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Volume 22

Number 2

©Vinesse Wine Club 2014

SKU 22414

The Grapevine

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VINESSE WINE CLUB MEMBERS

The Romance Issue

**Valentine's Day: Simple
Things Matter the Most**

**Food and Wine Pairings
for That Special Evening**

**The Romantic Beginnings
of Napa's Signorello Estate**

**Special Deals Offered at
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The Grapevine is published by Vinesse, 822 Hampshire Road, Suite E, Westlake Village, CA 91361; 1-800-823-5527. Copyright by Vinesse, LLC. Printed in USA.

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EDITOR'S JOURNAL

Expert Tips for Planning a Perfect Valentine's Day

By Robert Johnson

"Romance is thinking about your significant other, when you are supposed to be thinking about something else."

Novelist, screenwriter and producer Nicholas Sparks once made that observation, and if he's right, then so is my lady. She claims that I'm a romantic guy, even though I've never thought of myself as such.

But who am I to argue? So, given that I'm some sort of expert on romance, let's get on with this year's *Grapevine* Valentine's Day column... with a little help from my significant other.

Our first Valentine's Day together is coming right up, so I asked my S.O. what she'd like to do on the most romantic day of the year. That quickly turned into a discussion about romance in general, and the advice she would give to men who are hoping to make an impression.

"I've always thought you should keep things simple," she said. "You don't need that many things to really woo a woman."

That certainly came as good news. But I wasn't sure exactly what she meant by "things." So I pressed her for more information.

"You know, romantic things," she said. "A nice dinner... a nice bottle of wine... flowers... chocolates... a red Corvette..."

Now you know why I love this woman. We laugh a lot.

But she's really right when it comes to planning a special evening for the special person in your life. Chateaubriand is nice, but a Double

Double burger can be every bit as romantic if you happened to eat at In-N-Out on your first date.

Likewise, you could spend a whole lot of money on Godiva's "G" Collection of chocolates (\$120 per pound, last I checked), or a whole lot less on See's Scotchmallow hearts — if your S.O. is a fan of those creamy, buttery caramel and honey marshmallow treats.

And when it comes to wine on Valentine's Day, the most romantic may not be the most expensive or the one that *Wine Spectator* awarded 98 points. More likely, it will be one that means something to you as a couple.

Long story short: Keep it simple and keep it personal. You've already passed the first half of the romance test simply by remembering Valentine's Day.

But should February 15 arrive and you suddenly realize you've missed the big day, be advised that the 2014 Corvette coupe is going for around \$51,000.





A Valentine's Day Salute to Pinot Noir

There are a number of "S" words commonly associated with Pinot Noir.

Silky. Smooth. Seductive. Sensual. Sinful.

Sinful? Well, if you put all those other "S" words together, something sinful — the good kind of sinful — is bound to happen, right?

Among red winegrape varieties, Pinot Noir is perhaps the most perplexing to grow, yet can be the most rewarding when the right vineyard site, the right weather and the right winemaker converge — a vinous ménage a trois, so to speak.

The Pinot Noir capital of the world is the Burgundy region of France. The variety also is grown in that country's Champagne region to make stunning (another "S" word) sparkling wines. In Oregon, a vast majority of the vineyard acreage — particularly in the Willamette Valley — is devoted to Pinot. And in California, pockets of the Central Coast, Sonoma County, Napa Valley and Mendocino County are noted for Pinot production.

The movie "Sideways" will be remembered most vividly for a pair of observations about specific wine varieties

by the character Miles — one an obscenity-laced diatribe about Merlot, the other an almost poetic appreciation of Pinot Noir.

With Valentine's Day coming up, we'll save the Merlot comments for another occasion, and share Miles' perspective on Pinot:

"It's a hard grape to grow. As you know. Right? It's, uh, it's thin-skinned, temperamental, ripens early. It's, you know, it's not a survivor like Cabernet, which can just grow anywhere and thrive even when it's neglected. No, Pinot needs constant care and attention. You know? And, in fact, it can only grow in these really specific, little tucked-away corners of the world. And only the most patient and nurturing of growers can do it, really. Only somebody who really takes the time to understand Pinot's potential can then coax it into its fullest expression."

We couldn't have said it better, but wine writer and educator Jancis Robinson once came close — and she did include one "S" word: "Pinot Noir is a minx of a wine. It leads us on a terrible dance, tantalizing with an occasional glimpse of riches in store for those who persevere, yet obstinately refusing to be tamed."



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Signorello Estate west vineyard



The Romantic Beginnings of Napa's Signorello Estate

When better than this most romantic of months to tell the tale of a winery that was founded on romance?

This is the story of Signorello Estate, a much-honored winery in Napa, Calif. In the mid-1970s, Ray Signorello Sr. and his wife Hope purchased a 100-acre site along the Napa Valley's historic Silverado Trail, and initiated a vineyard project that would lead to a family business now overseen by their son, Ray Jr.

