

Wednesday, April 8, 2009

## LUKACS: Wine of the week

Segura Viudas Aria Brut, Cava,  
Penedes, Spain, \$10

Some traditional Easter foods come with traditional wine pairings. Red Bordeaux grapes such as cabernet sauvignon and merlot, for example, are long-established partners for a leg or rack of lamb. Similarly, a dry rose or a light-bodied pinot noir are customary companions for baked ham.

But what about the most common

Easter food of all - eggs? Odds are strong that many people will be eating eggs next week. Perhaps they'll be cooking omelets or flipping frittatas or making egg salad. In any case, what sort of wine goes best with egg dishes?

The answer is dry or brut bubbly. Sparkling wine, with its high level of acidity, almost always pairs well with eggs because it provides a foil for this versatile food's natural richness. In addition, bubbly goes well with savory, piquant heat, so it's definitely the wine to choose if your egg recipe includes some Tabasco or other sort of hot sauce or spice.

If money's no object, you can't go wrong with true champagne. Most of us, however, can't afford a \$40 or \$50 bottle for a simple weekday supper, so we need to look elsewhere. Try the Penedes region of Catalonia in Spain, where the best cavas (Spanish for sparkling wines) offer excellent value.

These cavas are neither as ripe-tasting as California bubbly nor as toasty as France's champagnes, but instead offer dry, satisfying flavors that echo citrus and apple fruit with earthy undertones. Aria Brut from Segura Viudas is consistently a first-rate example. It is widely available and definitely value-priced, well worth buying by the case.



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