

GRAPE TALK

A wine cocktail is more than just sangria



BY DEBBIE TOLLEFSON

Holiday entertaining is in full swing, and I am ready with lots of great Applegate Valley wines, both white and red. This year I thought I would mix things up a bit and experiment with creating some wine cocktails. I started my research by reaching out to some of my wine-maker friends to see if they had any recipes for wine cocktails using their wines. I know this is risky because wine makers spend every waking hour trying to make their wines the best they can be, and mucking about with that finely tuned profile could be considered a major insult. Thankfully, Bill Steele of Cowhorn Vineyard answered that although he “doesn’t really make cocktails with wine,” his resident chef and tasting-room ambassador, Dawn Strickmeyer, makes a great cocktail with Cowhorn viognier. Thanks, Dawn, for this great recipe!



Wine cocktail made with Cowhorn viognier and Hopka. (Photo: Debbie Tollefson.)

- 4 oz. Cowhorn viognier
 - 1 oz. Hopka (hops-flavored liqueur)
 - 2 oz. LaCroix plain sparkling water
- Serve over ice.
- One of my favorite uses of wine is to create a great sparkling wine cocktail. Here

is one I created using Red Lily’s Cava (Aria Brut).

- 16 oz. Red Lily Cava (or brut champagne or prosecco)
- 2 oz. fresh lime or lemon juice
- 2 oz. simple syrup (equal parts sugar and water heated until dissolved)
- Fresh ginger (cotton-ball sized) peeled, chopped, and muddled in a cocktail shaker
- Splash of limoncello liqueur
- Club soda to fill glass
- Garnish with mint.

Traditionally I have altered red or rosé wine when creating sangria. Here is a holiday sangria recipe using cranberries that I particularly like. Using Herb Quady’s



Use Quady North Rosé in a holiday sangria recipe using cranberries. (Photo: Quady North.)

great rosé and Red Lily’s Night School port, it is one of the best and most unique sangrias I have ever made.

- 1 cup water, 1 cup sugar
 - 1 cinnamon stick
 - 1 star anise
 - 5 cloves
 - 2 cups fresh cranberries
 - 2 apples peeled, cored, and diced
- Heat water, sugar, cinnamon stick, star anise, and cloves until sugar is dissolved. Cool, then add cranberries and apples and refrigerate overnight. Strain the fruit and set aside the spiced water. To the fruit, add the bottle of Quady North Rosé and 1/3 cup Red Lily Night School port. Add 1/3 cup spiced water and chill. Serve over ice

with mint garnish. (Make another batch with the remaining spiced water or freeze for later use.)



Debbie Tollefson

I also found a quick red wine cocktail that is very refreshing and easy to make.

- ¾ cup any Applegate Valley red wine
 - ¼ cup lemon-lime soda
- Ice and garnish with a lemon or lime wedge.

Here is a recipe using pinot noir and tequila.

- 1½ oz. good tequila
 - 1½ oz. pinot noir (Schmidt 2012 pinot noir is a good choice.)
 - ½ oz. lime juice
 - ½ oz. agave syrup
 - 2 ozs. blood orange soda (I love Trader Joe’s blood orange.)
- Garnish with a lime wedge.

With any cocktail, either created from a recipe or invented on your own, I think you need to use the same rule that I apply whenever I use wine in cooking: If I don’t think the wine is good enough to drink, it probably isn’t good enough to cook with or to use in my wine cocktails.

I hope these recipes show you the versatility of wine cocktails. Include some in your holiday entertaining using our great Applegate Valley wines.

Happy holidays and a happy, healthy, and peaceful 2018. For everyone’s safety, be sure *not* to drink and drive!

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Burn reminder



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Concert venues are Jacksonville Presbyterian Church, 6th and California Streets, at 7:30 pm on Friday, December 1, and Applegate River Lodge, 15100 Highway 238, at 3:00 pm on Sunday, December 3.

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