



ILLUSTRATION BY MARK STIVERS

# Springtime wine vibes

BY BONNIBELLE CHUKWUNETA

**It's March and spring is just** around the corner. There has been some lingering cold, but the thought of longer days, more sunshine and blooming flowers have many eagerly counting down to the fun activities to come—and what better way to head into the new season than by pairing wine with the warm weather?

Robust reds are a staple during the winter months and knocking down a glass or two with our favorite holiday movies is a whole vibe, but spring is the perfect time to add lighter reds, rosés and white wines into the mix. Here are a few varietals to add to your weekend—or weeknight—rotation that can be found at many local area wine outlets.

## Dry riesling

Riesling is like cilantro. Most people either really like it, or really hate it. I'm in the camp that believes there's a riesling out there for everyone. This white wine tends to have a moderate amount of alcohol and is easy to drink. A crisp, dry riesling with its hints of pear and peach flavors is

ideal for this time of year. It pairs excellently with salads, seafood, light chicken dishes and Southeast Asian cuisine such as Thai and Indian. **Budget:** Kendall-Jackson Vintner's Reserve Riesling (Monterey County), \$10. **Splurge:** 2018 Pey-Marin Vineyards Dry Riesling (Marin County), \$29.

## Prosecco

There's nothing better than some springtime bubbly and prosecco, an Italian sparkling wine, fits the bill. Prosecco is a crisp wine similar to riesling, but what makes it spectacular is how it takes to fruit. Local fruit varieties including strawberries and blueberries are slowly coming into season. Pop a few washed berries into your glass or freeze some fruit the night before to keep your drink nice and cool. **Budget:** Kirkland Signature Asolo Prosecco Superiore D.O.C.G., \$10. **Splurge:** Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label Brut, \$30.

## Lighter rosé

Rosés are a hit during the summer, but that doesn't mean we can't

bring them out a little early, especially with glasses of pink wine that look oh-so-pretty next to brunch spreads. Ease your way into rosé season by opting for delicate bottles with substance and saving the full-bodied pinks for summer. An easy way to tell if a rosé is full-bodied or not is by the color. Dry, crisp rosés are lighter in color. **Budget:** La Vieille Ferme Rosé, \$9. **Splurge:** Inman Family, 2018 Endless Crush Rosé Pratt Vine Hill (Sonoma County), \$38.

## Light-bodied pinot noir

Even though Sacramento spring tends to be on the warmer side, we have a few cold and rainy days before we forge into summer. So keep some reds out. Pinot noirs are quite robust and can be a bit overwhelming in the spring. So opt for a younger wine that's brighter and crisp in flavor. Pair this one with some creamy brie and a baguette or an Asian-inspired grilled salmon. **Budget:** Sea Glass Pinot Noir (Santa Barbara), \$11. **Splurge:** Domaine Drouhin Oregon 2016 Pinot Noir Dundee Hills, \$34. □

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