

Many kinds of wines go with holiday dinner

The old adage, "red wine with red meat, white wine with fish and fowl," is one of those generalizations best forgotten. "No generalization is worth a damn including this one" is a better operating motto, especially when it comes to the sometimes delicate consideration of marrying foods to wine.

Because it's December, the bird is the primary consideration here. What to serve with that big, brown, roasted fowl when the family gathers?

The answer, and this is the easy part, is that, unlike almost any other entrée, nearly any wine seems to go well with it. There is still sufficient gaminess in our domestic turkey that it calls out for a quite substantial companion. Champagne, of course (for that goes with anything), the heartier blush wines usually with

varietal designations, chardonnay, sauvignon blanc, cabernet, pinot noir... the list goes on.

If the issue were merely to complement the taste of the turkey, my personal choice would be the lightly oaked fruit of a chardonnay or the bright cheeriness of a pinot noir. Or one of the nouveau from France, California or Michigan (both Napa Valley's Turkey Red and Seven Lakes' Nouveau are excellent this year).

So, for the record, any hearty red or white (or blush) will go nicely with the somewhat subtle charms of turkey meat. Avoid only those wines that are too delicate to stand up to them: generic whites and chenin blanc most notably.

The real challenge in selecting wine for the turkey fest lies in complementing the myriad foods that

wine

Richard Watson

accompany the turkey to the typical table. The traditional American holiday feast has us serving oysters in a rich cream sauce, tart cranberries, candied yams, perhaps some rather sour Brussels sprouts, a spicy stuffing and much, much more. A real panoply of taste sensations, some complementary and some sharply contrasting. There is, also, no universal wine that will accompany well each diverse course.

Given the dilemma, what are the

alternatives? There must be wine — at least for all who have gotten this far into this column.

There are, I believe, at least three choices. The first is to say drink what you like regardless — not a wholly bad solution, recognizing there will be some awkward taste processes during parts of the meal. This is the vigorous "I" solution.

There is the universal compromise solution to serve either a champagne or a blush wine with everything. This

pleases all circumstances only somewhat (the delicacies of the champagne being lost in the yams and stuffing) but should totally offend few.

The third solution assumes a reasonable full table of diners, or a few hearty ones, but that isn't a real handicap. Place at each setting two, or preferably three, wine glasses and then put three wines on the table. The guests can then sample as they choose and, once acquainted with them, can move their further choices around to match each course.

THE PREFERRED choices would involve color differences (for those so attuned), distinctions in sweetness and/or spiciness and body/boldness. Three choices in this solution might include a chardonnay or a sauvignon

blanc, a pinot noir blush and a fairly hearty zinfandel or fresh nouveau. Each of these comes close to blending in nicely with most of the courses on the table. Of course, if one uses champagne as an aperitif, it may be possible to stay with that for the whole meal, for those so inclined.

Probably more wine per guest would be consumed using this choice — not always a happy circumstance. There are those who tend to forget the 12 percent alcohol designation on each bottle and get a bit carried away on such a festive occasion. However, the usual overindulging attendant to holiday meals should obviate some of the effects of too much wine.

But no wine with pumpkin pie. Cheese and port maybe?

Harry, the furball, is no match for Spielberg's E.T.

Here's a plot that's seen more lives than Morris the Cat: Small-town family discovers strange otherworldly creature, cares for it and helps it return home.

That's "Harry and the Hendersons," a bargain basement "E.T." it copies the popular original without any of the excitement.

The movie revolves around the Henderson family, ditty mom, befuddled dad, sarcastic teenage daughter and nerdy younger son.

Dad, George Henderson (John Lithgow), works in his father's gun shop and hunts for pleasure. Judging from the number of animals mounted on his walls, George tries for membership in the same Great White Hunter League as Ernest Hemingway and Teddy Roosevelt.

Coming home from a hunting vacation with the family, George bags his biggest beast, Big Foot. Of course, he ties it to the top of the station wagon and hauls it home.

Next thing you know, the Hendersons awake in the night to find the huge, smelly creature rummaging through the kitchen. This isn't just a case of the midnight munchies. Harry topples the refrigerator, punches



second runs

Louise Okrutsky

holes in the walls and inflicts major structural damage to the house.

After that, he devotes the remainder of the night to burying George's hunting trophies and Grandma's ratty old mink stole.

AS THE SHALLOW graves increase, George the hunter/gun salesman repents his grizzly ways. Enter George the misunderstood, who secretly yearns to be an artist.

No matter how hard they try, Lithgow and Kevin Peter Hall as Big Foot don't generate the kind of chemistry that convinces viewers these two communicate on some primal telepathic level.

Even when nerdy son Ernie (Joshua Bloom) cuddles up with his teddy bear and Big Foot, the relationship doesn't click.

Birmingham native, Dear directed national and local television commercials before turning to feature films.

Its length — one hour and 51 minutes works against it. That's too long to wait for the inevitable fond farewells to the furball.

ON THE OTHER hand, there's "Paris, Texas," which earned a Golden Palm at the Cannes Film Festival in 1984. Directed by Wim Wenders and written by Sam Shephard, the film doesn't offer easy viewing or a pat ending. Ry Cooder provided the simple background music, which evokes the same lonesome feeling as hearing a train whistle in the night.

The movie, released in 1985 and

on videotape courtesy of CBS/Fox doesn't offer 145 minutes of easy amusement. At-home viewing might hurt this movie because it demands the type of attention viewers gener-

ally award movies only in theaters. If you want a movie to watch instead of one that you need pay only minimal attention to, Second Runs recommends giving this one a try.

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