

Bill Garlough is the founder and an owner of My Chef Catering in Naperville, the 2007 U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Small Business of the Year. Bill is a Level 1 Master Sommelier and pairs food and wine for My Chef Catering customers—and for you—in this month's article about holiday wines on pages 32–33.



As writer for more than 10 years, **Katie Morell** has dangled off skyscrapers, floated above deserts in hot air balloons and listened to stories from teens in drug rehab, all for the sake of a story. This month she previews Naperville's New Year's Eve events on pages 36–37. Katie lives in Chicago and contributes to *Chicago Tribune*, *Naperville Sun*, *Aurora Beacon-News*, and *Livingston County Press & Argus*.



Marc Schulhof has driven almost 700 vehicles, from the slow and inexpensive to the outrageously fast and pricey. In this month's auto article, he helps you endure the elements in style in the 2010 Range Rover Sport. See for yourself on pages 70–71.



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Holiday Wines

Tips for entertaining

By: Bill Garlough

The holidays are a magical time of the year—with festive gatherings to share good meals and drinks with special friends and family. When you're hosting those events, consider creatively pairing wines with food to offer you and your guests something new.

Starters

To begin your party, offer your guests a sparkling wine when they first arrive. Create a festive, colorful touch by adding a fresh raspberry or cranberry to each glass of bubbly. French Champagne has become more of a special occasion beverage as the price has soared to \$40+ per bottle. Less expensive, quality alternatives are available from Italy, Spain and California. When not produced in the Champagne region of France, these beverages are known as sparklers.

Crowd pleasing, light, easy drinking sparklers are the Italian Zardetto Brut Prosecco at \$14 and Villa Sandi Prosecco at \$13. Spanish Cavas are earthy and citrusy. A favorite is Juvé Camps at \$14. Naperville's Tasting deVine

Cellars offers Lynfred Winery's Sparkling Rosé for \$22. This is a light, dry, brightly colored wine with hints of strawberry.

The good acidity of sparklers allows pairings with a wide range of appetizers—a variety of cheeses, smoked salmon, garlic shrimp, spicy chicken sates, and sushi to name a few.

The Main Event

Holiday meals are often the centerpiece of the evening's entertaining. They typically include a wide variety of dishes, flavors and seasonings, presenting some wine pairing challenges. Focusing on the main course is a safe way to go. Pair medium-bodied wines with dinner as they are versatile and can compliment a wide variety of dishes and please most palates.

Turkey pairs well with Semillon white wine and Pinot Noir red wine. Semillon, popular in France and Australia, is a creamy dry white with a hint of spice, peach and honey. Lynfred Winery offers a very good Semillon for \$30 with unusual, mild bourbon notes.

Pinot Noir is the classic pairing with turkey. California Pinots tend to be fruitier and Oregon Pinots offer a more earthy experience. Hahn Winery of Monterey County, California offers a medium-bodied style with hints of cherry and raspberry that sells for \$15. Oregon's A to Z Winery is a great choice at \$18 and also pairs well with lamb and veal.

For ham dinners, Zinfandel tends to be a standard pairing, but Malbec wine from Argentina is a delicious, trendy alternative. Malbecs tend to be medium-bodied reds with light acidity, low tannin levels and offer a hint of spice and the aroma of dark fruit. At parties these have universal appeal. Terrazas Reserva at \$17 is a great value. If you prefer a full-bodied Malbec, Catena is worth checking out. This \$20 bottle is an intense, full-bodied wine with loads of dark plum and cherry notes, and can also stand up to steak. If you prefer white wine with ham, add cloves before heating the ham and pair with the Lynfred Semillon.



Finishers and Hostess Gifts

The dessert course adds the finishing touch to a wonderful dinner. I suggest Rosenblum's Desiree Chocolate Port at \$18 for a decadent pairing with chocolate. If you prefer a lighter ending, Lynfred Winery produces several unique fruit dessert wines, offering an intense fruit-flavored experience. A favorite is their festive, ruby red colored Cranberry Wine at \$12. This wine has an intense cranberry aroma, is tart, dry on the palate and offers some sweetness. Fresh fruit tarts or pastries pair well with this wine.

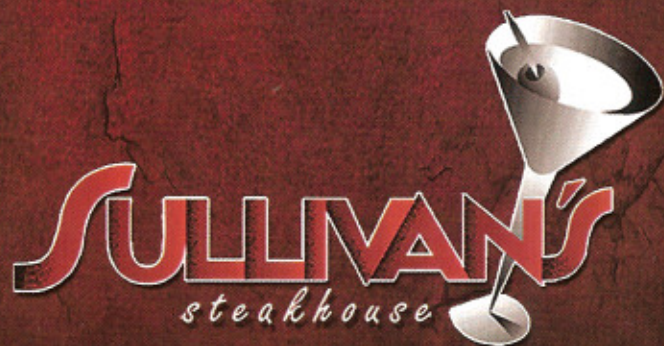
Dessert wine can be a perfect hostess gift, which could be served with dessert that evening or kept for decadent sipping at a later date. A bottle of Chocolate Port and a small box of truffles is a perfect combo for a special holiday treat. Another nice hostess gift is Ice Wine, a trendy dessert wine that can be found in beautiful, slim bottles. Ice Wine's peach and apricot flavors pair well with fruit tarts, shortbread cookies and bread pudding. Cheers!

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