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WINTER WINES TO PLEASE THE PALATE

Posted on [January 16, 2013](#) by [Stephen Stromberg](#)



A change in seasons means a change in a lot of things — from the weather to your wardrobe. But it also means it's time to change what pleases the pallet, and in this case, we're talking wines. No longer are the airy, sweet notes of summer an appropriate pairing to bring out the best of your meal, but full-flavored, hearty flavors to warm you from the inside.

As the temperature drops, there are several selections of bottles bold enough to withstand the winter months. Wines that are perfect for cold weather cuisine included the 2006 St. Supery Dollarhide Estate Cabernet Sauvignon — an excellent vintage and perfectly balanced Cabernet from Napa. The wine is concentrated with black cherry and currant fruit notes with a little spiciness from white pepper, anise and even some spearmint. Complex and forward without being over bearing, the Dollarhide Estate Cabernet is a wonderful compliment to rich, complex dishes and will not overpower the flavors.

Other notable winter wines include:

- **2011 Wild Horse Pinot Noir Central Coast**

Aromas of raspberry and cherry blend with the flavors of pomegranate and black cherry in this smooth and supple choice. Structure and depth created by French oak aging, this wine compliments earthy dishes like mushrooms and roasted pork loins.

- **2010 Qupe Syrah Central Coast**

With an emphasis on a Syrah's spicy and mineral aspects and a strong, savory component, the big and bold flavors of the 2010 Qupe Syrah Central Coast is less fruity than most Central Coast wines.

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• **2010 Folie a Deux Zinfandel Dry Creek Valley**

A blend of zinfandel and petite Syrah, the deep plumb flavors are complemented by black pepper spice tones. A small amount of petite Syrah enhances the wine's complexity as well as adding depth to the color.

• **2010 Massimo Malbec Mendoza**

A light whiff of oak, gentle spice notes, this Malbec is a succulent selection that finishes with spicy, cedar and floral tones. Pairs well with hearty beef entrées that are popular in the winter months.

• **2009 Freemark Abbey Merlot Nappa Valley**

Spicy and sweet, the dominating oak flavor is layered with black cherry, raspberry, dark plum and dark chocolate notes. Spices like cinnamon, cloves and vanilla warm the palate, and the velvety textured paired with the rich flavor makes this a strong wine with a long finish, perfect as a standalone winter night-cap.

Don't be alarmed, white wine lovers, as winter wines will not leave you high and dry.

Although the name sounds warm, a 2011 Summerland Bien Nacido Chardonnay is the special kind of white wine that pairs with winter's traditional heavier meals. This golden Chardonnay is very food friendly with a nice minerality that compliments the lighter flavors of dishes without overpowering more savory dishes. This is a small production wine whose winery we have an exclusive arrangement with. Fresh, muddled peach and honeysuckle blossoms highlight the bouquet and flavors allude to baked and Asian pear.

If you are looking to try some of these wines, visit Sapporo Scottsdale during Wine Down Wednesdays when select bottles of wine are half-off all day on Wednesdays, giving you a chance to experience some new note and tones at a discounted price.

In addition to these cool-weather collections, certain spirits can help those looking for refuge from the cold and mundane. Sapporo Scottsdale's winter liquid market includes Ginger & Beer using Tio's Handmade Vodka, Domaine de Canton, Fever Tree, orange bitters and beer foam; Rye Knot made with Rittenhouse Rye, Disaronno, Carpano Antica and orange bitters. And, of course, nothing can warm your core as well as hot sake, which comes in a variety of flavors for your choosing, perfect for that quick warm-me-up while still upholding the integrity of a fine Japanese meal.

For more information on some of the winter wines mentioned here, please visit tavisstockrestaurants.com/wine in which featured wines are highlighted.

For a full list of cocktails and wines available at Sapporo Scottsdale, please visit sapporoscottsdale.com.

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ABOUT STEPHEN STROMBERG

With nearly 20 years in the food and beverage industry (the past 14 being in Arizona), chef Stromberg has worked his way up the restaurant ranks — from dishwasher, to waiter, to executive chef and everything in between. As executive chef of Sapporo, his day-to-day activities include overseeing all aspects of food preparation and execution, along with morning prep, lunch and dinner service, ordering, inventory and table-side chats with guests.

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