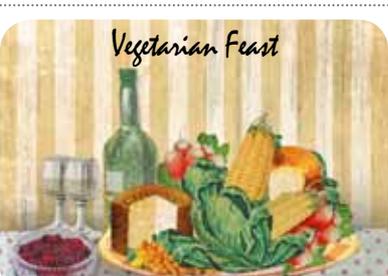




All-American Matchups

THANKSGIVING DINNER	WINE LOVER \$	WINE ENTHUSIAST \$\$	WINE COLLECTOR \$\$\$
 <p><i>The Gourmet Extravaganza</i></p> <p>Wines to pair with four-star chef trimmings</p>	<p>Made by long-time Pinot Noir specialist Greg La Follette (and former head winemaker at Flowers), La Follette 2011 Pinot Noir, Sangiacomo Vineyard, Sonoma Coast (\$40), has aromas of thyme, sage, red cherry and currant. Pinot Noir is the most versatile of varieties and matches well with turkey, stuffing with mushrooms and gourmet trimmings.</p>	<p>Paul Hobbs is a noted winemaker with widespread international influence—making wines from Argentina to Armenia—giving him the nickname “The Steve Jobs of Wine.” The 2011 Paul Hobbs Russian River Valley Pinot Noir (\$45) from Sonoma has expressive wild berries, rose petals and clove notes. Its ripe red currant and blackberry flavors finish in long round tannins.</p>	<p>With its grapes sourced in Napa’s Knights Valley and Carneros, Newton Vineyard 2010 Unfiltered Chardonnay, Napa (\$58), is made with indigenous yeasts and aged <i>sur lie</i> for 16 months in French oak barrels giving it a creamy texture. Being unfiltered, its tropical flavors and hints of citrus, flint and minerality are especially vivid and complement a chef’s feast.</p>
 <p><i>Small Wine-Focused Dinner</i></p> <p>Quirky esoteric wines</p>	<p>In an up-and-coming region in the eastern foothills of Napa Valley, Priest Ranch is off the beaten track. And Grenache Blanc is an unusual variety for California. With its grapes grown in a mountain single vineyard at 1,200 feet, Priest Ranch 2012 Grenache Blanc, Napa Valley (\$20), is fermented with wild yeasts in stainless steel and has aromas of melon and honeysuckle with great citrus balance.</p>	<p>NV9 Cain Cuvée (\$34) is a multi-vintage and multi-varietal wine that tastes more like a Burgundy or Barbaresco than a Napa Cabernet/Merlot blend. It’s vibrant with aromas of black and red cherries and a touch of smoke. Winemaker Christopher Howell has enchanted wine geeks by combining several vintage years resulting in a complex yet medium-bodied red that can even pair with turkey.</p>	<p>Benziger family winery in Sonoma was the first to become Demeter-certified biodynamic in Napa and Sonoma counties. Benziger 2011 de Coelo, Quintus (\$75)—an elegant Old World-style Pinot Noir from a single vineyard perched on a hilltop near the Pacific Ocean—has strawberry, cherry, mineral and black tea notes, bright acidity and a long finish.</p>
 <p><i>Huge Family Gathering</i></p> <p>Pleasing value-priced wines for everyone</p>	<p>From a winery dating back to 1880, Geyser Peak uses fruit from Alexander Valley in creating Geyser Peak 2011 Chardonnay, Sonoma County (\$14), with bright pear and pineapple flavors. LangeTwins is a fifth-generation farming family growing sustainably in Lodi. From its vineyards in Clarksburg on the Sacramento Delta, LangeTwins 2011 Viognier (\$16) has beautiful aromas of stone fruit and a balancing acidity.</p>	<p>Treana White (\$23) is a Rhône blend of Viognier and Marsanne from Hope Family Wines. It has intense floral and tropical aromas—jasmine, stone fruit, pineapple—and a lively acidity to stand up to a variety of holiday dishes. The Hope family has been farming for more than 30 years in Paso Robles in California’s Central Coast.</p>	<p>Celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, Cakebread Cellars—with 982 acres under vine in Carneros, Howell Mountain and Anderson Valley—is one of Napa’s family-owned winery success stories. Its classic and beloved Cakebread 2012 Chardonnay, Napa Valley (\$36), is aged in French oak and has ripe pear, apple, melon and vanilla flavors.</p>
 <p><i>Vegetarian Feast</i></p> <p>Wines that love their veggies</p>	<p>The Fritz Underground Winery is built into a hill in the Dry Creek Valley. Aged 10 months in French oak, Fritz 2011 Russian River Valley Chardonnay (\$25) has notes of pear, apricot and cinnamon. From grapes grown in Napa Valley’s Carneros District, 2011 Sequoia Grove Chardonnay (\$28) has flavors of lemongrass, apple, almond and nutmeg. Both match well with cream-based vegetable preparations.</p>	<p>Robert Mondavi 2011 Fumé Blanc, Oakville (\$32), is a new release with grapes sourced mostly from Mondavi’s legendary To Kalon vineyard with the oldest Sauvignon Blanc vines. This Fumé Blanc gets a bit more complexity with light oak treatment and works perfectly with a vegetarian menu, holding up to a wide variety of sauced preparations.</p>	<p>Located in Sonoma’s Russian River Valley, Chalk Hill Estate is one of California’s top wine properties with 300 acres of grapes grown sustainably. Chalk Hill 2011 Sauvignon Blanc (\$33) has concentrated gorgeous flavors of lemon, grapefruit, blood orange and mango, plus a long finish. This wine matches extremely well with vegetables and white cheeses, especially goat.</p>
 <p><i>Unconventional Ethnic Option</i></p> <p>Wines that go with, say, Asian cuisine</p>	<p>With 80-percent Pinot Noir and 20-percent Chardonnay in its blend, Mumm Napa Brut Rosé, Napa Valley (\$22), has hints of wild strawberry, cherry and plum, a delicate mousse and lots of finesse. Winemaker Ludovic Dervine grew up in Champagne and uses <i>méthode champenoise</i> aging this wine 18 months. It’s an ideal partner for Asian cuisine’s spices and oils.</p>	<p>The North Carolina <i>méthode champenoise</i> bubbly Biltmore Estate Blanc de Blancs Brut (\$25) has lively acidity and delicious hints of apples and pears. It goes well with spicy dishes and shellfish. George Vanderbilt’s grandson founded the winery—now part of the 8,000-acre Biltmore Estate in the mountains of Asheville—and planted more than 100 acres of grapes.</p>	<p>Schramsberg Vineyards is a sparkling-wine house with 43 acres of Napa vineyards. It was first in the U.S. to produce a Blanc de Noirs style, made mostly from Pinot Noir. Schramsberg 2009 Blanc de Noirs (\$40) displays flavors of apricot, guava, cherry, raspberry and candied ginger. Its fuller body and vibrant acidity makes it a great pair with Asian cuisine, especially Peking duck. —<i>Baroness Sheri de Borchgrave</i></p>