

Robb Report

11 Stellar Wines to Pair With Chocolate, From Dark to Milk and Everything in Between

No matter what kind of chocolate fix you prefer, we've got the right bottle for you.

In the USA alone, 58 million pounds of chocolate will be bought and consumed for Valentine's Day. That's a whole lot of love! And while much of it will be eaten on its own, those of us who love wine can enhance our pleasure by perfectly pairing our delicious confections. In general, the best accompaniment to anything sweet is wine with a high degree of residual sugar. If the sweetness of the wine and chocolate (or any dessert) are not matched, dry wine will taste bitter and the experience will not be enjoyable. There is one exception to this advice: Dark or bittersweet chocolate with a high percentage of cacao, 72 percent or higher, works with a bold red wine like Barolo or Napa Cab. Otherwise, stick to the sweet stuff.

Despite the fact that we do not think there are hard and fast rules to wine pairing, often drinking red wine with fish and white wine with meat, we do have one set of guidelines: Sweet wine made from white grapes, such as Sauternes, Tokaji or Madeira, goes well with white chocolate or lighter milk chocolate, especially with fruit, and sweet wine made from red grapes, such as Port or Passito Rosso is better alongside dark chocolate or darker milk chocolate, unadorned or with nuts or caramel. This advice works with dessert as well. Sweet white wine pairs best with flan, crème brûlée or cheesecake, and sweet reds are a natural with chocolate cake, chocolate mousse or brownies.

Quinta do Noval 2015 Vintage Port



A blend of the "Port" varieties including Touriga Nacional and Touriga Franca this voluptuous vintage Port has aromas of dried plums, raisins and black olive tapenade. It is full bodied on the palate with flavors blackberry preserves, candied orange rind and a touch of anise in the post palate. It is drinking beautifully right now, but don't hesitate to lay this bottle down for a few decades. Pair with dark chocolate (greater than 60 percent cacao) and dark chocolate filled with ganache.