends to be fruit forward, rich, complex and with marvelous stone fruit flavors. Pair Pinot Gris with antipasto, white fishes, mussels, roasted pork loin, ham and mild cheeses. Fortunately, for us, world-class Alsatian-style Pinot Gris is made in California and Oregon.

New World picks: Amity Pinot Gris 2008 (Oregon), Arborbrook Pinot Gris "Ana" 2008 (Oregon), Chalk Hill "Pinot Gris "North Slope" 2007 (California), Carabella Pinot Gris "10th Anniversary" 2007 (Oregon), Chehalem Pinot Gris Reserve 2007 (Oregon), Harmony

Pinot Gris, 2007 (California), J Vineyards & Winery Pinot Gris 2007 (California), Solena Pinot Gris 2008 (Oregon), Vista Hill Pinot Gris "Treehouse" 2008 (Oregon)

Pinot Blanc. A very underappreciated member of the Pinot family, Pinot Blanc is a delicious white wine

with some of the same richness that Chardonnay has. Pinot Blanc has even been called "the poor man's Chardonnay." It is grown in California and Oregon, and some of the best have rich, ripe flavors of pear, toast and apple. Many of the preps that work well with Chardonnay go beautifully with Pinot Blanc. For a change of pace, try Pinot Blanc with paella, cioppino, pâté, turkey or rabbit. Here are some marvelous Pinot Blancs.

New World picks: Adelsheim Pinot Blanc 2008 (Oregon), Alma Rosa Pinot Blanc 2008 (California), Erath Pinot Blanc 2008 (Oregon), Maysara Pinot Blanc 2007 (Oregon), Robert Foley Pinot Blanc 2007 (California), St. Gregory Pinot Blanc 2007 (California), The Four Graces Pinot Blanc 2008 (Oregon), Torii Mor Pinot Blanc 2008 (Oregon)

Riesling. Moving away from the Pinot family, another marvelous white wine with rich winter fare is Riesling. For years, Riesling was out of favor, and for good reason. Many of us remember drinking sickly-sweet Blue Nun or Liebfraumich in college and think they are the same as Riesling. But those brands were only partly Riesling, blended with sweeter Sylvaner and Müller-Thurgau grapes. Riesling was the fastest-growing varietal in the United States in 2009. Most basic Riesling is dry or off-dry (slightly sweet), aromatic and refreshing. Its high acidity and floral, citrus, peach, apricot and mineral flavors and aromas are amazing with a variety of foods. Since sweetness levels vary, many wineries are now indicating the level of sweetness on the label. The aroma of petrol, found in German Rieslings and considered highly desirable to the Germans, is rarely found in

domestic Riesling.

Riesling is a great match for Asian foods, because its acid and sweet edge help it stand up to the spicy/salty flavors of Chinese, Vietnamese and Thai dishes. Riesling also pairs nicely with Cajun cuisine, sushi, curry, foie gras and salty foods like smoked salmon and charcuterie. Riesling is native to Germany, so it's a natural with schnitzel or choucroute garni. Riesling is now also made in New York, California, Oregon, Washington and Michigan. Here are some to look for.

Old World picks: Koferehof Riesling 2007 (Italy), St. Urbans-Hof Riesling Ockfener Bockstein Kabinett 2008 (Germany)

New World picks: Arcane Riesling "Wheatland" 2008 (Oregon), Chateau Ste. Michelle/Dr. Loosen Riesling "Eroica" 2008 (Washington), Fox Run Riesling 2008 (New York), Greenwood Ridge Riesling 2007 (California), Olsen Estates Riesling 2007 (Washington), Prager Riesling "Sweet Claire" Late Harvest (dessert wine) 2006 (California), St. Julian Riesling 2007 (Michigan), Willamette Valley Vineyards Riesling 2008 (Oregon)

And if you have any of these marvelous wines leftover until spring or summer, you can still serve them once you open up the patio.

Marlene Rossman is a corporate wine studies consultant and instructor for the University of California-Irvine Extension corporate wine program.

For more on winter white wines, visit ChefMagazineBlog.blogspot.com.

