



A Sunday with Jacobs Creek Classic Chardonnay

Description

I woke up with a travel fatigue today. A couple of days of travel had left me exhausted. However, on a brighter side today was a Sunday and there was the Jacobs Creek Classic Chardonnay in the refrigerator, gifted to me by my brother.



Jacob's Creek Classic Chardonnay

Jacob's Creek

Jacobs Creek, is a small creek in South East Australia which lent its name to the famous wine brand Jacob's Creek. The first grape vines were planted on the banks of Jacobs Creek in 1847. The Chardonnay opened today comes from wine house's vineyards in the Barossa valley.

Barossa Valley Wine Region

Situated just 70km north east of Adelaide, the Barossa is typified by gentle rolling hills and valleys. It enjoys warm dry days and cool nights. There is enough sun to give fullness of tannins and flavour ripeness to the grapes, whereas the cooler night time temperatures promote a natural acidity, thereby giving Barossa wines their high quality wines and excellent reputation.



Barossa Valley (Pic by South Australia Tourism)

Tasting Notes

I poured a small measure of the wine into the glass to get a feel of what's it's going to offer. I found it to be a clean wine with golden yellow color. It had strong tropical fruit aromas and flavors of pears, melons, green apples and unripe pineapple. Additionally, the wine also showed a subtle oak character mainly that of vanilla. Bit of malolactic fermentation was evident too.

Delicate Wine with a Punch

Well, from the tasting notes above its evident that this wine is an aromatic, fruit forward, uncomplicated and an easy drinking wine. Thatâ??s true, but do not let that mislead you since the wine is also a powerful one when it comes to alcohol content. With 12.9% abv on the label, this Chardonnay certainly delivers the proverbial Punch.



First pours to sample the wineâ??s potential

A Citrusy Chardonnay?

Being a Chardonnay from Australia, which enjoys a viticulturally warmer climate, I did expect it to be rich, creamy and buttery. And one which is ofcourse a dry wine but would give an off dry feel â?? a slight perception of sweetness. Now, although it did have a medium body and a texture, however, the wine displayed prominent citrus notes, mainly lemon. Though these citrus notes did soften up a bit after sometime in the glass, but still this demanded some suitable food for balancing.

Revelation

All above notes combined (including citrus) with a sharp acidity, long finish and subtle oak clearly established this as a fresh, fruity and easy drinking wine but one which would need an intelligent food pairing to enable delightful savoring.

What type of dishes ?

Main idea behind food selection was to balance the searing citrus notes of the wine. This, with the fruit forwardness of the wine and its sharp acidity, helped in homing on to some rich cheese based dishes.

The Cheeses

Two types were readily available at home – Mozzarella and Diced Gouda cheese. After a bit of Google research, we decided upon three dishes, more of hors d'oeuvres actually, to go with the wine.

Dishes

A) Mozzarella Sticks

Quick Recipe – In a small bowl, combine flour and salt, set aside. In another small bowl, beat egg and milk until blended, set aside. On a plate, keep bread crumbs. Pour oil into a pan and heat it at medium-high. Cut small strips of frozen Mozzarella and in batches dredge these in flour to coat lightly. Dip each floured strip in egg mixture to coat, then press into bread crumb mixture. Shallow fry these in the pan to get the Mozzarella Sticks.



Making of Mozorella Sticks

B) Chicken Bread Toast with Gouda Cheese

Quick recipe – start by making the cheese sauce – melt butter in pan over medium heat, once frothy, add the flour and stir to combine. Cook the paste for a minute and then slowly add the milk to the pan and stir. Now add grated gouda cheese and stir until it’s melted. Next, shallow fry a previously marinated chicken thigh piece in a pan using olive oil and a measure of white wine. After around 7 minutes, remove it from the pan and cut it into smaller pieces and combine these with the cheese sauce and spread this over toasted bread.



Chicken Bread toast with gouda cheese spread

C) Linguine Pasta

Linguine is a type of pasta similar to fettuccine but elliptical in section rather than flat. It is about 4 millimetres in width, which is wider than spaghetti but not as wide as fettuccine. The name linguine means "little tongues" in Italian. We used Gouda cheese to make it.



Linguine pasta with Chardonnay

Pairing experience

1. The first principle in pairing is to pair the most prominent flavor in food with the wine. In all three dishes above this was the Gouda Cheese. Here the sharp acidity of the Chardonnay matched the cheese in the dishes perfectly. As an example, I took a bite of only cheese and chicken – the cheese was found overpowering the chicken. Then I took a sip of the wine – now I could feel the acidity of the wine actually washing down the cheese and balancing it thereby enabling the succulent flavors of the chicken to be released.
2. Second of course was to balance the prominent flavour of the wine which here clearly was citrus lemon. Here the richness of the dish due to cheese, olive oil, butter etc acted to balance the citrusy feel of the wine resulting in a good pairing.