



# Four Red Wines to Sip & Savor

Versatile Varietals That  
Shine on Their Own and  
Pair with Perfection »

In vineyards around the world, lesser-known grape varieties are joining the red wine party. Increasingly available in the U.S., these terrific reds please both the palate and the wallet. Complex yet approachable, food-friendly yet enjoyable on their own, these wines are delightfully drinkable whether you're pouring them at a cocktail party or sipping them with a weeknight dinner.

### Tempranillo

Tempranillo grapes are traditionally grown in Spain, although today they're also found in Portugal, the U.S. and Australia. Spanish Tempranillos are divided into four categories that denote how long they've been aged and oaked. The youngest wines are labeled *vin joven*, Spanish for "young wines." Next are the *crianza* wines, then *reserva* and *gran reserva* wines.

**Tasting notes:** Full-bodied Tempranillo is rich magenta in color, with red fruit notes of cherry, plum and tomato. Its savory flavor works well with all kinds of cuisine.

**Enjoy it with:** Not surprisingly, Tempranillo pairs especially well with regional Spanish cuisine, including roasted vegetables and cured meats like salami, ham and prosciutto. It also makes a perfect complement to antipasto, pizza, lasagna and Mexican dishes.

### Garnacha

Garnacha is the Spanish name for the Grenache grape, which is also planted in France. While it's used mostly as a blending grape in France, the Spaniards bottle Garnacha on its own with great success. Much of the Garnacha imported



to the U.S. comes from 50- to 100-year-old vines in the Aragon region, which is inland and west from Barcelona. During the past 20 years, modern winemaking techniques have greatly improved Garnacha's quality and value.

**Tasting notes:** Garnacha often has an inky color, with lovely flavors of cherry and spice. Some Garnachas also carry a light note of citrus, giving them a pleasant zing.

**Enjoy it with:** Garnacha is wonderful on its own, and also pairs well with spicy, herby or roasted foods. As we head into fall, Garnacha can accompany seasonal meals like chili or roasted chicken with vegetables. »



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### Beaujolais

The Gamay grape is most famously used to make French Beaujolais wines. Most varietals are made with a unique method called semi-carbonic maceration, where grapes are placed into a vat in whole clusters. The grapes at the bottom are crushed, eventually creating carbon dioxide and resulting in grape explosions (thus, no need for crushing!).

**Tasting notes:** Each sip of this light crimson red wine reveals fruity flavors of raspberry, tart cherry, cranberry and banana. Due to their low tannins and fruity nature, Beaujolais wines are best served slightly chilled. They also make great sangrias!

**Enjoy it with:** Light and fruity Beaujolais is easy-drinking on its own for a party, and it's also food-friendly. Chicken dishes, salads, cheeses and charcuterie make ideal pairing partners.

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### Carmenere

The Carmenere grape was originally cultivated in Bordeaux and used as a blending grape. Due to disease, it virtually disappeared from France and is now grown almost exclusively in Chile. Chilean producers are demonstrating the tremendous potential of Carmenere, and it's becoming the signature wine of Chile.

**Tasting notes:** Carmenere is enjoyably complex, with a stunning deep

purple-violet color. Prepare yourself for tastes of blackberries, pepper, smoke and a little bit of earth. You can sometimes also detect a subtle note of red pepper in Carmenere. With all this going on, you might expect Carmenere to be heavy in body, but it's not.

**Enjoy it with:** Carmenere is an excellent alternative to Cabernet Sauvignon and complements steak or other grilled meats. ●