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The Grapevine

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VINESSE WINE CLUB MEMBERS

THE FOOD ISSUE



**The Stars Come Out
for Atlantic City Event**

**The Principles of
Food & Wine Pairing**

**Take a Ride Along the
Santa Fe Chocolate Trail**

**Eating at the Source:
Wineries With Restaurants**

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To uncover and bring you wine gems from around the world, which you're not likely to discover on your own, and which enhance your wine enjoyment.

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EDITOR'S JOURNAL

Avoiding Culinary Divorce Court

By Robert Johnson

The marriage between food and wine is very similar to a marriage between two human beings.

In both cases, for instance, there needs to be a whole lot of give and take.

In a human marriage, one spouse may be a sports fanatic, while the other couldn't tell you the difference between a field goal and a slam dunk. Such a union could endure only if the sports fan were allotted a certain amount of no-guilt time per day to play couch potato, perhaps in exchange for the dinnertime duty of preparing the baked potatoes.

In a culinary marriage, there's no place for the food and the wine to be fighting for supremacy. The goal is flavor harmony, and that means certain types of wine must remain corked when certain types of food are served.

Then there's the Carly Simon factor: anticipation.

In a good marriage, one spouse can't wait for the other to get home at night. Both partners look forward to sharing their adventures, misadventures, achievements and

challenges of the day.

In a good culinary marriage, the anticipation revolves around the next bite of food and the next sip of wine. What new flavor will that sauce reveal? How will it meld with the flavors of the wine? Are the textures of the food and wine compatible, or would a lighter (or more full-bodied) wine work better with the dish?

Marriages that endure are those in which the participants invest in

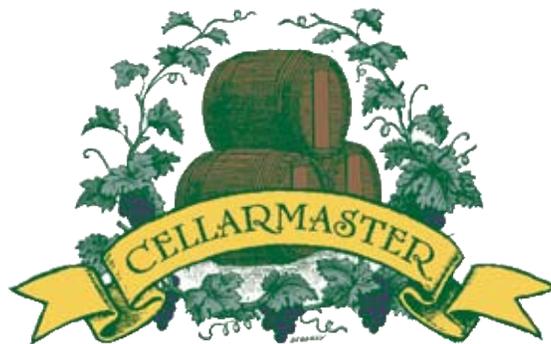
one another's interests and personalities, rather than constantly going their own way. Shared experiences often make for great memories.

And the same thing is true in

the marriage of food and wine. On those occasions when exactly the right wine is served alongside exactly the right dish — such as a big, bold Cabernet Sauvignon with a thick, juicy steak... or a rich, creamy Chardonnay with a perfectly prepared pork chop... or even a glass of Zinfandel with a slice of pepperoni pizza — you can be sure that the meal will be talked about for a long time to come.

Good marriages take work. So do good culinary marriages. But the payoffs are so worth it.





Rosé: It's Not Just for Drinking Anymore

What's that? You didn't finish that bottle of Rosé with dinner last night, and tonight's dinner calls for a white wine?



No worries. If you have about half-a-bottle left, you have enough wine to make this fun and refreshing dessert – a Rosé jelly, mixed with fresh fruit.

This recipe makes four servings, but keep one thing in mind: The jelly itself will need about four hours of chilling time. That means

the dessert you prepare tonight may not be ready to enjoy until tomorrow.

Ingredients

- ¼ cup red grape juice
- 3 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons sugar, divided
- 1½ cups Rosé wine, divided
- One ¼-oz. envelope unflavored gelatin
- 2 ripe nectarines, sliced
- 1 cup blueberries

Preparation

1. In a medium saucepan, mix together grape juice, 3 tablespoons sugar, and 2 tablespoons wine. Sprinkle the gelatin over the surface and let stand for 5 minutes.
2. Heat the mixture over medium-low heat, stirring gently, until the sugar and gelatin are dissolved. (Note: Do not allow the mixture to boil.)
3. Mix in the remaining wine, then pour the mixture into a shallow glass or nonreactive container to chill for at least 4 hours, or until jelled. (Note: It will not be a stiff jelly, but it will be spoonable.)
4. When ready to serve, toss nectarine slices and blueberries with the remaining sugar. Cut the gelatin into ½-inch squares. Layer the fruit and jelly into goblets.



