

[ajc.com](#) > [Print Edition](#)**KULERS UNCORKED: Drink**

During meal, use this wine guide

By Gil Kulers

For the Journal-Constitution

Monday, November 24, 2008

Right after preparing and cooking 19-pound birds, nothing stirs more angst among Thanksgiving Day hosts than choosing wine. Red wine or white? How much to spend? Boxed or bottled? Well, break out the scissors and get ready to clip this column (you online hipsters can just hit “print”). Here’s your hour-by-hour wine guide to Thanksgiving Day.

1 p.m.

Hugs and kisses are one thing, but nothing says “Welcome to our home, please stay a while,” like a glass of bubbly.

Spanish cava offer some of your best values. Names to look for include Segurida Viuda and Marques de Gelida. These wines are all under \$15.

At the other end of the spectrum is capital “C” Champagne. You’ll pay \$30 for your basic cuvee and as much as 10 times that for the top of the top-shelf bottles, like Louis Roederer’s Cristal and Pol Roger’s Cuvee Sir Winston Churchill (my personal favorite, if someone else is buying). If you don’t have glass Champagne flutes, pick up plastic flutes at the supermarket or just use your regular wine glasses.

Also try: Sparkling wine — Freixenet (I prefer the extra dry, but the brut version is more widely available and also nice). Champagne — Henriot Blanc Soverain Pur Chardonnay (\$49), Pommery (\$35), Duval-Leroy (\$36).

3 p.m.

Someone forgot to turn on the oven, so dinner is going to be delayed. Why not break out something that’s a little outside the norm to stimulate conversation while you wait? Wines from the Muscadet de Sevre-et-Maine region are typically lemony, briskly acidic and low in alcohol. Your better wine shops will have at least one in stock. If you see the words “mise en bouteille sur lie” on the bottle, that usually suggests a better wine. Remy Panier makes a decent one for \$10, but go with what your wine shop has.

A gruner veltliner from Austria is made from a completely different grape, but also has scintillating acidity and bright fruit flavors. I recently had a lovely-but-oddly named version called Gmork. It goes for \$15.

While at the wine shop, head to the Argentine section for a malbec. Gascon and Tamari are names to check out, both under \$15.

Also try: White — Huber, Schwarzbock, and Laurenz und Sophie, all from Austria and under \$20 a bottle; Valle de la Puerta Torrontes from Argentina (\$10). Red — malbec by Alamos, under \$15.

5 p.m.

Thanksgiving dinner is no time to challenge the mixed bag of personalities around the table. Go for the comfortingly familiar chardonnay, merlot, cabernet and shiraz. Dinner is the time when the bulk, if not all, of your wine purchases will be consumed. Depending on the crowd, this can get expensive. I have a radical solution: Get a three-liter box of chardonnay and three-liter box of shiraz. Stay with me on this. First, you don't have to put the box on the table if you don't want to. Pre-fill a couple of empty bottles and put them out and re-fill as necessary. The other great reason to go boxed this Thanksgiving is that it's cheap. At most, you'll spend \$24 for a single, three-liter box, the equivalent of four regular bottles. That's \$6 a "bottle" for some pretty respectable wine. If you need a good excuse to put you over the top, boxed wines are much more ecologically friendly. Less fossil fuel is used to ship them because they weigh much less than their bottled counterparts. And they take up less room in landfills, especially if you recycle the cardboard box.

Names to consider: Black Box, Delicato, Three Thieves (all from California), Hardy's (Australia) and Revelry Vintners (Washington state).

7 p.m.

Dare I suggest a dessert wine? I do.

If you are concerned, however, with over-consumption by your guests (and you should be), there are low-alcohol dessert wine choices. Moscato d'Asti is a subtly bubbly sweet wine with ethereal aromas of honey and flowers. It will go with most desserts, especially yellow cakes and desserts featuring pears or apples. Best of all, it has a mere seven percent alcohol, half as much as most chardonnays on the market. I have been recommending an American version of this Italian wine, Allegro Moscato (\$12), for many years and still do.

Maybe chocolate finishes off your Turkey Day menu? Consider Brachetto d'Acqui, a lightly bubbly, pink wine that absolutely loves chocolate, especially if there are a couple of raspberries rolling around on the plate. And again, these wines have about seven percent alcohol, so indulging in a final glass should not put your guests over the line. Earlier this month, I had the pleasure of trying Giulio Cocchi Brachetto d'Acqui (\$20) and loved it. Banfi's Rosa Regale (\$23) still wows my dinner guests whenever I serve it.

Gil Kulers, a certified wine educator with the Society of Wine Educators, and teaches in-home wine classes. You can reach him at Gil.Kulers@WineKulers.com.

More on ajc.com

- [Gil Kulers' Wine Pick](#)
- [Merchants can lead you to wines of value](#)
- [Much ado about nothing: Sulfites](#)
- [There's potential in North Ga. mountains](#)
- [Together, beautifully](#)
- [Taste of place](#)
- [Food and Wine Festival a Disney delight](#)
- [Why Aussies shake the wine: It's a gas](#)
- [Easy borders: 1 lake, 3 European countries](#)
- [Germany's Lake Constance ideal for active travelers](#)

[Expand this list](#)

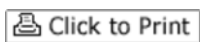
Related Subjects

- [Beverages](#)
- [Culture and Lifestyle](#)
- [Wine](#)
- [Food and Cooking](#)
- [Gil Kulers](#)
- [Austria](#)
- [Entertaining](#)
- [House and Home](#)

[Expand this list](#)

Find this article at:

<http://www.ajc.com/services/content/printedition/2008/11/24/wine.html>



[EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.