

## Tinned fish is all the rage right now, and it's even better with wine



Have you noticed that more and more people are snacking on what looks like military rations? Yes, those tinned items, known affectionately abroad as [conservas](#), are taking over bars and pantries from Miami to Seattle. Tinned fish has become especially popular, and we're here to tell you that it's even better with the right wine pairing.

Tinned seafood is all the rage, from octopus in olive oil to smoked mackerel or anchovies. It's become the go-to snack in wine bars and trendy restaurants, and for good reason. It's ready to eat, delicious, and easy to stretch out, as there tends to be leftover oil or sauce that makes for great dipping.

With spring in full swing, now is the time to get into tinned fish. It's packable, meaning it's ideal for your next picnic or dinner on the deck. You don't have to cook anything; just sit back and soak up the flavor. And with so much of it being finger food and stuff you throw on a loaf of crusty bread, there's not much clean up either. We're sold.

Oh, and [seafood also pairs wonderfully with wine](#). The many proteins of the ocean have been served with fermented fruit for thousands of years. Lighter and brighter wines in particular — the ones you're naturally reaching for anyway now that the weather is milder — are perfect for the task.

We chatted up a couple of players in the tinned fish market to get some suggestions on proper tinned fish wine pairings.

# Pairing ideas



Lucia Flors and Carlos Leiva are the founders of [Siesta Co.](#) Hailing from Valencia, they know a thing or two about matching conservas with wine. Their company specializes in sustainable seafood that's harvested in Spain, then tinned up and shipped out to L.A. (and beyond).

"Tinned seafood pair well with a few different types of wine — young red wines, rosé, or unctuous white wines like chardonnay," Flors says. "They're also great with cava or champagne, and light wines that are easy to drink but with a deep flavor."

Below, we break down some of the major categories of tinned fish and which wines ought to accompany them. Buen provecho!

## Mackerel

For mackerel, Flors and Leiva suggest a good sparkling wine like cava or [champagne](#). Oily with plenty of fat, mackerel is ideal for these wines and is known to offset them perfectly. It's why we love a good [sparkling with caviar](#) or even fried chicken. If the mackerel is smoked, try an unctuous red like gamay noir, pinot noir, or even a dry sherry.

## Squid and Octopus

[Albariño is the way to go here.](#) This wine is dazzlingly acidic, and it hails from a place that has long loved the pairing of salty sea treats with invigorating white wine. Another option is sparkling rosé, which takes on the big, briny characteristics of the squid wonderfully. The fruit cuts into the saltiness while lifting up the clean taste of the squid. A solid bottle to try is [this cava](#).

# Sardines

In keeping with the Spanish theme, [Txakoli is excellent](#) with sardines.

Chardonnay is another great choice, especially if you can get something with marked acidity; look to domestic regions like the Russian River and Willamette Valleys for this style. A bone-dry rosé can do the trick too, like the signature pink wines from Provence.

# Mussels

"Mussels in escabeche (pickled olive oil) are delicious with vermouth," Flors says. The Spanish have known this for about as long as life itself. Vermouth has become increasingly available here in the states, and the Spanish options are generally great and fairly inexpensive. If they're smoked, vermouth can work too, but wines like sauvignon blanc (from New Zealand especially) and vinho verde work exceptionally well.

# Razor Clams

A fuller, aromatic red is a good choice here, as the razor clams can more than stand up to it. A great option is a Cote du Rhone, such as [this](#). Tempranillo is another great bet and an obvious choice given its dominance in the Iberian Peninsula. Look for a lower alcohol version, and don't be afraid to give it a little chill before serving. The spicy and savory notes of the wine do great with the smokier notes of the clams.

# Tuna

"In particular, bonito tuna and tuna belly pair well with chardonnay or rosé," Flors says. We also suggest a good pinot blanc or chenin blanc, generally clean wines that bring out the meaty flavor of the tuna. A classic pinot grigio is a nice option here as well, especially if the tuna is sharing the table or picnic blanket with other items like cheese and olives.

As you prepare to dive fully into tinned fish and wine, be sure to have a few other things on hand to heighten the experience. Items like bread, potato chips, and crostini are great for dipping, and pickled vegetables offer a great edible kick on the side. Have some other spreads and sauces available (think rillettes and a few different kinds of olive oil) and whip up a simple salad as a

In addition to the great options from Siesta Co., check out some of the tinned fish from [Fishwife](#), [Tiny Fish Company](#), and [JOSE](#) as well. You won't be disappointed, especially if you follow the above wine pairing guidelines.