



Nick's WINE of the WEEK

Red or White? The Thanksgiving Dilemma Part 1

That's the question facing every hostess or amateur sommelier this time of year as turkey day approaches. Well, the answer to this perennial Thanksgiving wine puzzler is easy – serve both. Give your guests a choice.



But now comes the tricky part, exactly which red wine and which white wine?

This week and next I am going to endeavor to answer both these questions, in general terms and with specific recommendations.

First to red. Turkey is a versatile food, rich and full flavored, so it definitely works well with red wine but it has to be the right red wine. Turkey's more delicate than say, braised beef or barbeque ribs, so avoid anything too assertive and heavy, like Syrah/Shiraz. I find the Bordeaux varietals, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, compliment turkey splendidly.

Some California versions of these wines can be flabby and despiriting, nothing more than cocktail sippers, but not this week's Five Star Nick's Wine of the Week, the Merlot 2010, Buena Vista Winery, Sonoma (\$15).

A definite cut above your typical California Merlot, this beauty shows real personality – backbone, fortitude, flash and vibrancy. A long, cool growing season in 2010 resulted in more hang time for the grapes so more concentrated flavor as well as helping to preserve acidity. Then a warm October harvest was perfectly timed to bring the grapes to full ripeness resulting in a nicely balanced wine packed with luscious black fruit and hints of a cedar-tinged spiciness. A real winner for the modest price and the perfect accompaniment for turkey.

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NWOW Rating: ★★★★★

When to Drink: Now

Breathing/Decanting: An hour's breathing is essential

Food Pairing: Turkey

Grapes: 100% Merlot

Appellation: Sonoma County

Region: California

Country: USA

Price: \$15

Availability: Good

the LATEST

Most unusual tasting last night – Four anonymous...

Four anonymous Champagnes and one Cremant de Bourgogne, Ambal, tasted blind. Then we had to vote on which we preferred. ... [Continue reading...](#)

What I Drank Last Night – Thirty Years of Churchill's Port

Well, not every vintage, but twelve of them at an excellent dinner at Hearth, NYC. Johnny Graham, Churchill's founder, talked ... [Continue reading...](#)

What I Drank Last Night – Great California Cab Provides Sandy Succor

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