

# Sangria

You can't find a better combination than fresh fruit and regional wines

story by **Cara Recine**

For lovers of wine, sangria is a perfect choice. For people who aren't big fans of wine, sangria might still be the perfect choice, especially when the temperatures rise and you're wearing Southern Illinois humidity like a second set of clothes.

Sangria, a traditional Spanish drink, is easy to make and even easier to drink. It's a good seasonal choice, because it goes with just about anything you might serve this summer. And, you can claim that it's good for you because it's full of fresh fruit. You could work harder to find Vitamin C in its freshest form, but why should you?

Sangria is like an old-fashioned punch that consists of wine, chopped fruit and a sweetener of some sort, usually lemon-lime soda. There are literally hundreds of recipes for sangria, mainly because the mixture allows so much variation in choice of wines, fruit and other ingredients. You can even up the alcohol content with a little brandy, if you want something with a little more kick.

Good fruit choices for your sangria include apples, cherries, oranges, kiwi, lemons, limes, pineapples, peaches, melons and berries. Be sure to think locally grown fruit; it will go a long way in enhancing your concoction.

## Regional wines

Traditionally, sangria – which literally means 'blood' in Spanish – is made with dark, full-bodied reds, hence its name. But, as with many traditions, that is changing. A sangria made with white wine – sangria blanca – is a popular choice. Because wine is the most dominant ingredient, you'll want to experiment to discover your preference. This gives you the perfect opportunity to explore regional wine varieties.

If you're looking for a good, regionally produced red, try Norton, Chambourcin and Cabernet Franc; for whites, you can't do any better than Traminette, Vignoles, Seyval and Chardonnay.

## Putting it all together

All you have to do is cut the fruit into thin slices or small chunks and mix it with your wine. Many people choose to leave on the peel of citrus fruit; just be sure to wash it thoroughly before slicing.

Martha Stewart offers this tip: Chill the bottle of wine thoroughly before mixing with fruit; it will help keep the ice you add later from melting too quickly and diluting the full taste of the sangria. Don't add the soda or seltzer until after the wine and fruit have had plenty of time together, at least several hours in the fridge or, better yet, overnight. Just before serving, add the other ingredients.

Serve in a large pitcher or punch bowl with a wooden spoon to dig out the fruit, which will taste even better after absorbing some of the wine.

## The recipes

The recipes offered here come from a few of our local wineries. You'll find others, in which we suggest local wines that would be terrific. If you think you might like your sangria a little sweeter, ask your favorite vintner for suggestions on wines with more sugar.

– Sources: wine.about.com and Wikipedia



## Low-Sugar Sangria

- 1 bottle of red wine
- 1 lemon cut into wedges
- 1 lime cut into wedges
- 1 orange cut into wedges
- ¾ cup raspberries (fresh or frozen)
- 2/3 cups Agave nectar
- 2 cups sparkling water or club soda

Pour wine in the pitcher and squeeze wedges from the lemon, orange and lime into the wine. Toss in the fruit wedges (leaving out seeds if possible) then add agave nectar. Chill overnight. Add sparkling water or club soda, raspberries and ice just before serving. If you'd like to serve right away, use chilled red wine and serve over lots of ice.

**Regional varieties to try:** Chambourcin, Norton

**Others:** Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Zinfandel, Shiraz

## Orlandini Vineyard's Nona's Sangria Rosso

- 2 bottles Orlandini Vineyard Reserve Chambourcin (or Rosso Gustoso for more sweetness)
  - 6 ounces frozen juice concentrates: Pineapple, orange, lemonade, limeade
  - 16 ounces chilled club soda
  - Fresh fruit slices for garnish
- Mix wine and juice concentrates; add chilled club soda and fresh fruit just before serving.

## Owl Creek Sangria

- 1 bottle Owl Creek Bald Knob (red) or Water Valley (white)
- 1 cup sweet pineapple juice
- 1 bottle (750 ml) lemon-lime soda
- ½ to 1½ cups sugar \*
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges
- 1 lime, cut into wedges
- 1 orange, cut into wedges

Combine in large pitcher: One bottle of wine with equal quantity of lemon-lime soda and one cup of sweet pineapple juice. Gently stir in sugar and sample until you reach desired sweetness. After sugar is dissolved, add lemon, lime and orange wedges, squeezing each wedge. Makes about two quarts.

**\*Note:** Red Sangria will require more sugar than White Sangria, and the sweetness of the wine will also impact how much sugar to add.



▶ Visit [www.LifeandStyleSI.com](http://www.LifeandStyleSI.com) to find more recipes for sangria using locally grown fruit.

## Pomona Winery Sangria

- Fresh or frozen fruit
- Pomona Strawberry dessert wine (or any Pomona dessert wine)
- Sprite or 7UP

Mix equal parts wine and soda, stir and add fruit.

## Von Jakob Jonathan Apple Wine Spritzer

- 1 bottle of Von Jakob's Jonathan Apple\*
  - 1 cup orange juice
  - 1 cup pineapple juice
  - 8 ounces lemon-lime soda
  - Orange and apple wedges for garnish
- Mix liquid ingredients. Pour over ice in large pitcher, add fruit, stir and serve.

**\*Note:** Jonathan Apple wine can be substituted for Von Jakob's Honey Raspberry or Ridge Red.

## Alto Vineyard's Nona Mia Sangria

- 1 bottle of Alto's Nona Mia Sangria
- 1 can of 7-Up or Sprite
- Fresh fruit wedges, including oranges, apples, pears, pineapples and lime

Mix liquid ingredients. Pour over ice in large pitcher, add fruit, stir and serve.

## Blue Sky Sangria

- 1 bottle Blue Sky Seyval (white) or Papa's Rosa (red)
- 1½ cup Squirt
- 1¼ cup lemonade
- ¼ cup orange juice
- ½ cup pineapple juice
- ½ cup sugar
- 1/8 cup lime juice

Mix liquid ingredients. Add sugar, and stir until sugar is dissolved. Pour mix over ice in large pitcher; add fruit, stir and serve.

