

Pour & Pasta

The Wine Pal's Complete Pairing Guide

Match the wine to the sauce, not the pasta shape. That one rule unlocks every pairing below.

When in doubt: Barbera d'Asti — goes with 80% of pasta dishes and costs under \$20.

Sauces	Flavour	Recommended Wine
TOMATO AND RED SAUCES		
Marinara & simple tomato	Bright, acidic, herby	Chianti Classico , Barbera d'Asti, Montepulciano d'Abruzzo
Arrabbiata & spicy tomato	Fiery, peppery, bold	Montepulciano d'Abruzzo , Nero d'Avola — avoid high alcohol, it amplifies heat
Amatriciana	Guanciale-rich, tangy	Chianti Classico Riserva , Cesanese del Piglio, Morellino di Scansano
Puttanesca	Salty, olive-brined	Nero d'Avola, Primitivo , or Vermentino if you prefer white
MEAT & RAGÙ		
Bolognese	Deep, fatty, slow-cooked	Chianti Classico Riserva , Barolo, Barbaresco, Brunello di Montalcino
Carbonara	Eggy, porky, salty	Frascati Superiore , Soave Classico, or a light chilled Pinot Noir
Nduja & spicy sausage	Fiery, smoky, porky	Nero d'Avola , Aglianico — or off-dry Riesling to tame the heat
CREAM & BUTTER SAUCES		
Alfredo & butter sage	Rich, buttery, fatty	White Burgundy (Meursault, Saint-Aubin) , Soave Classico, aged Champagne
Cacio e pepe	Salty, peppery, starchy	Frascati , Verdicchio, Greco di Tufo — keep it Roman, keep it dry
Creamy mushroom	Earthy, umami, rich	Red Burgundy (Pinot Noir) , aged white Burgundy, Barbera d'Alba

Sauces	Flavour	Recommended Wine
PESTO & VEGETABLE SAUCES		
Basil pesto	Herbal, nutty, oily	Vermentino , Gavi di Gavi, Grüner Veltliner – white only, always
Pesto rosso	Tangy, sun-dried, nutty	Fiano di Avellino , dry Provençal rosé, Vermentino di Sardegna
Truffle pasta	Earthy, funky, luxurious	Barolo , Langhe Nebbiolo, aged red Burgundy – worth every penny
Aglione e olio	Garlicky, clean, oily	Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi , Pinot Grigio Friuli, dry Prosecco
SEAFOOD PASTA		
Vongole (clams)	Briny, oceanic, delicate	Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi , Muscadet sur Lie, Chablis
Frutti di mare	Mixed seafood, light	Vermentino , Greco di Tufo, Pinot Grigio Friuli – never red wine
Scampi & prawns	Sweet, buttery, oceanic	White Burgundy , Soave Classico, Grüner Veltliner
BAKED PASTA		
Lasagne al forno	Meaty, cheesy, oven-rich	Chianti Classico , Barbera d'Alba, Côtes du Rhône rouge
Baked pasta & béchamel	Creamy, cheesy, rich	Barbera d'Asti , Dolcetto d'Alba – juicy, lower-tannin reds

Find the full sauce-by-sauce guide with tasting notes at thewinepal.com