



K R A M E R
V I N E Y A R D S

— 40 YEARS —

Apéro à la Willamette

A French-style evening ritual with an Oregon soul—simple, festive, and easy to host.

Apéro is the pre-dinner pause: a clink of bubbles, a few savory bites, and relaxed conversation. Plan for 45–90 minutes, standing and mingling—no place settings, no plates. Choose foods that need nothing more than a cocktail napkin.

What is apéro? Light drinks and salty/savory bites shared before dinner. Keep pours modest, flavors savory, and the window short—apéro ends when dinner begins.

What to pour

Start with bubbles: Oregon Apéro — Sparkling 6-Pack (4–8 friends) or Party Case (12) (a crowd). Classic-method Brut, Rosé, and Blanc de Noirs—bright, savory, celebration-ready. Pacing: Open as you go. Begin with one bottle; add another when glasses are half empty.

Quick Start (Host Checklist)

Step	Details
Chill	Aim for 43–46°F (6–8°C). Side-lay in fridge for 8+ hours; add 20–30 minutes in an ice bucket before serving.
Set the scene	No place settings, no plates: platters within reach, napkins only, relaxed playlist, warm lighting.
Open & pour	Hold at 45°, thumb on the cork, twist the bottle. Aim for a quiet sigh. Modest pours; frequent top-ups.

How much to open (rule of thumb)

1 bottle ≈ 6 full flutes (4–5 oz) or 10 tasting pours (2–3 oz).

Guests	Opening plan	Approx. bottles/hr
4-6	Open 1; add 1 when needed.	1-2
6-10	Open 1; add 1 every ~15-20 min.	2-3
10-14	Start with 2; add 1 as glasses empty.	3-4

Set the table in 15 minutes (no plates)

- Arrange a board with salty, seafood, cheese, and a veggie bite—napkins-only.
- Set out white-wine stems or tulips; fill an ice bucket nearby.
- Cue a relaxed playlist and warm lighting; place platters within easy reach.

Snack ideas (local-first, napkin-friendly)

Category	Ideas
Seafood	Oysters on the half shell; smoked salmon; mini crab tartines.
Cheese	Triple-crème; young gouda; aged cheddar; local brie-style.
Savory	Charcuterie; pork pâté/rillettes; spiced hazelnuts.
Veg	Marinated mushrooms; cucumber + crème fraîche; cherry tomato skewers.

Non-alcoholic apéro ideas

Drink	Build
Verjus spritz	2 oz verjus + sparkling water over ice; lemon twist.
Bitter orange (zero-proof)	Italian-style bitter soda with citrus peel.
Herbal fizz	Sparkling water with orange slice + thyme or cucumber + mint.

Glassware & leftovers

Use white-wine stems or tulips for aroma (flutes can mute bouquet). Keep bottles on ice between pours. Re-cork with a sparkling stopper; best within 24-36 hours.

Apéro vs. apéro dînatoire

Apéro is a pre-dinner pause; apéro dînatoire replaces dinner. If you go dînatoire, add 2-3 substantial bites (quiche squares, jambon-beurre sliders, lentil salad) and segue to Pinot Gris and lightly chilled Pinot Noir after the bubbles.