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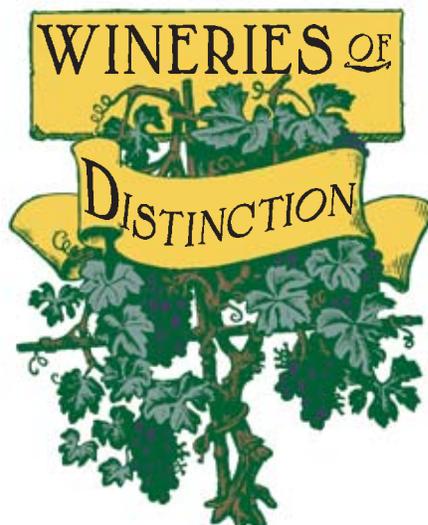
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Eating at the Source: Wineries With Restaurants

It's not yet a trend, but it could become one as we march forward in the second decade of the new millennium: restaurants attached to wineries.

It makes perfect sense, since the marriage of food and wine is the exact opposite of a typical Hollywood marriage: happy. And when the restaurant's menu has been developed with specific wines in mind, that happiness can turn into pure bliss.

Australia has been at the forefront

of the winery/restaurant combo, but other countries are catching on. So we decided to put together a list of some of our favorite winery restaurants, from a pioneering estate in the Napa Valley to a handful of destinations in the Pacific Northwest... from Canada's Okanagan Valley to the Stellenbosch area of South Africa... and from Tuscany to Temecula...

• **Etoile** — Domaine Chandon was a Napa Valley pioneer in offering winery visitors a fine dining experience. This is the latest iteration of the now 30-year-old restaurant, where the American menu is dotted with creative French



Etoile — Domaine Chandon

accents. If you feel like dressing up, this is one of the few places in the valley where you won't feel out of place. (But please note that jackets are not required.) www.chandon.com/etoile-restaurant.html

• **Dundee Bistro** — A delightful restaurant that's part of the Ponzi family's "wine complex" in Dundee, Oregon. You can spend a lot of time (and money) there, beginning with a visit to the winery's tasting room, continuing with a fine meal, and concluding with a stroll through the wine shop, where one can find several bottlings that are made in such limited quantities that they never make it out of Oregon. www.dundeebistro.com



• **Tagaris Taverna** — Washington's wine country has long been short on "big city" dining, but that conundrum has been solved with the opening of this restaurant, which is adjacent to the Tagaris Winery in Richland. Great food... great service... and, of course, great wine. www.tagariswines.com/taverna.html

• **Okanagan Valley** — Several wineries in this British Columbia wine region have restaurants on site, including Quails' Gate (www.quailsgate.com/visiting-the-winery/old-vines-restaurant.php), Summerhill Pyramid (www.summerhill.bc.ca/sunset-bistro/hours-and-info), Sumac Ridge (www.sumacridge.com/cellardoor/default.asp), Burrowing Owl (www.bovwine.ca/the_restaurant.html), and Gray Monk (www.grapevinerestaurant.ca/). But our favorite is the...

• **Terrace** — Open for lunch from May through October, and for dinner

from June through August, this restaurant on the front lawn of the Mission Hill Family Estate offers an unforgettable dining experience — both for the food and setting. If your palate needs awakening, or if you just want to treat yourself to a very special dish, try the venison carpaccio with arugula, anchovy and creamy Salt Spring Island cheese. www.missionhillwinery.com/guest_experience/terrace.html

• **Buca Lapi** — Love steak? Hop on a plane to Tuscany, bring along a significant other, head to Palazzo Antinori and order the bistecca chianina (Italian grass-fed beef) for two. Atmosphere absolutely

contributes to the enjoyment of a meal, and at Buca Lapi, you'll be dining in a room that formerly was used to age Antinori wines. 39-055/213-768.

