

Texas Wine Holiday Pairings

Want to pair wine and food like the pros? Here's what wine professionals across Texas recommend for your holiday gathering.

Merrill Bonnarigo, owner of [Messina Hof Winery and Resort](#), says if you like white wine, pair your turkey with a Gewürztraminer. If you like red, pair it with a Pinot Noir. And for a holiday wine and cheese gathering, try Port with a nice, blue-veined Stilton.

Nichole Bendele, public relations coordinator for [Becker Vineyards](#), suggests staying away from a heavier wine with your traditional meal.

"It would overpower," she said. "An Alsatian-style Gewürztraminer is good with holiday turkey, as well as the traditional cranberry sauce. Some light-bodied Pinot Noirs can complement holiday turkey and some lighter-style Zinfandels can also be fun. And there is nothing wrong with using wine for reduction sauces or adding to gravies, or as a meat marinade."

At [Bell Mountain Vineyards](#), cooler weather means it's time for KrisKindel. This red wine, in the European tradition, is served hot (but never boiled).

Sangiovese is the choice at [Barking Rocks Winery](#) where they recommend pairing it with spicy Italian appetizers.

[Alamosa Wine Cellars](#) owner Karen Johnson suggests dining with a Texas Rose. "It's a wine that holds up against the myriad flavors on the holiday table, yet doesn't overpower the star of the table, the roast turkey," Johnson said.

[Pillar Bluff Vineyards](#) owner Gill Bledsoe enjoys the holiday with Swiss cheese soup and a Chenin Blanc, followed by the main course — duck and Pillar Bluff Vineyards' red Enology 101.

Port is on the menu at [Stone House Vineyard](#). It can pair with a dessert — or be one. "Drink it with fruitcake, chocolate or just by itself!" owner Angela Downer Moench said.

Bonnarigo said the emphasis on finding the perfect pairing can take the joy out of a meal. Still, she said, there is science in the art of pairing, and certain food and wine alliances can maximize their combined flavor potential.

She explained that, in most cases, people try to pair an entrée or food item with a wine. But you can achieve the desired result by using certain spices or ingredients in your meal, regardless of what you're serving. In other words, while a cook can't change the composition of a favorite wine, he or she can change the way a dish is prepared to get a sumptuous food-wine flavor

combination.

For more pairing advice, call your favorite Texas winery or visit <http://www.gotexanwine.org/>.