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# Wines that take on regional, seasonal foods

September 3, 2015

4:59 PM MST



Two new wines called Educated Guess work well with seasonal and regional Sonoran fare.

*Courtesy of Roots Run Deep Winery*

The return of Hatch chiles from New Mexico also mark the launch of the late summer, early fall home entertaining season. And is it ever welcomed. After months of sweating it out, locked up in our air conditioned homes and cars, let's lift the malaise of summer, roast some of those beautiful chiles, pop a cork, and let the games begin.

But [wine](#) and chile don't go together, you say. Wine and Mexican food? No way. I say shame on you, of course they do. Bear with me and trust me on this. Dry rub a couple skirt or flank steaks with chili powder, cumin, black pepper, garlic and onion powders, oregano and salt, and let it rest for a few hours.

Meanwhile, throw a dozen of those sublime whole Hatch chiles on the grill. Choose mild, medium or hot depending on your threshold for pain. Char each side, usually three to five minutes, until the skin actually blackens. Remove the peppers and place in a clean paper grocery bag and close the opening. Allowing the peppers to rest and come to room temperature makes them easier to peel. Once cooled, peel the peppers and keep them whole with the stems. Lightly salt the now exposed tender inner flesh.

Let's bring it all together. Grill those flank steaks three to five minutes on each side, so that you have medium or medium-rare inside. Throw a few ears of corn on the grill while you're at it (it's corn season, too). Grill until slightly charred. Remove and baste with butter.

OK, you have the makings of an amazing Sonoran dinner – Steak, corn and sublime fresh-roasted chile peppers. What are you going to serve with it? Wine, of course! This isn't brats and beer, it's fine regional cuisine. A spicy Spanish Tempranillo may be in order on the red side, or perhaps an acidic white like Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris or racy Albarino, also from Spain. Dry rose wines and fruit-forward reds like Zinfandel and Pinot Noir also are apropos.

Here are a few new wines I found in anticipation of a [Hatch chile](#) feast for the long Labor Day Weekend. All are widely available at local retailers like Total Wine, BevMo and AJ's Fine Foods valleywide. Cheers!

- Michel Chapouter 2014 Domaine de Bila-Haut “Les Vignes” Rose, Roussillon, France. Terroir, a French term referring to the essence of a region, applies to this delicate, minerally and imminently drinkable wine from southeast France. A blend of Cinsault and Grenache creates a fruity and crisp citrus profile that is well-suited to grilled meats and veggies. \$15.
- Educated Guess 2013 Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley, California. This rich, ripe and well-structured wine is fun and approachable, and includes a enough tannic bite to cut through beef and spice. Lesser amounts of Merlot, Cab Franc and Petit Verdot, along with 12 months on French oak, round out this fruit-forward and tasty wine. \$20. Also try the equally intriguing Educated Guess 2013 Chardonnay with its creamy, delicious profile. \$17.
- Josh Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon 2013, California. This is pretty serious wine without the price tag. The bouquet is rich with dark fruits, cinnamon, clove and toasty oak, and juicy on the palate with blackberry and stone-fruit flavors. Fine, firm tannins tackle the dry rub and chile, no sweat. \$13.
- Tenet 2013, Columbia Valley, Washington. The splurge bottle of the group. Made in the traditional style of the southern Rhone valley, this seductive red blend of Grenache, Syrah and Mourvedre is sourced from some of the oldest and most renowned vineyards in the region and

speaks of elegance and finesse. Rich and velvety, with complex flavors of tobacco, white pepper, clove and star anise weave among a tapestry of rich berries. Beef is the only pairing here. \$70.

- Trivento Amado Sur Chardonnay, Mendoza, Argentina. Beautiful, aromatic Viognier and crisp Pinot Grigio are added to this Chardonnay blend creating something altogether interesting and exciting. Lush pear, pineapple and peach come to the forefront with a soft and round texture and long, satisfying finish. A really pretty blonde. \$15.
- Bon Affair Wine Spritzer, California. Whether you're a fan of Mark Cuban or not, there's no denying that the adult beverage concept he funded on the television program Shark Tank is a refreshing and flavorful spritzer. Created with Scotto Cellars Sauvignon Blanc, pure mineral water, added electrolytes and grape seed extract, the spritzer is low calorie compared to regular wine and offers to refreshing effervescence like that of Prosecco. \$15.

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