

Poached fish with butter meets wine match

By Michael Austin
Chicago Tribune

Poaching is the perfect method for cooking tender fish fillets. Here the liquid is stocked with vermouth, for a delicate flavor. Butter, toasted nuts and lemon finish the dish — all accents to look for in a wine pairing, such as the three suggestions here.

MAKE THIS

VERMOUTH-POACHED FISH FILLETS

Heat a large, dry skillet over medium heat; add 1/2 cup sliced almonds. Toast, stirring, until golden brown, about 2 minutes. Transfer almonds to a bowl. Heat 1 cup water, 1 cup dry white vermouth and 2 teaspoons salt in the skillet to a simmer. Add 2 boneless whitefish fillets; simmer until fish just turns opaque and flakes easily, about 5 minutes. Remove fillets; season with salt and pepper. Top with 2 tablespoons melted butter, the almonds and 1/4 cup finely chopped parsley. Serve with lemon wedges on the side for squeezing. Makes: 2 servings — *Recipe by Renee Enna*

DRINK THIS

Pairings by sommelier Belinda Chang of Maple & Ash in Chicago, as told to Michael Austin:

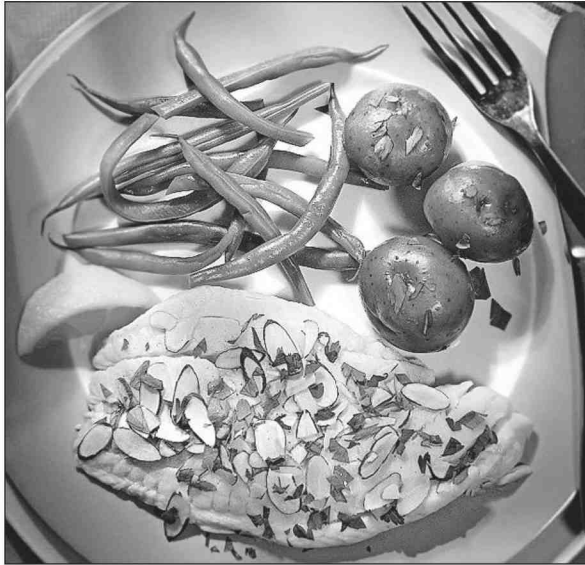
2014 Vietti Roero Arneis, Piedmont, Italy: Butter, almonds and lemon, the components of the sauce in this dish, are also some of the notes you'll find in a top-flight Roero arneis. Though best known for world class age-worthy reds, Piedmont is also planted with arneis, a white grape that produces lovely, plush, full-bodied wines. This arneis is redolent of roasted nuts and citrus. Its buttery texture will also harmonize well.

2013 Palmina Dolcetto, Santa

Barbara County: A fish dish can be challenging to pair with a red, but this dolcetto delivers. Meaning "little sweet one" in Italian, dolcetto is a super utility player. It is medium-bodied, juicy and peppery with a bit of baking spice on the nose and a lovely fig note on the palate. It will marry nicely with the toasted almond and butter in the dish. Like a fig tart!

Szigeti Sekt, Burgenland, Austria:

The brightness of a chilled, well balanced bubbly like this sparkling rose will echo the zip of the lemon in the dish. A blend, this bottling includes the lesser-known zweigelt grape variety, which is pinot noir-esque. Also, the wine's nuttiness, achieved by aging it on the lees (the spent yeast cells that give a traditional-method wine its typical brioche and roasted nut character), will vibe well with the almonds.



Whitefish fillets are gently simmered in a vermouth-spiked poaching liquid, then finished with butter, toasted almonds and a spritz of lemon.

BOB FILA/
CHICAGO
TRIBUNE