• **Restaurant at Tokara Estate** — This stunning stone-and-glass South African winery sits atop the mountain pass that separates Stellenbosch from Franschoek, and the owners take full advantage of their location to provide visitors with stunning views. The menu, crafted by Belgian-trained Etienne Bonthuys, is part French and part South African, with inspired flavor surprises at every turn. The signature dish: calamari and shredded oxtail braised in red wine with ginger. 27-21/808-5959; www.tokara.co.za

• **Restaurant at South Coast Winery** — We have long touted Thornton Winery in Temecula as the quintessential wine country destination in Southern California. With its fine sparkling wine, superb restaurant and summer jazz concert series, what's not to like? But if you'd like to simply get to your destination, park the car and not restart it for a few days, there's an alternative: the South Coast Winery, Resort and Spa. Its name says it all — almost. South Coast also is home to an outstanding restaurant — which means you really can plant yourself for a few days. 951-587-WINE; www.wineresort.com

Four Seasons



WINES THAT MATCH THE SEASON.

Summer — wines for barbecues, picnics or just for sipping. Fall — wines for hearty, harvest-time dishes. You get the idea. All wines are selected by our Tasting Panel to pair beautifully with the foods you love.

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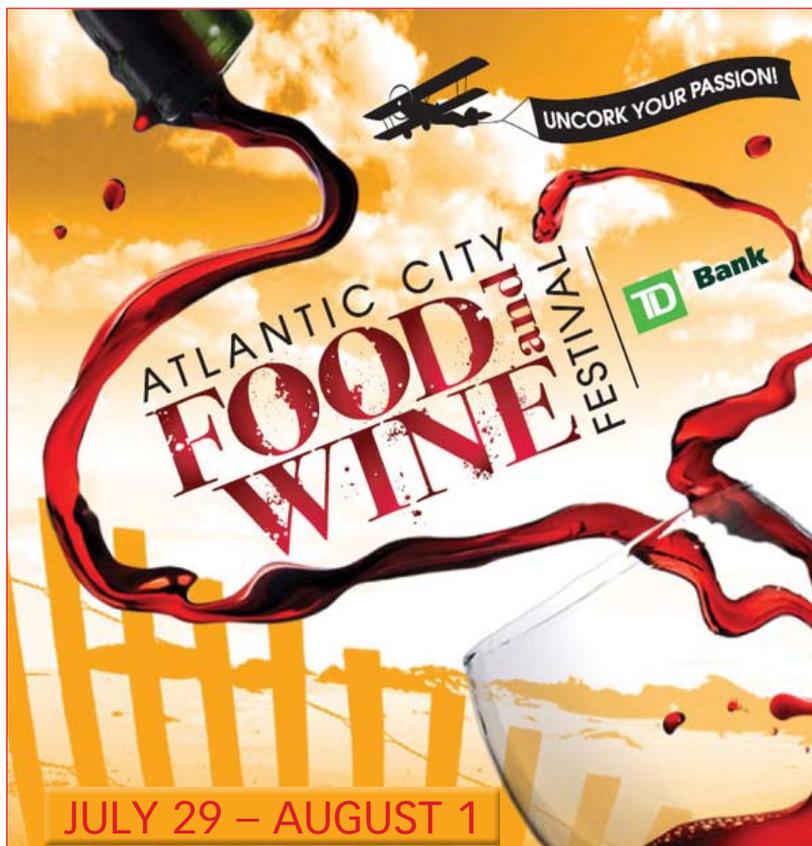
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The Stars Come Out for the Atlantic City Food & Wine Festival

Not all great food and wine festivals take place in California Wine Country.

For proof, we give you the Atlantic City Food and Wine Festival, presented by the Food Network and scheduled for July 29-August 1.

Long known as a classic East Coast vacation spot, Atlantic City is basking in the glow of a lavishly upgraded hotel, restaurant and entertainment

scene. The seaside locale is now rightfully known as a grown-up playground worthy of both its storied past and what now appears to be a bright future.

With the addition of the Food Network's Atlantic City Food and Wine Festival, a new label is being added to the city's pedigree: "Foodie Heaven." So if you're looking for a memorable East Coast getaway weekend this summer, read on.

