

FOOD
& WINE

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WHAT TO
DRINK WITH

Big Fish

Larger fish – tuna, swordfish, marlin and kingfish – tend to offer subtle flavours and, as Peter Bourne notes, a range of wine-matching options.

Fish' is a vast category, from tiny but intense anchovies and sardines to the sweet, delicate flavours of whiting or flathead. Salmon and ocean trout are dense and oily with pinot noir a cheerful companion. Then there's the big stuff from deep, cold waters, with an almost meaty texture yet surprisingly subtle flavours. Think tuna, swordfish, marlin and kingfish – all very lean, all perfect raw or sensitively cooked to ensure they don't turn to cardboard. Here are a few favourite pairings.

KINGFISH SASHIMI AT MOJO BY LUKE MANGAN + 2017 Fukuchiyo Shuzo

Nabeshima YN, Saga, Kyushu, Japan, A\$89
Matt Young of Black Market Sake is adding to my sake know-how. In his recent masterclass at Sydney's Mojo by Luke Mangan a highlight was Mangan's kingfish sashimi plus nam jim, perfect with 2017 Nabeshima YN with its hint of mid-palate sweetness and spicy dry finish.

TUNA TARTARE + NV André Clouet Rosé No 3, Bouzy, France, A\$90

I love raw tuna, so when I spied Steve Hodges' tuna tartare recipe in the *Australian Fish & Seafood Cookbook* by John Susman and others, I gave it a go. It was a triumph with the native pepper berry and chilli adding a spike to the tuna. I like complementary colours so a pink drink seemed right. My new favourite grower Champagne producer is André Clouet with this 100 per cent pinot noir rosé delivering sufficient punch to meet the bold flavours of the tartare.

SALADE NIÇOISE + 2016 Rogue Funky Ferment Verduzzo, Orange, A\$30

There's no better way to 'joosh up' a salade niçoise than with a slab of barely cooked tuna. The *Australian Fish & Seafood Cookbook* recipe recommends albacore tuna loin. I paired a rich textural white (a rosé would also do well). The northern Italian grape, verduzzo is relatively rare in this country, but its fresh pear aromas and spicy flavours a brilliant platform for the

wild yeast, old barrel fermentation that defines Gwyn Olsen's Rogue series. It's a worthy match with the density of the tuna and the lovely Mediterranean flavours of the salad.

TUNA PASTA + 2016 Mac Forbes Pinot Noir, Yarra Valley, A\$30

Every family has its comfort food. Ours is tuna pasta with canned Sirena tuna, canned tomatoes, garlic and fresh herbs. Chilli is adjusted to suit each palate. Our comfort wine is pinot noir (though not for our 12-year-old just yet). Mac Forbes latest release is a light-bodied, refreshing gem that exudes crushed strawberries and exotic spices. A light chill is appropriate.

SWORDFISH WITH CAPONATA + 2016 Bass Phillip Rosé, Gippsland, A\$23

I discovered swordfish in Sicily 20 years ago at a boisterous grand banquet in a run-down villa. My lasting memory was a thick swordfish steak and a gusty caponata. I replicate the dish at home, pairing wines from bold whites and light reds to a denser Sicilian nero d'avola. A sample bottle of Phillip Jones' Rosé was a real discovery. At first it was too cold, which shut down its abundant flavours, but as it warmed a little it shone – almost a light red with depth, complexity and persistence. A terrific combo.

BARBECUED STRIPED MARLIN STEAKS WITH TERIYAKI, EGGPLANT & MUSHROOMS + 2012 Giesen The Fuder Matthews Lane Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough, A\$50/NZ\$40

Marlin is dense, almost meaty, with little fat, but lots of flavour. Teriyaki marinade reinforces its potency; eggplant and mushrooms add thrust. On a recent trip to Marlborough I found the Giesen brothers busy with interesting projects. One is the use of 1,000-litre German oak fuder, spawning a wine that's the antithesis of a typical Marlborough sauvignon. It's complex and savoury with the weight and structure to match this recipe's robust flavour. **I**

SASHIMI AT HOME (AND AWAY)

Tasting southern bluefin tuna sashimi at Tsukiji Fish Market is an unforgettable experience – especially the fat-rich toro belly meat. But as it's an endangered species, I use yellowfin tuna for home-prepared sashimi. My knife skills aren't those of a Japanese itamae, but I do my best. Pickled ginger, premium Yamato soy sauce and Shima wasabi from Tasmania add flourish. I always serve a sake.

