

GERVAIS & VINE'S WINE CLUB WINE TIPS of the MONTH

“Sweet” vs. “Dry” Wines How many times have you overheard someone in a restaurant or shop saying they want a wine that "isn't too sweet"? Maybe you've said this yourself; most people think they want a dry wine. Dry seems sophisticated. In fact, this is an easy demand to meet, since most table wines today (with the exception of White Zinfandel) are entirely dry--in the technical sense that they contain virtually no residual sugar. All of the natural sugar in the grapes has been converted into alcohol through fermentation. What most people taste as sweetness is really fruitiness. Ripe wine grapes, when fermented, yield a wine that tastes of fruit (but curiously, not usually of grapes), and fruitiness powerfully suggests sweetness. But this isn't a bad thing! On the contrary, winemakers around the world go to great lengths to extract as much ripeness, and resulting fruitiness, from their grapes as possible. Speaking very broadly, most wines (especially reds) that taste dry simply lack fruit and flavor, and aren't very good. Such wines, if they are clean and have refreshing acidity, can be ok to wash down a meal, but they won't enhance it much. Many white wines are designed to be balanced on the acidic and refreshing side, but

Herb-crusted Flank Steak with Olives and Tomatoes

Steak

2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
2 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary
1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 teaspoons salt
1 1/2 teaspoons ground black pepper
2 1 1/2-pound flank steaks
1 tablespoon olive oil

Tomatoes

2 cups halved cherry tomatoes
1 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
1/4 cup coarsely chopped pitted Kalamata olives or other brine-cured black olives
1/4 cup chopped pitted brine-cured green olives
1/4 cup chopped fresh basil
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

For steak:

Mix first 6 ingredients in small bowl. Place steaks in large glass baking dish. Brush steaks with olive oil. Rub with herb mixture. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 1 hour and up to 8 hours.

For tomatoes:

Mix all ingredients in large bowl. Season tomatoes to taste with salt and pepper. (Can be made 2 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature.)

Prepare barbecue (medium-high heat). Grill steaks until cooked to desired doneness, about 4 minutes per side for medium. Transfer steaks to cutting board. Cover with foil. Let stand 5 minutes. Cut steaks across grain into 1/2-inch-thick slices. Arrange steak slices on



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Shrimp with Mango Sauce

4 tsp canola oil
1/2 cup chopped red onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tbsp fresh ginger, peeled and minced
3/4 tsp salt
1/4 tsp allspice
1/4 tsp ground cumin
1/8 tsp cinnamon
1 mango, peeled, pitted and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1/3 cup cider vinegar
2 tbsp fresh lime juice
1 tbsp brown sugar
1 lb large shrimp, peeled, tails on
1/4 tsp red pepper flakes
1/4 tsp garlic powder

Heat 2 tsp oil in a 3-quart saucepan over medium-high heat. Cook onion, garlic, ginger, 1/4 tsp salt, allspice, cumin and cinnamon about 3 minutes. Add mango, vinegar, lime juice and sugar and gently boil, stirring occasionally, until sauce is thick; refrigerate in a bowl. Toss shrimp with red pepper, garlic powder and remaining 1/2 tsp salt. Heat remaining 2 tsp oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Cook shrimp until no longer translucent, about 2 minutes on each side. Let cool; serve with sauce and a chilled glass of Mills Reef Sauvignon Blanc.