

Guest column: Wine, snacks & soundtracks, a new kind of pairing from AMI Group

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AMI Group pairs wine not only with food, but with music and mood too

In this guest column, AMI Group's Janine Bennett, VP Wine Sourcing and Supplier Management, introduces the company's powerful global all-female wine sourcing team and how to pair wines with food and music



Janine Bennett, VP Wine Sourcing and Supplier Management, AMI Group

At [AMI Group](#), food and beverage is not just what we do, it is who we are. We believe wine should be joyful, expressive and yes, sometimes unexpected.

Meet the wine leads

Tanya Low, based in Europe, brings a global perspective and precision to our Old World wines. Her background, from flight attendant to wine program manager at some of the world's top airlines, is proof that a great palate can take you places, literally. Her global perspective and refined palate bring more than just good taste; they unlock the emotional spark that transforms her wine selections from a product into an experience.

Julianne Kennedy, based on the U.S. west coast, heads up our New World portfolio. She has lived every side of the wine world: restaurant pro, "cellar rat," and marketing lead for one of Oregon's wine pioneers. She knows her way around a barrel and a business plan. She brings an admirable ability to translate what is in the glass into moments that connect people.

Together, they are AMI's dynamic duo, sourcing standout wines with an obsession for what is next, not just what is expected. They make wine feel less like a lecture and more like a vibe. This is why we are pairing it not just with food, but with music and mood, too.



Julianne Kennedy, Senior Manager, New World Wine Portfolio, AMI Group



Tanya Low, Senior Manager, Old World Wine Portfolio, AMI Group

Wine rules, rewritten

Wine pairing is more than just a tradition—it is a sensory experience that elevates both food and drink. The right wine can highlight flavors in a dish, cleanse the palate between bites or add a layer of complexity to a simple meal. Pairing is not about perfection. It is about experimentation and curating a sensory moment where food, wine and music all sing in harmony.



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Pairings, remixed

1. Match intensity: Let the wine and the music match the weight of the dish.

- Wine: Alto Adige Pinot Grigio
- Food: Fresh salads, seafood, roast chicken
- Vibe: Refreshing, light and breezy acoustic
- Playlist: "Summer Breeze" by Seals & Croft, "The Stable Song" by Gregory Alan Isakov, "Home" by Edward Sharpe & The Magnetic Zeros
- Wine: Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
- Food: Aged cheese, grilled steak
- Vibe: Bold, rich and bluesy
- Playlist: "Ain't No Sunshine" by Bill Withers, "Round Midnight" by Thelonius Monk, "The Thrill is Gone" by B.B. King

2. Embrace acidity: Bright wines deserve crisp, energetic music.

- Wine: New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc

- Food: Goat cheese, ceviche, citrus-based dishes
- Vibe: Upbeat and fresh indie pop
- Playlist: "Electric Feel" by MGMT, "Dog Days Are Over" by Florence + The Machine, "Take a Walk" by Passion Pit

3. Play with sweetness: A little sugar goes a long way with spice—and salsa beats.

- Wine: Off-dry Riesling
- Food: Thai curry, fried chicken
- Vibe: Sweet and spicy, lively, tropical rhythms
- Playlist: "La Vida Es Un Carnaval" by Celia Cruz, "Could You Be Loved" by Bob Marley, "Bailando" by Enrique Iglesias

4. Tannins love fat: Big reds need fat-rich foods...and equally bold soundtracks.

- Wine: Argentinian Malbec
- Food: Ribeye, short ribs, truffle mac
- Vibe: Intense, rich, classic rock
- Playlist: "Paint It Black" by Rolling Stones, "Sweet Child O' Mine" by Guns N' Roses, "Back In Black" by AC/DC

5. Mirror or contrast flavors: Earth with earth, or sweet with salty. Both can sing.

- Wine: Oregon Pinot Noir
- Food: Mushroom risotto
- Vibe: Lush, elegant, classical
- Playlist: "Clair de Lune" by Debussy, "Spring" from The Four Seasons by Vivaldi, "Pavane in F-sharp minor" by Gabriel Fauré
- Wine: White Port
- Food: Blue cheese, candied nuts
- Vibe: Complex, experimental, progressive jazz
- Playlist: "Misterioso" by Thelonious Monk, "Giant Steps" by John Coltrane, "The Art of Love" by John Zorn

Wine and snacks? Yes, please!

Wine does not have to be reserved for candlelit dinners. Some of the best surprises come when you pair a great glass with something unexpected—like your favorite inflight snack.

- Cooper's Cheese Straws or Cheddies
 - Pair with: Rioja Reserva, California Zin, or a peppery Gruner Veltliner
- Daily Crunch Nuts
 - Pair with: Smoky Pouilly-Fumé or earthy Pinot Noir
- Funky Chunky Sea Salt Caramel Popcorn
 - Pair with: Port or a nutty Madeira

These playful pairings embrace the same golden rules—balance, contrast and a bit of curiosity.

The AMI approach

Over the past two years, AMI's culinary and wine teams have built a culture of collaboration, creativity and disruption. We aim for a whole new level of inflight flavor—and a few category-breaking ideas.

So, next time you reach for a glass, turn up the music, grab a bite and let the moment unfold.



Playful pairings in hand, AMI Group wine celebrates balance, contrast and a touch of curiosity