What brought the Signorellos to the Napa Valley was the romantic side of winemaking: growing grapes, working the land, and enjoying the wine country lifestyle of camaraderie, good wine and great meals.

The Signorellos' original plan was to grow quality grapes and sell them to existing wineries. But the harvest of 1985 changed their vision. The bountiful crop allowed the Signorellos to custom crush their excess grapes, and that venture demonstrated what fabulous wine their vineyards were capable of producing.

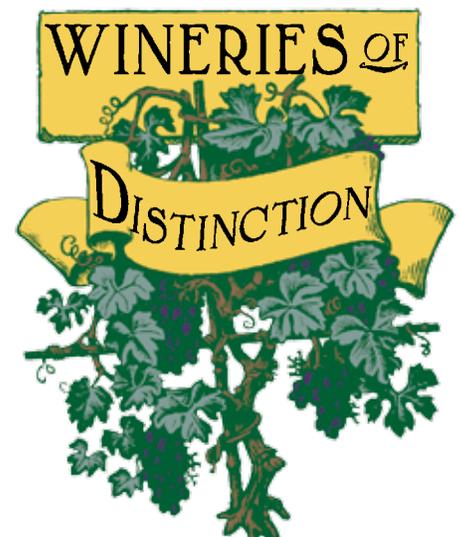
In 1986, the Signorellos began the second phase of their new venture: building the main winery structure. It's a beautiful building that's used for barrel storage, wine tasting and retail sales.

Along with the building of the winery, production was expanded to include Cabernet Sauvignon and

Pinot Noir. By the end of the 1980s, the Signorello family was thoroughly committed to making wine as well as growing grapes.

Today, the project continues to grow, as do the spectacular 42 acres planted to several different varietals. The continuing efforts of Ray Jr. represent the invested energies of his parents that created this reality from a dream.

Over time, Signorello Estate has developed a style of winemaking based on the idea of "winegrowing" — described by the French word, *vignerons*. Basically, it means that everything done in the vineyards



is intimately connected to the winemaking.

This technique or style is enthusiastically embraced in the Burgundy region of France. Ray Jr.'s preferences and tastes are decidedly

Signorello Estate Winery



Burgundian. He strives for lush fruit to produce rich Chardonnays, like those of Domaine Coche-Dury and Domaine Leflaive. And he focuses on elegance, balance and depth when producing magnificent Pinot Noir wines, like those from Domaine de la Romanee-Conti and Domaine Leroy.

“Our style of winemaking is directly tied to our vineyards,” Signorello emphasizes. “The goal is to have wines with early accessibility, as well as the potential to develop additional complexity as they mature.”

Visitors to the Signorello estate can sample the winery's wares via an intimate food-and-wine-pairing session that has been rated among the most romantic experiences in the Napa Valley. It's called Enoteca Signorello, and is available Wednesdays through Sundays by appointment.

Guests sit down and relax indoors in the winery's Salone del Padrone, a private tasting area with an Italian decor that seats a maximum of nine people. There, Signorello wines are paired with American-style Kobe Wagyu beef products from Snake River Farms.

The cost is \$115 per person, plus tax and 18 percent gratuity.

Tastings also can be enjoyed on the winery's patio, which provides

vistas across the valley — also quite romantic, particularly during the quiet non-summer months. Ditto for the private terrace luncheons that can be arranged.

Another touch of class is provided by the winery's Signature program, which consists of wines that Ray Signorello tastes throughout the time the wines are aging in barrels.

The Signature Cabernet Sauvignon is a classic Bordeaux-style blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc. It is dedicated to the memory of Ray

Signorello Sr., who died in 1998, and is called Padrone.

The Signature Chardonnay consists of the finest barrels, hand-selected by Ray Jr. to create the celebrated and delicious Hope's Cuvee, named after his mother, who passed away in 1995.

While the Napa Valley lifestyle remains a very real part of the business, there is a serious responsibility associated with transforming a dream into a reality — something both Ray Sr. and Ray Jr. understood from the very beginning of Signorello Estate.

“This venture was a dream; now it is reality,” Ray Jr. says simply. “We have enjoyed every moment of it, and we look forward to continuing on to make quality wines from the Napa Valley.”

Winery 4-1-1

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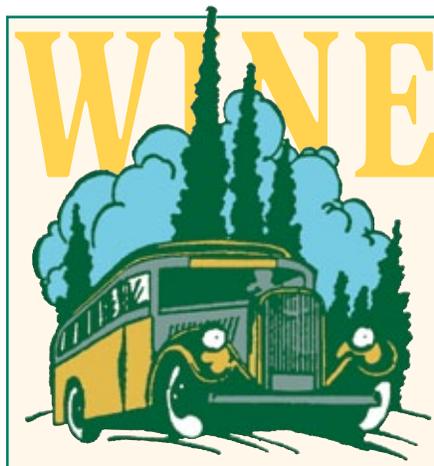


Want to get away with your sweetie for a few days of wine tasting and romance? Here are 19 Sonoma County inns currently offering an array of special packages and/or pricing...

