



CIDER AND FOOD BASICS

Cider in general pairs well with food because of its acidity, tannins, and carbonation.

The basic principles of food and cider pairing are as follows:

1 MATCH INTENSITIES – This plays an important role in food and cider pairing. Intense food can easily overpower a delicate cider, and an intense cider can overpower lighter foods.

- a. Examples of this would be
 - i. Example of cider overpowering:
Ice Cider and a lightly grilled piece of fish
 - ii. Example of food overpowering:
Blue Cheese and a light-bodied dry cider
 - iii. Example of matching intensities:
Ice Cider and Blue Cheese
 - iv. Example of matching intensities:
Lightly grilled piece of fish and a light-bodied dry cider

2 COMPLEMENT – Similar flavors in the cider and food can create a harmonious pairing.

Example: A semi-dry blackberry cider with a blackberry jam, bacon, and brie sandwich.

3 CONTRAST – Generally thought of as ‘opposites attract’, two contrasting tastes, such as salt and sugar, can highlight each other in their opposition.

Example: A hopped cider (slightly bitter) and fresh goat cheese (lightly acid)

4 CUT – Carbonation, tannin, and/or acidity in cider will strip away the heavy or fatty richness in food and refresh the palate.

Example: Highly tannic cider and camembert cheese.

5 COMPLETE – A well composed dish has many basic tastes (salt, acid, sugar, bitterness and umami) working together. If a dish is lacking one, a cider can help fill that void.

Example: A skirt steak with a chimichurri sauce on top. This dish has salt from the seasoning on the meat, umami from the meat itself, and sour from the chimichurri sauce. Pair this with a cider that has sweetness and bitterness and you will have ‘completed’ the dish.

6 TERROIR MATCHING – There’s an old saying that “if it grows together it goes together”. Pairing distinct local food with local or regional ciders, while this does not always work, it is a really great place to start. You will want to consider the other pairing concepts when making sure particular pairings work.

Example: Spanish-style tapas a a natural pairing with an acid-forward, dry cider that echos the tastes of the ciders in Northern Spain. The tapas often have fatty, rich elements (chorizo, croquetas) while the cider is acid-forward and dry.

As a very general rule, most cider pairs well with the following:

- **PORK** – Pork tends to have a bit of sweetness. Cider's acidity can **contrast** this element, while its sweetness **complements**.
- **CHEESE** – the acidity and/or tannins in cider **cuts** through the milk fat in cheese and refreshes the palate.
- **CHARCUTERIE** – the acidity and tannin in the cider **cut** through the rich fattiness and any sweetness or fruitiness will **contrast** with the saltiness found in cured meats.
- **SPICY FOODS** – The residual sugar in the cider will **contrast** the spice in the food leaving the dish in balance. Alcohol will intensify spice, since cider is generally lower in ABV than wine, for example, it keeps the pairing in balance.

Below are some suggested cider and food pairings, broad food categories rather than complete dishes. They can be used as a reference when choosing the cider to pair with your dish or, better yet, choosing the dish to pair with your cider.

The pairings below assume the cider and food match intensities.



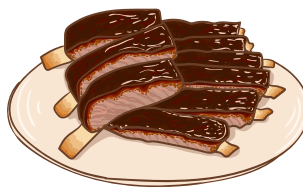
Acid-forward Cider

- Great with – Cheese
- Why? – The acidity in the cider will **cut** through the rich milk fat.



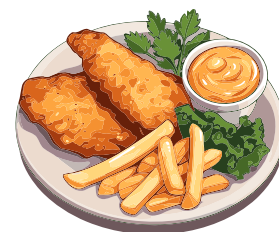
Semi-sweet Cider

- Great with – Spicy food
- Why? – The sweetness **contrasts** with the spice and the balance allows other subtler flavors to come through.



Semi-dry tannic Cider

- Great with – BBQ
- Why? – The mild sweetness in the cider **complements** the molasses or brown sugar base of many BBQ sauce while the tannin in the cider **cuts** through the richness of the BBQ.



Dry Light-bodied Cider

- Great with – Fried food
- Why? – The carbonation will **cut** through the fat/grease of the fried food and leave your palate refreshed.

