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WINE ENTHUSIAST



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SEPTEMBER 2014

THE HOME ENTERTAINING ISSUE

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CRAZY for Chianti

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all grown up



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PAUL JOHNSON

Visit www.crazyforchianti.org and enter the Gourmet Grilled Cheese virtual recipe contest for a chance to **WIN \$2,500** and other great prizes.

GO CRAZY FOR CHIANTI!

Chianti is an area within the region of Tuscany, famous for making delicious wines from the Sangiovese grape with small additions of a few other varieties. There are several different types of Chianti, and the major ones are Chianti, Chianti Superiore, Chianti Classico, and Chianti Classico Riserva. There are differences in geography, aging requirements, alcohol content and complexity, but they are all known for great flavor and amazing versatility. It sounds complicated, but it's really not, so let's figure out which one is best suited to your style.

Chianti wines have delicious ripe cherry and dark fruit flavors and great acidity—and they're terrific with a whole lot more than just pasta. Try Chianti with burgers, grilled steak, pizza, or everybody's favorite comfort food classic, grilled cheese. The fact that there are a few different styles

of Chianti means that there's a wine that's right no matter what's on the menu. Break out your corkscrew and wineglass, and get ready to go Crazy for Chianti.

TRY CHIANTI WITH EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE COMFORT FOOD, CLASSIC GRILLED CHEESE

CHIANTI DOCG: Wine labeled Chianti comes from a large area within Tuscany. These wines will be young and fruity, with bright flavors of cherry and a touch of violet. Some of our favorites are Bolla Chianti, one of the best-selling brands in America. We also like Placido Chianti, named for

Count Placido, a 13th century hero, and Bell'Agio Chianti, bottled in the traditional straw-wrapped flask.

CHIANTI SUPERIORE: These wines have a bit more alcohol and are aged longer than other Chianti wines, for a minimum of 9 months, giving them a more complex, oak-influenced flavor. Banfi Chianti Superiore has soft toast and spice flavors that do not overpower the fruit.

CHIANTI CLASSICO: These wines come from the historic heart of Chianti called the Classico region, and some of the best Chiantis come from here. They are aged a little bit longer than Chianti Superiore wines. Banfi Chianti Classico has all the great cherry flavor you expect, with rich body and increased complexity.

CHIANTI CLASSICO RISERVA: Wines come from Chianti Classico, but they are aged longer—at least 24 months—giving them a deeper color and earthy flavors on top of the cherry notes. Banfi Chianti Classico Riserva also has a touch of spice and dried herb flavors, making it one of our favorites when we're including truffles or other rich ingredients.



Formaggio Fantastico

Grilled Mozzarella Sandwich with Three Kinds of Mushrooms

Our gooey mushroom-filled take on the gourmet grilled cheese sandwich is just right alongside the rich cherry flavors of Bolla Chianti. For a more complex pairing, add a little bit of truffle oil to the mushroom mix and enjoy with the earthy flavors of Banfi Chianti Classico Riserva. *Makes 2 sandwiches*

1 Portobello mushroom cap, sliced
6 Cremini mushrooms, sliced
6 Shiitake mushrooms, sliced
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
8 slices Mozzarella cheese, thick cut
4 slices firm white bread, thickly sliced
4 tablespoons salted butter, softened
½ teaspoon truffle oil, if desired

For the mushrooms:

Heat a heavy bottomed fry pan over medium heat and add oil. Add sliced mushrooms and sauté until soft, then season with salt and pepper.

For the sandwich:

Butter both sides of each slice of bread. Place two slices of cheese on each of two bread slices and top with sautéed mushrooms. Add truffle oil if desired. Cover with two more slices of cheese and top with another slice of buttered bread.

Heat a Panini press to medium heat and place the sandwich in the center. Close the lid and cook until golden brown. You may also use a hot frying pan and cook on one side until golden brown, then flip and cook until the other side golden brown while pressing lightly with spatula, approximately 2-3 minutes per side.

Slice each sandwich in half and serve while hot. Mangia! Mangia!

– Mike DeSimone and Jeff Jensen
Lifestyle & Entertaining Editors

Watch: Lifestyle & Entertaining Editors Mike DeSimone and Jeff Jensen make this delicious sandwich at winemag.com/formaggio