The incredible lineup of events includes numerous tastings, demonstrations, cooking competitions and nightlife. Various Harrah's Entertainment locations, as well as other Atlantic City hot spots, will provide the venues.

The weekend will begin with a Food Network Festival Kick-Off Party, hosted by a who's who of Food Network personalities. Just steps from the beach, attendees will rub elbows with culinary superstars at the ultrachic Chelsea Hotel while enjoying tantalizing food and beverages deep into the night.

The fun continues all weekend long

with "Chefs on Stage," as various Food Network shows come to life at the Caesars C-Max Theater.

Then there's the poolside event at Harrah's

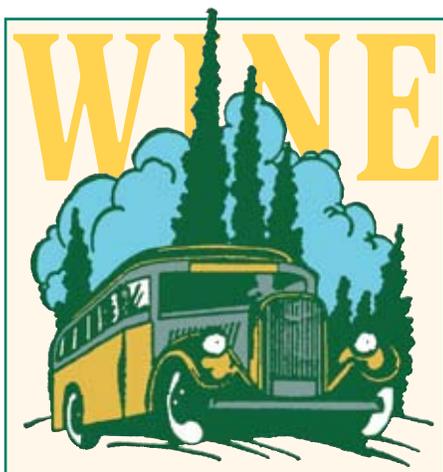
Resort known as "Taste the World: Grapes and Global Tapas." Wine, food and cocktails will reflect a greatest-hits selection from recent "Hot Tables" recommendations in *Conde Nast Traveler* magazine.

Among the other enticing events dotting the eclectic schedule:

- **Tequila Connoisseur's Dinner** — Held under the stars at the Caesars rooftop pool.
- **Boardwalk Clambake** — Organizers promise an elegant twist.
- **Dim Sum Brunch** — To be held at Stephen Starr's white-hot Buddakan restaurant at The Pier Shops at Caesars.



Guy Fieri



TOURING TIPS

VINESSE

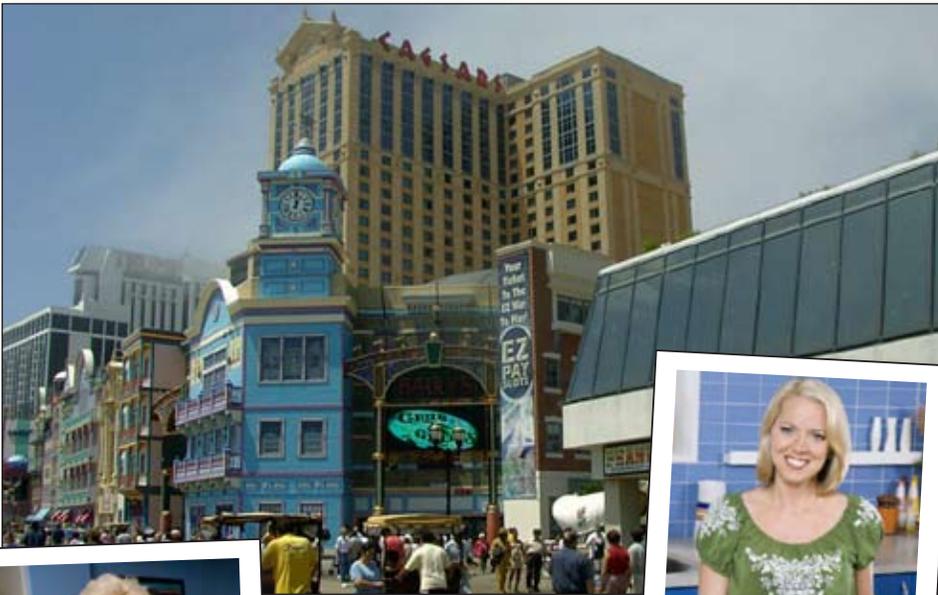
Hot LIST

In keeping with the theme of this issue, all three Hot List entries have to do with food.

