



# NEW YORK

## Dovetail's John Fraser Will Pair Your Food With Sherry

By Alexandra Vallis

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Since John Fraser opened Dovetail late last year he's emphasized sherry, a drink he thinks is miscast as an occasional digestive. Fraser offers fourteen sherries by the glass and will personally design meals featuring dry and sweet sherry pairings in the restaurant's private cellar. The chef was first introduced to the fortified wine five years ago, when he spent time in its birthplace region of Jerez in Spain. After returning to the States, he found sherry relegated only to Spanish restaurants and has since become one of its biggest advocates, finding new purveyors and convincing oenophile skeptics "that there are things other than wine that are very good."

### ***How do you get diners onboard with sherry pairings?***

Sherry goes very well with food; it's just a matter of changing the mind-set of the customer that there's more to life than Burgundy and California Cabernet. I'm a big fan of wine with a sense of place — you could call it soul. When we first opened, we had trouble getting people to buy it, but now they're coming to try something new and it's not just about food.

### ***What's typical sherry service like?***

At a recent Sherry Council of America dinner we started with a cocktail, our Albariza, made with gin and sherry,

orange juice, and orange bitters. For scallops with artichoke and my salsa verde (tomato water, cucumber, and herbs), we pair a Manzanilla, La Gitana, which has a smoky nose, is bright on the palate, white pepper, a little bit of raisin, grassy. Two kinds of Oloroso: the first with a non-Jerez cheese course, and Oloroso Asuncion, slightly sweeter, with "S'mores," a coffee shortbread with caramel-chocolate ganache. Then Pedro Ximénez and after-dinner cigars. I'm kidding, but it's that fat-old-man-in-a-leather-couch image.

### ***What are the different styles of sherry?***

Fino, bone dry. Manzanilla, also dry. Oloroso, usually served with cheese or dessert. Pedro Ximénez is the sweetest.

### ***What's your favorite?***

Most of my obsession right now is pairing dry sherry with food, so right now a Manzanilla called "La Guita."

### ***What's a good producer and what should people look for in a wine store?***

One we carry is Bodegas Emilio Hidalgo. But for general styles, what's most exciting is Fino or Manzanilla. You can get it for fifteen bucks a bottle.