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## Wines that take brunch tipples beyond mimosas

April 13, 2011

Each month, members of the Court of Master Sommeliers, an international association of wine experts, suggest wine pairings for popular menu items. Here they offer up both premium and bargain wines to be enjoyed at brunch. The sommeliers do not have a financial interest in any of their recommendations.

### Claudia Tyagi, MS, consultant, Roseville, Mich.

**Bargain Wine:** Beni di Batasiolo Moscato d'Asti DOCG Bosc dla Rei, Piedmont, Italy, 2009

**Grape varieties:** Moscato Bianco

**Taste profile:** This is a rich and intense Moscato d'Asti.

Tropical fruit flavors abound – think ripe juicy mangoes and pineapple in heavy syrup.

**Pairings:** Made to be a foil for rich and creamy dairy, like cream cheese on a blueberry bagel or clotted cream on scones. I'd go ahead and let your hair down and have a crisp, hot Belgian waffle smothered in heavy whipped cream. It's only 5.5 percent alcohol, and we won't count the calories.

**Average wholesale case price:** \$132.00

**Premium wine:** Taittinger Brut La Française Champagne, Reims, France, NV

**Grape varieties:** 40 percent Chardonnay, 60 percent Pinot Noir

**Taste profile:** toast and cream with teasing lemon zest and peach

**Pairings:** superb with gravlax on toasted brioche or battered deep-fried oysters, also great with caviar, crème fraîche, chopped egg, capers and toast points; perfect with a china bisque plate of red raspberry, ruby strawberry and sliced white peach.

**Average wholesale case price:** \$385

**Joseph Spellman, MS, winery sommelier for Justin Vineyards and Winery of Paso Robles, Calif.**

**Bargain wine:** Prosecco Nino Franco Rustico, Veneto, Italy

**Grape variety:** Glera

**Taste profile:** Fresh, clean, bracing, dry – an ideal morning fog-clearer.

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**Pairings:** Fabulous with many an omelet, fresh fruit salad, and fruit-dressed French toast. My favorite is Eggs Florentine.

**Average wholesale:** 12-bottle case price: \$120.00

**Premium Wine:** Chapoutier "La Bernardine" Châteauneuf du Pape, Rhône Valley, France

**Grape variety:** Grenache

**Taste profile:** Spicy but even-handed red wine with gusto and energy. After seeing one of my favorite winemakers knock back a morning bottle of Syrah with a spicy egg dish in Santa Fe last year, I've decided anything goes at breakfast.

**Pairings:** Well-seasoned and sauced breakfast meats and drippy over-easy eggs. Great with green chile huevos rancheros.

**Average wholesale:** 12-bottle case price: \$350.00

**Doug Frost, MS, consultant and author, Kansas City, Mo.**

**Bargain Wine:** Domaine Ste. Michelle Blanc de Noir NV, Columbia Valley, Washington

**Grape variety:** Pinot Noir

**Taste profile:** Very soft, light in flavor and body, but it carries just enough weight to stand up to the oily, salty, sometimes umami-heavy character of breakfast – like mushrooms, tomatoes and sausage.

**Pairings:** Great for savory breakfasts, but avoid sugary pastries, pancakes and waffles

**Average wholesale:** 12-bottle case price: \$72.00

**Premium wine:** Louis Roederer Brut Premier Champagne NV, France

**Grape varieties:** 40 percent Pinot Noir, 40percent Chardonnay, 20 percent Pinot Meunier

**Taste profile:** Roederer is as fat as just about any Champagne, but those racy bubbles give it balance and lift.

**Pairings:** Who cares? You're pouring the good stuff.

I particularly like it with really good tamales — hold the sauce, go light on the meat and heavy on the masa.

**Average wholesale:** 12-bottle case price: \$350.00

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