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The Essential List

With a considerable increase in the wine consumption in India, local wineries are expanding their offerings and are catering to the super premium segments. Collaborations with European wine giants have produced a range of international varieties from the subcontinent's grapes, which, owing to its soil and climate, have a character of their own. Nikhil Agarwal, sommelier and director of All Things Nice – a consultancy for luxury wines, spirits and food – hand-picks the seven best Indian wines and the finest gourmet items to pair them with.





York Reserve Shiraz

A winner at the Sommelier India Wine Competition and the International Wine Challenge, this wine is a sure shot pleaser. Priced very competitively, this is a wonderful medium-bodied wine with notes of well-integrated oak, derived from its ageing in French and American barrels, over a period of 10 to 11 months. Dark fruits, dark chocolate and peppery spice on the palate make way for a good finish.

The York Winery is situated in Nasik, just a stone's throw away from Sula Vineyards and their tasting room and lawns are a perfect place to dreamily let the day go by. Pair it with anything from the tandoor, roast lamb, a good steak or your favourite dark chocolate.

Reveillo Reserve Chardonnay

Barrel-fermented and barrel-aged, this Chardonnay is a creamy, buttery wine with tropical fruits and a full body.

The winery produces great wines using grape varieties such as Chenin Blanc and Cabernet Sauvignon amongst others. They have even successfully experimented with Italian grape varieties like Nero D'Avola and Sangiovese. Try it with Risotto or grilled fish, or on its own.



Vallonné Reserve Merlot

The wine has intense fresh aromas of dark chocolate and cigar, mixed with woody hints of vanilla and toast. Barrel ageing has enhanced these flavours to make it a complex and elegant wine. The rich mouth-filling palate has supple woody tannins with concentrated red fruit flavours. Vallonné Vineyards is a boutique winery which brings French-style wines to the Nashik Valley. French for 'undulating landscape', Vallonné was set up in 2009 and stands on sprawling estates that rest on the gentle southern slopes of Kavrai village in the Sahyadri ranges. Try it with Mutton Rogan Josh or lamb stew.

Fratelli Chenin Blanc

This wine has citrus notes backed with a hint of tropical fruits. Dry, crisp and refreshing, this is a fantastic wine from a very young winery of Fratelli Wines that is intent on focussing on quality. It is situated in Akhij, about two hours from Pune. They have 240 acres of land under vine, which they own and supervise themselves. The winery is state-of-the-art, with a design that will blow your mind. What makes them special, however, is the hospitality you receive once you set there. Try it with chevre or Chinese stir fry.



York Late Harvest Chenin Blanc

With ripe tropical fruits perfectly balanced with citrus notes, this wine goes down like a dream. It works very well with deserts and is versatile enough to pair with spicy Thai or Chinese cuisine.

Good Earth Basso (Cabernet Sauvignon)

Aged in French oaks for 12 months under the hawk eye supervision of one of India's finest winemakers, makes this Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon worthy of making it to this list. It is medium-bodied with hints of blackcurrants and pepper. The oak lingers in the back while blending in perfectly with the fruit. Try it with roast chicken, or for something a little adventurous, sample it with Gorgonzola. Good Earth is a virtual winery as they produce their wines using the facilities of other wineries.

Sula Brut Rosé

A dry rose sparkler from India's most famous winery, Sula Vineyards, it is a blend of Chenin Blanc and Zinfandel grape varietals. The wine is an easy drinking rose with hints of red fruit backed with refreshing acidity.

Sula Vineyards is at the helm of the wine industry, posting more volumes than any other winery in India. Their vineyards in Nasik are breathtaking. They have it all — a fantastic tasting room with an unbelievable view, Indian and Italian restaurants and even a small boutique hotel. ■

