

May the wine be with you for May the Fourth



Pepper Dowdy

WINE TIME

In celebration of May the Fourth, "Star Wars" Day, let's play a "Star Wars"-themed wine game. If I were my favorite character in "Star Wars," what wine would I drink?

My favorite character is Han Solo (I know, he DID shoot first!). If I were Han, I would drink ... a beer. There's little chance Han would be sipping wine, and an even slimmer chance for Chewy to even hold a wine glass without smashing it.

Hmm, let's try again with an easier, iconic character, Darth Vader. The thought of Vader trying to drink anything is quite funny, as already parodied in the Mel Brooks masterpiece, "Spaceballs," as "Dark Helmet" slurps coffee through his face-mask. To think of Vader holding a wine glass by the stem, swirling ... ok, that's a bit too much. How DID Vader eat or drink?

So an easier thought experiment may be, if your character was a wine, what wine would they be? Do you have a favorite wine? Do you have a favorite "Star Wars" character? Let's see if they're a match.

Luke Skywalker: Riesling

Light, white, sweet ... or is it? Luke was always confused, and Riesling can be very confusing, and misunderstood. It ranges from sweet to dry, from "dumb" to impressive. You might identify Luke as the "grocery store Riesling" of "Star Wars" in Episode IV, but by "Return of the Jedi," it's apparent he's more



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The 2009 **Vietti** Barolo Castiglione is the Darth Vader of wines.

like a powerful Alsatian like Domaine Ostertag's Grand Cru Muenchberg Dry Riesling. A pleasant whiff of petrol (do X-Wings run on jet fuel?), salted-caramel apple and baking spices on the palate (can we say All-Alliance instead of All-American?).

R2D2: Champagne

Yes, R2D2 is the Champagne of "Star Wars," the unsung hero. He's a literal Swiss-army knife of versatility, at home in all situations, and likely a big reason for celebration. Champagne is highly complex, worthy of analysis and discussion, but can be taken for granted because it's too easy to pair with everything and know that it works, without understanding much about it. I'd compare R2 to our Champagne Jacquart "Brut Mosaïque." It has the old-world pedigree without the flashy name; it's a fantastic value for quality you won't easily match for at even twice the price.

Darth Vader: Barolo

Like Barolo, Darth Vader is super-annoying in his youth, impetuous and immature. It's inky black exterior, violence and raw power will eventually give way to a dark ruby brilliance. In maturity it has a refined, restrained, but still powerful expression, away from the dark side of the force. Our 2009 Vietti Barolo Castiglione comes to mind.

As I have said before and will say again, wine should be fun, so have fun with it. Stop by the Wine Shop at SoGourmet, upstairs from the Bodacious Shops, to find your Galactic wine match. Cheers, and May the Fourth be with you!

The Wine Shop at SoGourmet, 407 S. Palafox St. 438-7857, or visit www.sogourmetpensacola.com.

