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## Ham and peas partner up in cheese sauce for pasta



Cheese tortellini with ham and peas and cheese sauce. (James F. Quinn / Chicago Tribune)



[Michael Austin](#) Chicago Tribune

A rich cheese sauce, studded with classic partners ham and peas, coats pasta in a way that's sure to please. A wine with a refreshing profile is what you'll want to wash it down.

### **Make this**

#### **Cheese tortellini with ham and peas**

Cook 3 packages (9 ounces each) cheese tortellini in plenty of well-salted boiling water. Meanwhile, melt 2 tablespoons butter in a saucepan over

medium heat. Add 2 chopped shallots; cook 1 minute. Stir in 1 1/2 tablespoons flour; cook, stirring, 1 minute. Add 2 cups warm milk; cook, stirring, until mixture is slightly reduced and thickened, 10 minutes. Add 10 ounces frozen peas, 3/4 pound cubed cooked ham, 3/4 cup grated Parmesan, 1/2 cup chopped parsley, and salt and red pepper flakes to taste. Drain pasta; stir into the sauce. **Makes:** 6 servings

*Recipe by Kristin Eddy*

### **Drink this**

Pairings by sommelier Ryan Arnold of Lettuce Entertain You restaurants, as told to Michael Austin:

**2014 Bisci Verdicchio di Matelica, Marche, Italy:** Verdicchio is one of the most underrated white grapes in Italy, and this wine is from a largely unexplored region. It is dry, crisp and medium-bodied with aromas of spring flowers, green apple and quince. For the rich, cheesy pasta, this Verdicchio delivers the freshness and balance needed.

**2014 Massican Annia, Napa Valley, California:** A blend of the three notable grapes in Italy's Friuli region: tocai friulano, chardonnay and ribolla gialla. Annia carries aromas of lemon peel, dried herbs and green almond, which will match the peas and chopped parsley in the dish. The chardonnay brings weight, which will match the texture of the dairy, and the tocai friulano brings acidity, which adds freshness.

**2012 Vietti Barbera d'Alba, Tre Vigne, Piedmont, Italy:** Barbera from Piedmont has an abundance of bright red fruits, cherry and strawberry, which are all balanced with refreshingly high acidity. This light-to-medium-bodied version is bright and lively, which will help balance the richness of the cheese sauce.