1 Hot Chinese Banquet. In Taipei, Taiwan, the Tian-tan Chinese Food and Cultural Center offers a Confucian-style feast with a few modern twists. The 15-course extravaganza costs around \$1,000 and feeds 10. <http://957.tw>

2 Hot Pecan Product Source. Seventy years ago, Deane Stahmann planted 4,000 acres with pecan trees in the fertile Mesilla Valley in southern New Mexico. Today, more than 128,000 trees produces from 8 to 10 million pounds of premium pecans each year, making Stahmann Farms the largest family-owned pecan orchard in the world. Quality marks each step in the cultivation, harvest, shelling and manufacturing of the pecans, flavored pecans and mouthwatering pecan confections — all produced on the premises. www.stahmanns.com

3 Hot Las Vegas Culinary Destination. Sin City is packed with restaurants designed (and occasionally populated) by celebrity chefs. But no Vegas resort houses a longer list of extraordinary eateries than Bellagio, where the lineup includes Michael Mina's (for innovative seasonal dishes), Osteria del Circo (for high-end Tuscan cuisine), Jean-Georges Vongerichten's Prime Steakhouse (which also offers great seafood, by the way), and Le Cirque and Picasso (for fabulous French fare). www.bellagio.com/restaurants



Melissa D'Arabian

- **Wine Down Art Show** — Celebrity sommelier Michael Green will host an evening that pairs fine wines and world-class art.

- **Wine Unplugged** — Green returns to plug in a playlist of great wines accompanied by music from Doors tribute band Soft Parade. Think: Morrison meets Merlot.

- **Brews and Blues** —

Guests will sample 30 of the world's best craft beers while taking in a live concert.

- **President's Wine Tasting** — A selection of wines from Caesars' Exclusive Collection will be sampled in a guided tasting.

- **Jersey Tomato Brunch** — How many ways can a tomato be prepared? You have no idea... unless you attend this event, spotlighting New Jersey's star produce.

- **Cheese Steak Battle** —

Guests will experience 10 renditions of the classic dish that originated in nearby Philadelphia.

The festival's signature event is the Sunday Grand Market at Bally's, where more than 200 stations will offer a tempting selection of food, wine and unique culinary experiences.

No wonder organizers like to call the Atlantic City Food and Wine Festival a "Shore Thing."



Michael Green



Anne Burrell



Sandra Lee



Sunny Anderson

For an up-to-date festival event schedule, ticket information and special package opportunities, visit acfoodandwine.com.



The following food-and-wine recommendations come from *What to Drink With What You Eat*, a book by Andrew Dornenburg and Karen Page (Bulfinch Press, \$35).

White Castle Hamburgers. Off-dry Riesling, Rosé, or White Zinfandel.

Yams. California Chardonnay, off-dry Gewurztraminer, off-dry to sweet Riesling, sparkling wine with at least a bit of sweetness, or Viognier.

Zucchini. Beaujolais, Dolcetto, Montepulciano, Sancerre, or Sauvignon Blanc.

Arugula. Arneis, Chablis, Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, or Sauvignon Blanc.

Buffalo Wings. Rosé Champagne, off-dry Rosé, or Zinfandel.

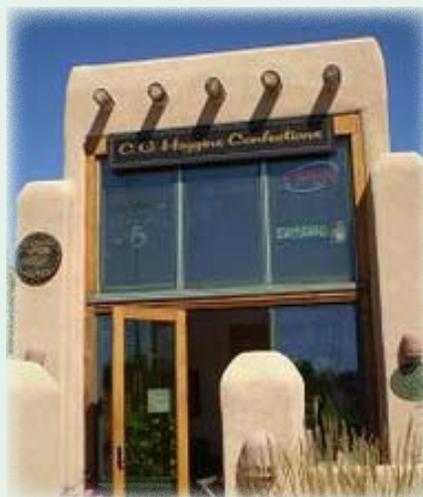
Cannelloni. Chianti, Dolcetto, Frascati, Montepulciano, or Sangiovese.

VINESSE STYLE

THE SANTA FE CHOCOLATE TRAIL

Santa Fe is known as one of America's great art centers. But did you know it's also a hotbed of artisanal chocolate?

Here are four confectioners to check out in-between gallery visits...



