

The Ideal Wines and Spirits to Pair With Every Course of Thanksgiving Dinner

Top sommeliers and mixologists help you craft a five-course food and booze pairing menu



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BY KIRK MILLER / NOVEMBER 26, 2019 5:31 AM

Thanksgiving with the family? You're definitely going to need a drink. Or five.

But you'll also want to stay relatively clear-eyed and provide some options for your guests. So we asked a few top sommeliers and bar professionals to give us an ideal wine and spirits drinking guide for Thanksgiving.

The rules we gave our experts were simple: We needed five drinks to correspond with five different phases of the meal, from the early moments when guests arrive through the main course and up until everyone's half-dozing on the sofa post-dessert. The wines had to be fairly easy to acquire, and spirits needed to be served neat, on ice or in very easy-to-make cocktails. And everyone had to end the night somewhat coherent.

Side note: Keep some non-alcoholic options around for drivers, kids and Aunt Sheila. (We get it, Sheila — you hate the Swedes. Put your pants back on.)

Your five-course drinking plan, as follows ...

With dessert

Tawny ports have a smoky, espresso, baking spice flavor profile that pairs well with any cake or pie (but especially pumpkin). It's also an easy sipper that helps with digestion if you overdid it on dinner and want the drink to be the dessert. Sandeman and Warres make great 10-year tawny ports. — *Amy Racine*

Giacomo Bologna – Braida Moscato d'Asti (Piemonte): This delightful Moscato is fruity, *frizzante* and 4.5% alcohol — very handy after drinking Corliss Cab. The orange blossom and peach flavors will be a great foil for apple and pumpkin desserts. — *John Slover*