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| HEB Wine and Cheese 101 |
| This document is a SIMPLIFIED guide to wine and cheese pairing to enhance the enjoyment of food and drink for our friends and customers at HEB Bunker Hill. |
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Wine enhances the flavor of food, relaxes your guests and, when enjoyed in moderation, can make any party more festive. HEB’s cellars are stocked with an amazing and ever-changing selection of all kinds of wine from all over the world. Our Wine Stewards are knowledgeable and happy to help you select the right wine for the right time. Likewise, our Deli Cheese department is unrivaled in Houston for the variety of product and individual customer service available for our customers.

AND you do not have to spend a fortune to find a good wine. We have a huge variety of wines all priced under $20 in myriad styles, regions, and varietals.

**When picking wines for a celebration or party, there are three main considerations:**

**1. Type of celebration**

**2. Number of guests**

**3. Budget**

**There is only one golden rule when serving wine at a party:**

**Don’t run out!**

Wine and cheese is a natural pairing. Cheese is tasted and described much in the way wine is: first by the visual impression, then by the aroma, then by the texture and mouthfeel, and finally by the lingering flavor.

Cheese is as varied, as blatant or as subtle in its differences, as wine is. First there are the three main categories: cow’s milk cheese, sheep’s milk cheese, goat’s milk cheese. Then there are the textures, which occur in every category: soft, semi-soft, semi-hard, firm, hard, hard/crumbly. There are the rinds and wrappings: edible/inedible, powdery or hard, natural to the cheese or applied by the cheesemaker. And don’t forget the origin of the cheese: what the milk-giving animals eat, and where they eat, greatly affects the outcome.

**How much wine should I buy?**

For a cocktail party or walk-around buffet, count on one drink per guest per hour

and up to two drinks per hour if guests are staying overnight or have prearranged

transportation home.

Keep in mind that people usually consume less wine at daytime events. But it is always better to have an overabundance than to run short, and wine keeps indefinitely, so be generous in your estimates. For a formal seated dinner, allow for two glasses of each wine per person.

**Provide the right equipment when possible:**

Glassware is especially important for a seated dinner, when you may want to provide

the right glass for each varietal. But basically, a big round glass for red, a taller,

slimmer glass for white and a flute for sparkling are all you need.

Tip: wine coasters will save your table linens from drips.

**Tips for party planning:**

For a birthday or anniversary, look for a vintage from the same year. Match the

wine to the type of cuisine you’re serving. A magnum of wine — twice the size of the

standard 750 ml bottle — provides drama, especially if you’re toasting.

**Be sure to offer non-alcoholic beverages available as well.**

The good news is that your guests will be thrilled no matter what you pour. The bad news is: it's complicated. Pairing wine and cheese is harder than you'd think.

That's because there isn't just one kind of wine and one kind of cheese. Cheeses vary in moisture content, fat content, texture, flavor. Wines, too, vary in acidity, sweetness, body, and structure. Fortunately, a few basic guidelines will bring match-making success. And when in doubt, you can always consult your wine steward or cheese “whiz” at your local HEB.

***Fresh and Soft Cheeses***

Fresh and soft cheeses love crisp whites, dry rosés, sparkling wines, dry aperitif wines, and light-bodied reds with low tannins. Wines with apple, berry, stone fruit, tropical, melon, or citrus flavors work best. Avoid big, tannic red wines like Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, Bordeaux, and Bordeaux blends.

**Cheeses:** Ricotta, Mozzarella, Burrata, Chèvre, Feta, Halloumi, Brie, Camembert, Brillat-Savarin, Crottin, Bûcheron  
**Pair with**: Riesling (dry to sweet), Gewürztraminer, Moscato, Champagne, Cava, Chablis, Chenin Blanc, Pinot Gris, Pinot Grigio, Albariño, Grüner Veltliner, unoaked Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Provençal rosé, Beaujolais, Lambrusco, White Port, Fino sherry

***Semi-hard, Medium-aged Cheeses***

These cheeses have a firmer texture and stronger flavors. They need medium-bodied whites, fruity reds, vintage sparkling wine, and aperitif wines that offer a balance between acidity, fruit, and tannin.

**Cheeses:** Havarti, Edam, Emmental, Gruyère, Jarlsberg, young Cheddar, Monterey Jack, Manchego, Tomme d'Alsace  
**Pair with**: Chardonnay, white Burgundy, white Bordeaux, Pinot Blanc, Viognier, white Rhône blends, Riesling (off-dry), Gewürztraminer, Champagne, red Burgundy, Pinot Noir, Beaujolais, Dolcetto, Barbera, Zinfandel, Merlot, vintage Port, young Tawny Port, Amontillado sherry

***Stinky Cheeses***

Stinky cheeses call for light-bodied wines with demure aromatics that complement rather than compete.

**Cheeses:** Époisses, Taleggio, Morbier  
**Pair with:** Gewürztraminer, Riesling, Sauternes, red Burgundy, Pinot Noir

***Blue Cheeses***

Blue cheeses need wines with both oomph and sweetness to balance their bold flavors and usually very salty, savory body.

**Cheeses:** Stilton, Gorgonzola, Roquefort, Cambozola, Bleu d'Auvergne  
**Pair with:** red Port, Tawny Port, Sauternes, Oloroso sherry, Banyuls, Recioto, Tokaji

***Hard-aged Cheeses***

Harder cheeses love full-bodied whites and tannic reds. Their nuttiness also works with oxidative wines like sherry, and their saltiness makes them terrific with sweet wines.

**Cheeses:** Aged Cheddar, Cheshire, Comté, aged Gruyère, aged Gouda, Pecorino, Manchego, Asiago, Parmigiano Reggiano  
**Pair with:** Aged white Burgundy or Bordeaux, white Rhône blends, sweet Riesling, Viognier, vintage Champagne, Vin Jaune, red Burgundy, red Bordeaux, Cabernet Sauvignon, Barolo, Barbaresco, Nebbiolo, Petite Sirah, California red blends, red Rhône blends, Zinfandel, red Port, Tawny Port, Madeira, Sauternes, Oloroso sherry.

**What if I’m opening only one bottle?**

It's fun to open a range of bottles to sample with your cheese assortment, but if you must pour a single wine with a mixed plate of cheeses, try Riesling, especially off-dry. The wine is low in alcohol, but its acidity, sweetness, tropical fruits, and mineral backbone let it partner broadly. Alsatian Gewürztraminer is another great choice. It's dry with a delicate body, but its floral aromas will waft ethereally above the savory notes of all of the cheeses.

Sparkling wines, from dry to sweet, almost always work well, too. Their ample acidity and toasty, nutty flavors complement cheeses from fresh through aged. A mixed plate of cheeses is a great excuse to open another bottle of Champagne—**as if you needed one**.

**Cheers to your next successful gathering.**