

Trader Joe's Blog Entry

This Week's Post:

Congratulations Oklahoma!

Changes in Oklahoma Alcohol Distribution Law Mean New Wine Options

Hello, fellow fans! Most of you already enjoy picking up a fine wine from your local Trader Joe's, and now we would like to welcome our friends from Oklahoma to the group! On October 1, 2018, is when a law change went into effect in Oklahoma to allow grocery, convenience and drug stores to sell alcohol products such as wine. That is what this week's blog is dedicated to. However, even if you are not from Oklahoma you should stick around. Below we will provide some interesting details on the wines we have available, as well as give pairing suggestions. A large variety of wines are offered at TJ's - we have red, white, bold, fizzy, and kosher. In this post you will find some of our favorites!

To start off, there is the Cherry Blossom Pinot Noir, and it is a dry, fruit-forward red wine with notes of mocha and chocolate cherries. As far as dinners go, we recommend it paired with the commonly used Cornish Chicken. They go especially well together during the holiday season. Our cheese of choice with this wine is triple crème brie.

The next wine is of similar type. Moon X Dark Red Blend is the name, and the highlights are blackberry and black cherry along with dark chocolate. It is strong enough to accompany roasted meats, yet does not overwhelm rich chocolate desserts. TJ's cheese recommendation for this wine is Sriracha English Cheddar.

According to white wine guide on Vinepair.com, which I recommend if you want to learn more, Chardonnay is the most popular white wine on Earth. This is not surprising given how elegant and clean it looks. It is also made without the skins and seeds of the grapes. Some say it might be a bit overrated, and that is also understandable given that it is grown and produced virtually everywhere. Well, overrated or not - it is at TJ's too. The one we have is called Spiral Napa Chardonnay, and it delivers hints of apple, melon and citrus. It is full bodied and has a creamy mouth feel. Our cheese pairing suggestion with this wine is a little harder to find. Raw Milk Cave Aged Le Gruyere cheese is originally from Switzerland, and our German roots help us put it on our shelves.

Speaking of German roots, the next wine that is important to point out is a Secco Peach Bellini. Produced by a family winery in Germany, this is a common selection for celebrations or simply dessert. The low alcohol content makes it a lunch option as well at only about 8%. The most interesting cheese pairing with this wine is blue cheese, with its complex texture and taste adding to the elegance and simplicity of the Bellini.

Now, for something even more foreign, there is a wine from Israel called Givon Cabernet Sauvignon. It is one of our kosher offerings, which of course means that it is made in compliance to Jewish laws (for any of you out there who did not know). We recommend it paired with heavier meats, such as brisket. It has a balanced finish, plus blackberries and black currant notes along the way. There is something special about the Cheddar cheese we get from New Zealand that makes it go well with this wine. It is typically aged for about a year, which makes it just sharp enough.

To end this entry on an especially high note, I would like to make a reference to a wine made famous in the recent years. Thanks to its ridiculously low price, at just \$2.99, many people were talking about it. It sure helped that just about everyone of age could afford to try it. Not only did they try it, but many were impressed by the quality! I'm talking about Charles Shaw wine, or commonly referred to as Two-Buck Chuck. It is made in California, and the man behind it has quite an interesting story. To sum it up, he lived in France for some time, became infatuated with wine, coincidentally inherited money from family and then came back to the United States to risk it all and set up a vineyard on the west coast. Nowadays, we may think of wine from California as completely normal, however when Shaw first started his vineyard – the area's majority industry was cattle. To find out more details about Charles's story, I recommend you check out a podcast called "Household Name." He was their guest last August and tells the story himself.

That's all for this week! Next time we are getting ready for Thanksgiving! The cold will come and we will have some warmer suggestions. Once again congratulations to Oklahomans out there! Just don't get too excited – drink responsibly!

This was Stepan Nasada with Trader Joe's blog.