



THE PAIRING
 Sip Stone Edge Farm "Surround" Cabernet Sauvignon 2011 (Sonoma Valley, \$50), with flavors of ripe red fruit, a touch of tobacco, and balanced oak in the background, or Simi 2012 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$24; see page 107 for tasting notes).



GREEN SALAD with ALMONDS, CHARRED ONION, and POMEGRANATES

SERVES 6 / 1 HOUR

With its light texture and "green" flavor, lettuce alone can be a challenge with wine, especially a red. McReynolds pulls it off by adding rich textures, savory flavors, and a *verjus* dressing (juice from unripe wine grapes), which has a softer acidity than vinegar.

1/2 cup whole raw almonds
5 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
About 1 1/2 tsp. *fleur de sel** or kosher salt, divided
1/4 tsp. *piment d'Espelette** or hot paprika
2 tbsp. *verjus** or balsamic vinegar
1 tsp. Dijon mustard
About 3/4 tsp. pepper, divided
1/2 large red onion, cut into 1/4-in.-thick rounds
1 large delicata squash (1 lb.), peeled
2 to 3 oz. Vella Mezzo Secco* cheese, or manchego or parmesan cheese
1 lb. Little Gem* or romaine lettuces, stems removed, torn into 2-in. pieces
1/2 cup pomegranate seeds

1. Preheat oven to 350°. In a pie pan, toss almonds with 1/2 tsp. *each* water and oil,

1/4 tsp. salt, and the *piment d'Espelette*. Bake until nuts are golden, 10 minutes. Let cool, then roughly chop. Set aside.

2. In a small bowl, whisk together *verjus*, mustard, 1/2 tsp. salt, and 1/4 tsp. pepper. Gradually whisk in 1/4 cup oil. Set aside.

3. Heat a large cast-iron griddle or skillet over medium-high heat. Brush onion all over with 1 tsp. oil and sprinkle with 1/4 tsp. *each* salt and pepper. Cook slices flat on griddle until slightly blackened, turning once, 5 to 8 minutes total. Transfer to a bowl, separating into rings. Cover and let sit about 5 minutes to soften.

4. Meanwhile, cut squash crosswise into 1/2-in. rings and scrape inside clean with a knife. Wipe griddle clean and reduce heat to medium. Toss squash with re-

maining 1 1/2 tsp. oil, 1/2 tsp. salt, and 1/4 tsp. pepper. Cook squash until browned, turning once, 7 to 8 minutes total. Turn off heat, cover pan, and let squash sit until tender, 20 minutes. Let cool. Shave cheese with a vegetable peeler.

5. In a large bowl, toss lettuces with half of dressing and salt and pepper to taste. Arrange squash and onion at edges of dinner plates. Drizzle with some dressing. Mound lettuce on plates, sprinkle with nuts and pomegranates, and tuck in cheese. Drizzle with more dressing.

*Find *fleur de sel* sea salt at gourmet grocery stores. Find ground *piment d'Espelette*, a fruity, mild chile, at surlatable.com; *verjus* at sweetwatercellars.com; Mezzo Secco at vellacheese.com; and Little Gem at farmers' markets and well-stocked grocery stores.

MAKE AHEAD The almonds and dressing, up to 1 day (chill dressing and bring to room temperature to serve). The onion and squash, up to 3 hours at room temperature.

PER SERVING 299 Cal., 74% (221 Cal.) from fat; 6.7 g protein; 25 g fat (2.6 g sat.); 15 g carbo (4.7 g fiber); 554 mg sodium; 11 mg chol. V