

FOOD
& WINE

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WHAT TO
DRINK WITH

Beef

Peter Bourne's preferred protein source, high-quality cuts of beef demand top-notch drink matches, and here they are.

Beef is an amazing source of protein. The simplicity of a classic French steak-frites or the comfort of a wintry boeuf bourguignon take me to food heaven. One of beef's greatest assets is its versatility, which I hope to illustrate with these six dishes.

BEEF TATAKI + Oita Oni Koroshi Dohatsu Shoten, Gifu, Japan, A\$39

Raw beef comes in many guises – tartare, carpaccio and, my favourite, the smoky charred exterior, but still raw centre of beef tataki. Leigh Hudson, founder of the Chef's Armoury in Sydney, suggested this punchy junmai from the Oita Brewery in Hida, the same town that's famous for its succulent black Hida cattle. It was a delightful match with the texture of the meat in harmony with that of the sake.

GRILLED WAGYU + 2007 Château Mont Redon Châteauneuf du Pape, Rhône Valley, France, A\$96

My foodie mates, John Susman and Kim Terakes raved about a Kaiseki dinner at Ishibekoji Kamikura in Kyoto, so I went. As I watched a perfect brick of wagyu being charred, then rested for 20 minutes before hitting the white-hot grill for the final time, I hankered for a red wine. I picked a mature Châteauneuf du Pape off the wine list – it was a delightful combination. After a decade in bottle, the 2007 Château Mont Redon has smooth, mellow flavours.

THAI BEEF SALAD + 2017 L.A.S. Vino Albino PNO, Margaret River, A\$55

I use chef David Thompson's Thai beef salad recipe, named *nahm dtok* – a nod to the 'beads' of meat juice that form as the beef is seared. It's a summery dish so I trialled Nic Peterkin's latest Albino – a robust-flavoured 90/10 pinot noir chardonnay blend given the full-on wild ferment, oak maturation on yeast lees treatment. The salad and the wine were in perfect balance, the blast of chilli tamed by the fresh red fruit flavours of the rosé, served cool, not cold.


JOLLEYS BOATHOUSE WAGYU BRISKET + 2013 O'Leary Walker Cabernet Sauvignon Malbec, Clare Valley, A\$27

I host a number of the *GT WINE* reader dinners each year – the most recent at Jolleys Boathouse in Adelaide. The third bracket was 2017 Bondar Junto (a juicy young GSM), the energetic 2017 Chaffey Bros Pax Aeterna Grenache and a more old-school 2013 O'Leary Walker Cabernet Malbec. All delicious, but when the brisket was served it was a triumph with the O'Leary Walker. The brisket had been slow-cooked in an umami-laden masterstock and served with choy sum, tea-smoked oysters, black beans and chilli jam. The spice was deep and penetrating with the depth and intensity of the O'Leary Walker an equal match.

PAUL MERRONY'S POACHED BEEF + 2013 Tahbilk Eric Stevens Purbrick Cabernet Sauvignon, Nagambie Lakes, A\$65

In the early 1990s Paul Merrony's eponymous restaurant at Circular Quay was the place to be – his signature dish was perfectly poached beef. Kathy Snowball (former food editor of *Gourmet Traveller*) recently reprised Merrony's recipe, her husband serving a 2001 Château Léoville Barton – it was bliss. At home, I decanted the 2013 Eric Stevens Purbrick Cabernet Sauvignon in the early afternoon. By dinnertime it had opened up, its robust tannins softened, yet still sufficient to tackle the protein of the beef.

BISTECCA ALLA FIORENTINA + 2013 Le Chiuse Brunello di Montalcino, Tuscany, Italy, A\$160

After a late afternoon visit to Le Chiuse, hosted by winemaker Lorenzo Magnelli we drove to the hilltop village of Sant'Angelo to a rustic trattoria Il Leccio for dinner. The highlight was a magnificent bistecca alla Fiorentina served with a bracket of Brunellos, including (naturally) a Le Chiuse. I'm keen to revisit the combination at the new restaurant Bistecca in Sydney. There's a 2004 Le Chiuse on the list. 

MORE BEEF

I've opted to ignore offal, stews, braises and the ubiquitous beef mince (and its 1,000 uses) to focus on quality cuts of the beef that are simple to cook. For me, nothing beats a traditional steak. It's an impressive piece of meat best served bloody on a bed of rocket with a side of rosemary roast potatoes.

