

# AFFORDABLE WINES OFF THE BEATEN PATH

(\$20-\$30 range wines)

## *Sparkling Wine* (Crémant)

Alsace Region (France)

Loire Region (France)

Burgundy Region (France)

## *White Wine*

Pinot Gris (Oregon, US / Alsace Region, France)

Riesling (Mosel or Rheingau Region, Germany)

Pinot Blanc (Alsace Region)

## *Red Wine*

Chianti Classico or Chianti Rufina (grape variety is Sangiovese – Tuscany, Italy)

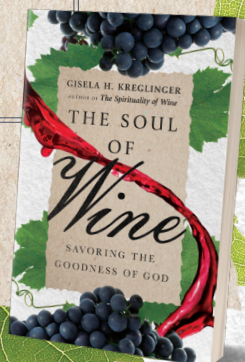
Primitivo/Zinfandel (Southern Italy or California)

Rioja Reserva (Rioja region of Spain)

Note: Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon are popular varieties and generally more expensive. When crafted well they are beautiful, powerful wines, but they usually come at a steep price.

Importer Kermit Lynch is an excellent place to learn about and find high quality wines at an affordable price. You can search according to your budget. Kermit researches wines and provides reliable recommendations.

<https://www.kermitlynch.com/our-wines/>



# CREATE YOUR OWN CHARCUTERIE BOARD

1. Start with a platter, cutting board, marble or slate board. Choose some small bowls for nuts, olives, jams, etc.
2. Place the cheese on the board. Cut several slices of the harder cheeses. You can leave the soft cheese whole, with a knife close by. Select 3-4 cheeses:
  - Soft cheese (muenster, brie, goat cheese)
  - Aged or hard cheese (asiago, sharp cheddar)
  - Something special (cheese with spices or fruit, bleu cheese)
3. Add some meat.
  - Thinly sliced prosciutto (place on board and twist the slice to create a loose rosette)
  - Sliced meat such as hard salami (roll into tubes and stack)
  - Chunky slices of salami or sausage
  - Liver pâté
4. Fill small bowls
  - Add olives in a bowl. Kalamata olives or marinated Greek olives are nice. Olives marinated in herbs and spices or olives filled with garlic or feta cheese are also tasty options.
  - Add nuts in a bowl. Almonds, cashews, or pistachios are great nuts to include.
  - Fill a bowl with an interesting spread, such as a spicy pepper jam or fig jam.
5. Add fruit
  - Dried fruit, such as apricots, dates, or cherries
  - Fresh fruit, such as figs, blueberries, cherries, apple slices
6. Add crackers or bread
  - Use a few kinds of crackers or bread.
  - Try a plain water cracker that allows the cheese to shine. You can also try a multigrain cracker with texture that compliments the meat and cheese.
  - Rye bread or sliced baguette are nice breads to consider.
7. Fill in the spaces
  - Use nuts, lettuce, grape tomatoes or herbs to fill in any empty space
8. Provide knives for spreading soft cheese and spoons for the spreads.
9. Finally, provide wine or sparkling water, small plates, and napkins. Enjoy!

One way to help keep the evening affordable, rather than buy all the wine and cheese and meat yourself, plan for a group of let's say 8 guests and ask four guests to bring a bottle of wine each, and four other guests to bring cheese, cured meats, nuts and dried fruit to create a charcuterie board.

To make sure there is a theme to the wine tasting, why not work with a local wine shop. Ask them to help you select four different wines to sample alongside one another and the meats and cheeses to go with the wine. Then you can tell the other guests to go to the wine shop to buy the wine and instruct them what cheeses/meats/dried fruits/nuts to buy.

This will help keep the expenses under \$25 for each person and you will have a fantastic evening of wonderful wine and an amazing charcuterie board. This also encourages a communal spirit of working together to create a fun evening.