• **C.G. Higgins Confections** — Makers of fine quality chocolate truffles, boutique caramel corns, excellent nut brittles and fine chocolate sipping drinks. If you can hold out until 4 p.m., the shop features a daily happy hour (running until 6 o'clock) with

special prices on espresso, lattes and sipping chocolates. www.cghiggins.com

• **The ChocolateSmith** — Specializes in fine dark chocolate, made fresh daily. Taste-tempting delights include toffee almond bark, Don Juan pecans, green chile pistachio bark, sea salt caramel, white chocolate lemon lavender bark and chile chocolates. www.chocolatesmith.com

• **Kakawa Chocolate House** — The place to go for authentic Meso-American and historic European chocolate drinks, as well as intense truffles, tortes and cakes. www.kakawachocolates.com

• **Todos Santos** — Featuring eclectic confections from around the world, this shop also offers housemade truffles and toffee. Looking for a unique gift? Check out Todos Santos' gold or silver leaf-covered chocolate Milagros. 505-982-3855



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APPELLATION SHOWCASE



New Mexico

About 400 years ago, Don Juan de Onate led a small band of Spanish colonists from New Spain (now Mexico) northward, up the trail that would later be known as *El Camino Real*.

Their mission: to settle the fertile valleys of the upper Rio Grande.

With the colonists came Franciscan monks who needed wine for their daily mass. Only a small sip was required — but it had to be wine.

The supplies that had been issued to each monk upon leaving the Old World were quickly depleted, and it was a thousand miles and a six-month journey by ox cart to replenish their stock of wine.

For 30 years, the monks obeyed the Spanish law that forbade the production of wine in the New World. Wine was made in Spain, shipped to Veracruz in New Spain, then hauled overland by ox cart to New Mexico. Supply trains came once every three years, and their manifests listed approximately 45 gallons of wine on each trip.

Finally, the church, along with

colonial Governor Francisco Manuel de Silva Nieto (whose government was paying to import the wine), decided to resolve the problem by planting grapevines and making their own sacramental wine.

The first vines planted in what is now the state of New Mexico were brought in 1629 to Senecu, a Piro Indian pueblo south of Socorro, by Fray Graciade Zuniga (a Franciscan) and Antonio de Arteaga (a Capuchin monk).

San Antonio de Padua Mission, at Senecu, was located on the east bank of the Rio Grande, slightly north of the present small village of San Antonio.

The cuttings brought by the missionaries were a variety of *Vitis vinifera*, commonly called the Mission grape. Historians, however, think it's a European variety from Spain called Monica. Whatever its name, it is still grown in New Mexico today.

The greatest concentration of wineries can be found around Santa Fe and Albuquerque in the northern part of the state, but there also are "wine trails" in the southeast sector of New Mexico, as well as west of Las Cruces. For further information and maps, visit www.nmwine.com.

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“Wine and food are meant to be enjoyed together — and that holds true whether you’re having a five-course gourmet meal or a take-out burrito.”



— Master Sommelier and author Andrea Robinson

Q I’ve seen the initials “M.W.” appear after the name of the sommelier on restaurant menus. What do they stand for?

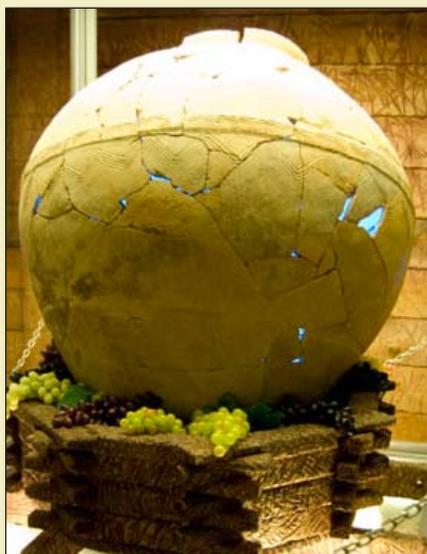
A Master of Wine. And it’s an impressive designation because qualifying for it requires about two years of time, over which candidates must pass various written, oral and blind tasting tests, and write a 10,000-word dissertation. So if you see “M.W.” next to a sommelier’s name, you can trust him or her to recommend the perfect wine to accompany your meal.

