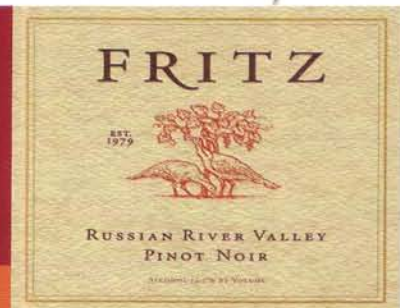


Wine & Spirits ■ WINE

# HELP WITH HOLIDAY Vinophobia

FINDING THE RIGHT WINE TO GIVE TO THE HOST OR PLACE ON THAT TABLE WITH THANKSGIVING TURKEY OR YULETIDE HAM NEED NO LONGER CAUSE NERVES TO SPLIT OR HAIRS TO RAISE WITH THESE GO-ANYWHERE SUGGESTIONS

By Pameladevi Govinda



**ARE YOU READY** for the whirlwind of celebrations ahead? Whether you're on the ball or not, we've done a little homework for you when it comes to the season's best food and wine pairings. It all starts with the bellyache of a holiday also known as Thanksgiving. Our advice is to keep it simple, stick with the American theme and get a wine that'll go with everything from turkey meat to sweet and tart cranberry sauce.

## Thanksgiving

A great example of wine is the floral and spicy **Edmunds St John Rousanne (\$30)** for a depth of flavor that will stand up to a smorgasbord of food or the fruitier **Sequoia Grove Chardonnay (\$20)**, a wine of white floral and white fruit aromas with hints of vanilla. A fruit-driven Pinot Noir that makes for a fabulous red choice to wash down the bird, **Fritz Russian River Pinot Noir 2004 (\$30)** has a lingering palate of dark plums and warm spices. For a good Gamay (the grape that makes Beaujolais) that is also light and bright enough to suit candied sides like sweet mashed potatoes, consider **Edmunds St John Bone-Jolly 2004 Gamay Noir (\$17)**, a perennial favorite of ours that possesses purity of fruit.

## Christmas

The next big shindig on our minds is Christmas dinner. Regardless of religious persuasion, chances are that you'll

be putting some good food away on that day. Should you celebrate the Christmas Eve tradition of fish for dinner, a Sauvignon Blanc is a must. We love the **Château La Tour Carnet 2004 (\$60)** made in Bordeaux's Haut Medoc region from Sauvignon Blanc, Sauvignon Gris, Semillon and Muscadelle. It's a wine of nice stony mineral and acidity, softened by a touch of oak. Hailing from the New World is the **Mulderbosch Sauvignon Blanc 2005 (\$20)** from South Africa, a vibrant wine of grassy and citrus character. A dry, medium-bodied rosé such as the **Montes Cherub Rosé of Syrah 2005 (\$17)** from Chile also fares well with the bird and will be great with fall vegetables. Consider serving a light red with your fish by pouring a vibrant wine with a touch of earthiness from the Alto Adige region of Italy. We recommend the **Griesbauerhof Georg Mumelter St. Magdalener Classico 2005 (\$12)**, made from the local Schiava and Lagrein grapes.

Red meat lovers that are looking forward to indulging in a tender leg of lamb or a juicy prime steak might want a red with a little more muscle. Our picks are the **Lassegue Saint Emilion Grand Cru 2003 (\$50)** from the right bank of Bordeaux, which offers a velvety mouth-feel accompanied by dark berry fruits, backed by some nice tannins, while the **Château des Erles, Cuvée des Ardoises 2002 (\$14)** from the region of



Fitou in the Languedoc-Roussillon area of France is a lovely full-bodied, yet balanced wine with wild berry character and spice.

## New Years

When it comes to bubbles, we say that you should drink them before dinner, with dinner, with a bowl of popcorn and a DVD, or during the countdown to New Year's – in other words: whenever you can. Our favorite California sparkler, **Schramsberg Blanc de Blancs 2002 (\$34)**, is lovely and crisp with apple and pear characteristics and a toasted bread quality. From the Champagne region in France we love the **Ruinart Blanc de Blancs (\$60)** for its elegant mousse and toasted almond tang. Finally, if you want to support a smaller-produced Champagne that smacks of wild berries with a rich palate to boot, then the **Vilmart "Cuvée Rubis" Rosé Brut NV (\$50)** is the fizz for you.