



## *La Cucina Cenacolisti*

### **WINE AND FOOD PAIRING TECHNIQUES**

*✿ plus ✿*

#### **Salmon with Raspberry Wine Sauce**

**by Ron Fenolio**

**The traditional way to consider pairing wine with food was the trite “white wine with fish, red wine with meat.” But consider, does an oyster (briny, mineral, sea water) sound the same as salmon (rich, fatty, unctuous)? These two flavors are not even close. So why think the same wine would work for both of them?**

**A much better way to think of pairing food and wine is “savory with savory” (as in roast lamb which is gamey with syrah which is peppery), or grilled ribeye steak with cabernet sauvignon. Chicken can in fact go either way, red or white, and probably the best pairing is a dry riesling. So the pairings are acidic with acidic, soft with soft, bold or strong with bold or strong, sweet with sweet, fruity with fruity (a muscat/Moscato with that variety’s peach overtones is both the perfect white wine in which to marinate peaches for a couple of hours before spooning them over gelato, but also to drink paired with this refreshing dessert). Tomatoes are very acidic so require an acidic red such as sangiovese/Chianti.**

**What are the hardest items to pair? Red chili peppers with a bold red wine (the spiciness or capsicum fights with the tannins in bold red wines, chili dishes require a sweet wine to moderate the heat); artichokes and asparagus (which have flavor compounds which make them hard to pair—they require a vegetal acidic wine such as a cold**

**climate sauvignon blanc from Mendocino, Monterey or New Zealand, or an Albarino from along the English Channel, or a very very dry Gruner Veltliner from Austria).**

**Back to the salmon. I think the perfect pairing for salmon is a “soft” red—pinot noir, merlot, grenache, Beaujolais (gamay).**

**My favorite recipe? Salmon with Raspberry Wine Sauce, of course!**

**First begin the sauce: put a container of fresh raspberries in a pan and gently simmer with red wine (I usually use pinot noir) until you have reduced the mixture by half. Keep the heat low, the sugar in the raspberries will otherwise burn. While the sauce is reducing, place the salmon steaks in a cold pan. Cover with the same pinot noir. Bring up to a boil and then turn down to either a very low simmer or even off. Let the salmon sit in the hot wine gently poaching to the desired degree of doneness. Once the sauce and the salmon are ready, put the salmon steaks on a platter, cover with the raspberry sauce, serve with a glass of the self-same wine. Pinot noir has an aroma of raspberries, cherry brandy, and lavender. If you wish to make the raspberry sauce more complex put a dash of lavender bitters and a dash of cherry brandy or raspberry brandy in it while it is reducing. Careful though—lavender bitters can overpower. Salt and pepper to taste.**

***“Have fun learning new pairing techniques and enjoy!”***