Just when you thought there was an iPhone app for everything, along comes “Wine DJ” from Hope Family Wines. The app enables the user to select the type of wine they’ll be drinking (from Hope Family, of course) plus a specific mood, and a music playlist is then generated. The playlist is sourced from listen.grooveshark.com, and the app can be downloaded for free from winedj.com.

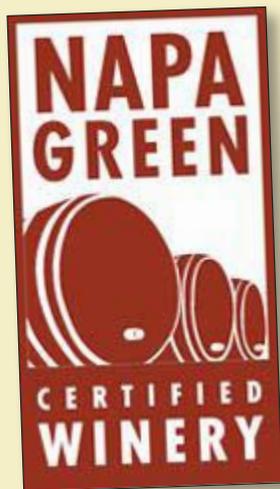


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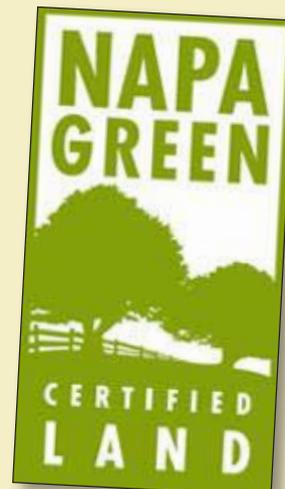
Percentage of Burgundy appellation production designated “Grand cru” — the crème de la crème of the region’s bottlings and, in most vintages, some of the world’s finest wines.



Stainless steel tanks are not the only containers in which wine can be stored so that its natural fruitfulness is preserved (i.e., without added flavor accents from oak barrels). In Italy, growing numbers of vintners are embracing containers used by the ancient Romans and Greeks: clay amphorae. Modern amphorae are being made in Italy, Spain and the former Soviet republic of Georgia. Another factor impacting the trend: cost. Unlike oak barrels, amphorae don’t need to be replaced every few years.



Napa Green is one of the wine industry’s most comprehensive “best practices” in land use and wine production. The voluntary program, developed by the Napa Valley Vintners, is open to all Napa County vintners and grape growers, and focuses on building environmentally sound, sustainable practices that meet and exceed more than 20 local, state and federal land or production “best practices,” and is certified by an independent third party. Napa County vintners participate in programs focused on winery operations and/or farming practices tailored specifically to each property to meet and exceed environmental compliance and continue to protect and enhance the ecological quality of the region.



FOOD & WINE PAIRINGS

THE PRINCIPLES OF PAIRING

In most issues, we take a look at a specific dish or a certain cuisine, and discuss the wine pairing possibilities.

This month, however, we thought we'd take a more general approach to the science or art (take your pick) of food-and-wine pairing by sharing Zaca Mesa winery's principles on the topic.

Over the years, the wine clubs of Vinesse have featured numerous wines from Zaca Mesa, an esteemed wine estate in California's Santa Barbara County. In addition to producing great wines, Zaca Mesa also has served as a training ground for vintners who have gone on to enjoy exceptional careers at other estates.

The team at Zaca Mesa notes that acidity plays a powerful role in the successful matching of food and wine. High acid wines (with pH in the 3.0 to 3.4 range) can pair well with a wide variety of foods. But more specifically...

P-1. Pair high acid wines with high acid foods.

P-2. High acid wines also temper salty foods. Example: Champagne and caviar.

P-3. High acid wines are a terrific counterpoint to smoked foods.

P-4. High acid foods, such as tomatoes, render most wines flat.

P-5. High acid foods make tannic wines, such as ageable reds, seem hard and bitter.

Saltiness and sweetness also play a role in successful pairing.

P-6. Salty foods will dull the flavors of many wines.

To counter this, serve wines that are slightly sweet.

Example: Off-dry Gewurztraminer or Riesling with ham.

P-7. Foods with fruity (sweet) components are best with fruity wines.

Aging wine for a long period of time in new oak barrels can result in a very tasty wine, but also can make food pairing a challenge. The wine does the food no favors, and vice versa.

