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Perfect pints and pinots for your meal

SUE KIDD; The News Tribune

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Ask Bill Bonnie which white wine to serve with turkey, and he's got a quick answer: "Burgundy."

Burgundy?

More precisely, a French white burgundy. "Higher acids and less oak make the wine perfect to match with food," said Bonnie.

It's the quandary for many a Thanksgiving table – what to match up with a feast full of flavors? Go big and bold and risk a flavor cacophony that might overpower the palate? Or go subtle, picking wines that are understated, and possibly unimpressive?

For Bonnie, he opts to match and complement. He looks for food-friendly wines with flavors that meld, rather than compete. Save big flavor for after dinner – once you awaken from the food coma.

"Try to stay away from big chardonnays or syrahs and cabernets. Have those after dinner. They are better suited to sipping by themselves after the meal. That being said, drink what you like – as if you don't like the wine, it makes no difference how well it matches the food. The most important thing is to share a good meal with good wine with friends and family," advised Bonnie.

Think beer.

For Tiffany Adamowski, owner of 99 Bottles in Federal Way, a Belgian-style brown ale will pair splendidly with her turkey. The beer expert also pairs her Thanksgiving meal with a Tripel, and pale lager. Adamowski has one rule to follow when pairing food with beer: "The more delicate the food, the more delicate the beer. The heftier the food, the heftier the beer."

Here, pairings for wine and beer from Bonnie and Adamowski.

Bill Bonnie, Tacoma Wine Merchants

Where: 21 Tacoma Ave. N., Tacoma

Info: 253-779-8258 or tacomawinemerchants.com

WHITES

Alsatian or Australian Riesling: "Riesling get a bad rap as a sweet wine. Some are sweet true, but drier Rieslings from the French region of Alsace or Australia work very well with food. They have a citrus note that tends to sing when matched with food. Alsatian wines tend to be aromatic as well that will complement the earthier side dishes on the table." Prices, \$20-\$30 for good French Rieslings: \$15-25 for dry Rieslings from Australia.

French White Burgundy: "White Burgundy is 100 percent chardonnay, but the French do it in a style that is a bit more food friendly. Higher acids and less oak make the wine perfect to match with food. It will complement turkey nicely, and you'll be surprised at how well it works with other dishes as well." Price, at least \$20 for a good bottle.

Italian Vernaccia di San Gimignano: "This chardonnay-like Italian grape is a wonderful food match for Thanksgiving. It has the weight of chardonnay but sees very little oak, making the wine zippy and fresh. Fresh and

clean is important when matching food and wine, you want wines that are versatile as you'll be matching many different flavors." Price, \$15-\$20 for a good bottle.

REDS

Pinot noir: "This wine is the tried and true Thanksgiving day wine. Can be light to medium bodied, matches well with a variety of foods and won't overwhelm the turkey." Price, \$15-\$20 for a good Oregon bottle.

Barbera: "Another Italian varietal that will go very well with turkey dinner. Americans tend to like barbera as it is very fruit forward; it also has good acidity and is very bright. The key is finding wines that will match a variety of sides and will still stand up to the turkey, Barbera is perfect for that as it is very versatile and medium bodied." Prices, \$15 and up for a good bottle.

Chianti: "This one is a little off the beaten path. Chianti, made from sangiovese grapes, is the quintessential food wine. Medium bodied with good acidity which is a must for any wine to go well with food as it cuts through the coating food leaves on your palate. Chianti matches well with all the root vegetable and sweet potato dishes." Prices, inexpensive, but spend more for a better bottle.

Tiffany Adamowski, 99 Bottles

Where: 35002 Pacific Highway S., Suite A102, Federal Way

Info: 253-838-2558; www.99bottles.net

Roslyn Brookside Beer: "Locally brewed in Roslyn (in Kittitas County), this lightly sweet pale lager whets the whistle and stimulates the palate as a before-dinner aperitif, pairing with nearly any of the assorted appetizers plates brought by family members. Crisp and smooth, this lager features soft caramel malts and grassy hops and is around." Details, 4.5 percent ABV, \$3.99 for 22 ounces.

Spire Mountain Dark & Dry Apple Cider: "Dark and Dry's fresh apple balanced with molasses and brown sugar is sure to pair not only with the turkey, but also the grand finale of the eve – pumpkin pie." Details, 5 percent ABV; \$4.50 for 22 ounces.

Avery Sixteen Anniversary Ale: "Saison beers are known for pairing incredibly with turkey. Brewed to celebrate the 16th anniversary of Colorado's Avery Brewing Company, it features a special blend of jasmine, peaches and honey that's been fermented with a Belgian yeast strain to create a marvelously spicy and fruity, dry, saison ale." Details, 7.6 percent ABV; \$7.99 for 22 ounces.

Koningshoeven Tripel: "Another of my favorite beers, this Tripel (Belgian strong pale ale) features light malts, with sweet-and-tart esters reminiscent of peach, apricot, melon, and tropicals. It presents a dry finish and lightly warming alcohol." Details, 8 percent ABV; \$11.50 for 25.4 ounces.

The Bruery Autumn Maple: "One of the main dishes I look forward to each Thanksgiving is the brown sugar- and marshmallow-covered baked yams. Reminiscent of that dish, Autumn Maple is brewed with hundreds of pounds of roasted yams and a fair share of molasses. This full-bodied Belgian-style brown ale has flavors of yam, marshmallow, brown sugar, molasses, nutmeg, ginger, and cinnamon." 10 percent ABV; \$13.29 for 25.4 ounces.

Allagash Grand Cru: "This Grand Cru has a complex palate of toasted biscuit, candied orange, clove, allspice, vanilla, and honey – all pairing well with nearly anything on the Thanksgiving table. And the crisp carbonation of this ale acts as a palate cleanser, prepping your tastebuds for the next dish." Details, 7.2 percent ABV; \$10.99 for 25.4 ounces.

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