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## Apples With Indian Food



A 2006 cider from Etienne Dupont. (Image courtesy of calvados-dupont.com)

I love [southern Indian food](#), especially the vegetarian cuisines, but it's a tough sell in my house as my two sons like to go the tandoori chicken route. But my brother-in-law Greg was up for a visit, and since he doesn't eat meat my persuasive power suddenly got a little more persuasive and powerful.

With Greg as the excuse I was able to remind them of the joys of the dosa, wonderfully huge crepes made of fermented rice and lentil batter and stuffed with potatoes, onions and spices. We ordered several of the basic masala dosas, along with mysore masala dosa, which adds a spicy chutney to the masala dosa, and some onion dosas.

Alongside came a variety of chutneys, mint, coconut and tamarind, as well as rice flavored with lemon, curry leaves and mustard seeds; yellow daal, a creamy spinach dish and a tangy, vibrant kachori [chaat](#) made with potatoes, chickpeas and thin rice noodles on a bed of fried dough. I'm getting so hungry just thinking about it!

Of course, wine and Indian food is not an instinctive match. Back when I was reviewing restaurants I would find every once in a while an Indian restaurant that took wine seriously. Sometimes, they would offer a good selection of German rieslings, and I would be very happy. The slight sweetness of a kabinett or spätlese riesling along with its refreshing acidity was always a great contrast to the spicy food. I can't think of any places like that now.

For this meal, which we had in the home, I had a few options. Riesling, of course. Champagne is another good choice, really for the same reason that beer works so well with Indian food — the bubbles cleanse and enliven the mouth. But I had something else in mind, a bottle of cider.

It was one of my favorite ciders, a 2007 Brut de Normandie Cidre Bouché from [Etienne Dupont](#), a great producer from Calvados country who sells his unfiltered, unpasteurized ciders in cork-topped 750-milliliter bottles, which are generally under \$10.

The cider had just a touch of welcome funk to it, a bit of a wet wool aroma that I felt contributed complexity, and while the cider tasted dry because it was so well balanced, it also had a bit of apple-like sweetness to it — a kabinett cider! I thought with its combination of kabinett sweetness and Champagne bubbles, it went perfectly with the Indian food. And only 5.5 percent alcohol.

This experiment may require endless repeating.

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