P-8. Match delicate wines with delicate foods. Examples: Viognier with sole, or Chardonnay with sea bass.

P-9. Match bold wines with bold, big-flavored foods. Examples: Syrah with grilled steak, or Roussanne with rich cheeses.

P-10. Match great food with great, complex wines.

Example: filet mignon with Cabernet Sauvignon.

P-11. Match everyday food with everyday wines.

Example: meatloaf with Merlot.



Light
& Sweet

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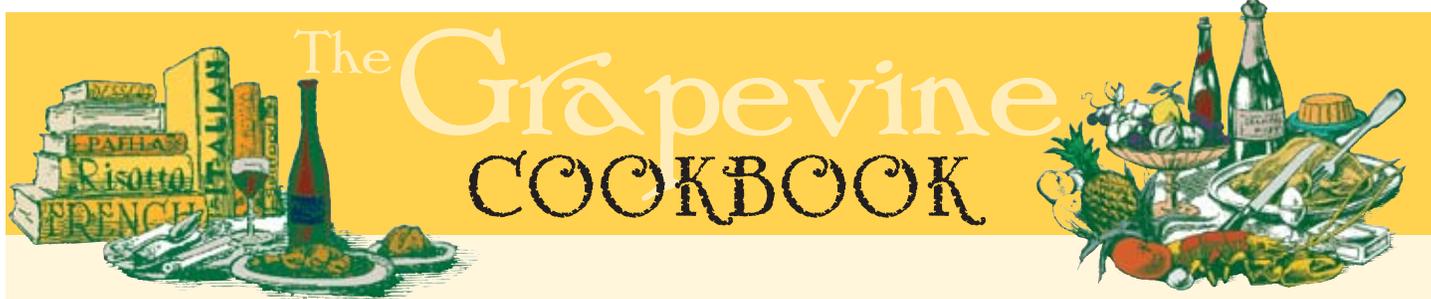
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GRILLED CHIPOTLE CINNAMON MARINATED RIB-EYE STEAK

It's summer, and that means it's grilling season. If you grill often, you may eventually find yourself looking for something a little bit different. This main course definitely is different, and packed with flavor. Better still, it matches beautifully with almost any red wine, including Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Zinfandel and Syrah. But the perfect pairing may well be a dry or off-dry Rosé. This recipe makes 8 servings.

Ingredients

- 1 package McCormick Grill Mates Chipotle Pepper Marinade
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup vegetable or olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon McCormick Cinnamon, Ground
- 2 lbs. rib-eye steak

Preparation

1. Mix marinade mix, water, oil and cinnamon in small dish.
2. Place steak in large resealable plastic bag or glass dish. Add marinade; turn to coat well.
3. Refrigerate 15 minutes or longer for extra flavor. Remove steak from marinade. Discard any remaining marinade.
4. Grill over medium-high heat for 5 to 7 minutes per side or until desired doneness.

GRILLED PRAWNS WITH GARLIC BUTTER

This recipe, which serves 2 to 4 people, depending on your appetites, matches beautifully with Sauvignon Blanc or California Chardonnay.

Ingredients

- 2 lbs. prawns
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons grapeseed oil
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter
- 6 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 or 2 Thai chilies, diced and crushed
- 1 teaspoon Nuoc Mam (fish sauce)
- 1 teaspoon citrus zest

Preparation

1. Heat grill for high-heat, direct grilling.
2. Rinse prawns and place in a large bowl. Sprinkle with sugar and grapeseed oil.
3. Heat butter over low to medium-low heat. Add garlic, crushed chilies and fish sauce, and gently cook for about 1 minute.
4. Pour half of butter mix over prawns; return remaining butter mix to stove. Add citrus zest to garlic-butter and keep warm on lowest heat.
5. Gently toss prawns until sugar is dissolved and garlic-butter completely coats them.
6. Place prawns over grill's direct heat. Grill for about 3-5 minutes, turning at least once.
7. When prawns are just cooked through, remove from grill and place in a large serving bowl. Pour remaining garlic-citrus-butter over grilled prawns, and serve.

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