- **Case Ranch Inn, Forestville** — Enjoy the Russian River Valley wine country and its many beautiful attractions. With three guest rooms in the main house as well as a garden cottage, Case Ranch Inn captures the intimacy of a traditional bed and breakfast, and is ideal for romantic couples. *Special offer:* Stay any two nights and add a third night for 50% off room rate.
- **English Tea Garden Inn, Cloverdale** — This lovingly preserved Victorian was built in 1879, and extensive restoration has made it one of the most sought-out historic B&B inns in Northern California. Four expansive suites with luxury amenities. *Special offer:* A two-night stay includes a three-course breakfast each day, wine-tasting pass to 120 wineries, and a bottle of wine.
- **Santa Nella House, Guerneville** — A Victorian farmhouse dating back to the 1870s. The property has been an olive oil mill, a winery, a speak-

easy, a stagecoach stop and, since 1984, a Russian River Valley B&B inn. The stately structure boasts five bedrooms and a cottage in the forest. *Special offer:* Book a room for any three nights, including a Tuesday, and Tuesday is free.

- **The Irish Rose Inn, Healdsburg** — A wonderful 1912 Craftsman home amongst year-round flowering



TOURING TIPS

- gardens. Home to three guest rooms and two cottages. *Special offer:* Stay any three nights (Sunday through Thursday) and pay for only two.
- **Bella Luna Inn, Healdsburg** — This elegant and comfortable inn has a backyard deck, heated pool and lush gardens, providing a serene environment for relaxation. *Special offer:* 20% off room rates.
- **Old Crocker Inn, Cloverdale** — Founded as a hunting retreat in the 1880s by railroad magnate Charles Crocker, this B&B offers five lodge rooms and five cottage rooms or suites, all with private bath and entry. *Special offer:* Book an available room 24 hours prior to arrival for \$150 per night (double occupancy only, weekends excluded).
- **The Rafoord Inn, Healdsburg** — This 1880 Victorian plantation property is graced with luscious gardens, a working estate vineyard and towering palm trees that are home to some of the region's most

exotic birds. *Special offer:* Reserve within 48 hours of your visit, and receive 25% off your first night's stay.

• **Camellia Inn, Healdsburg** — Owned and operated by the same family for more than 30 years, this inn recently became the first accommodation in Healdsburg to offer iPads to guests. Long established ties to the area allow the staff to arrange private wine tasting and other special experiences. *Special offers:* Ultimate Foodie Break-Up Package, Chocolate Covered Wednesdays, Massage/Spa Package and more.

• **Vintage Towers, Cloverdale** — Guests enjoy magnificent gardens, where “Green Getaway” workshops are held. *Special offer:* Book any five nights and receive the fifth night free.

• **Sonoma Orchid Inn, Guerneville** — This fully restored and elegantly furnished 1906 farmhouse has all the modern amenities, and its beautifully decorated living room has wall-of-glass views onto coastal oaks and towering redwoods on the grounds. *Special offer:* Stay any two nights and save 20%; stay any three nights and save 26%.

• **Hidden Oak Inn, Sonoma** — An exquisite example of a California Craftsman Bungalow, located one block from the historic Sonoma Plaza. *Special offer:* Three nights, a bottle of wine, a small box of Girl & the Fig chocolate fig kisses, daily breakfast, daily wine and cheese tasting in the afternoon, and a card for free tastings at Sonoma area wineries, all for \$525 plus tax.

• **Melitta Station Inn, Santa Rosa** — Offers English ambience, gourmet cuisine and warm hospitality. Located near the Charles Schulz Museum. *Special offer:* Stay two nights from \$225 when you stay by March 31.

• **Avalon Bed & Breakfast, Sebastopol** — A secluded B&B nestled in the majestic redwoods. *Special offer:* Last minute packages and price breaks are often available; call the B&B directly for current specials.

• **Applewood Inn, Guerneville** — A romantic, upscale B&B that provides couples a secluded and peaceful

refuge to unwind, rejuvenate and reconnect while celebrating wine country living. *Special offer:* Stay any three nights (Sunday-Thursday), and get 50% off the third night.

• **The Gables Inn, Santa Rosa** — A circa 1877 Victorian mansion situated away from the crowds on 3½ acres just south of Santa Rosa's city center. Each of the seven rooms has been elegantly restored and features 12-foot ceilings and private bathrooms with claw-foot tubs. *Special offer:* Book a two (or more) night stay, pay full price the first night, and receive 25% off on the second night.

• **Inn at Occidental, Occidental** — A perfect spot for a romantic getaway or special occasion, ideally situated for Russian River wine country and Sonoma Coast vacations and Bohemian Grove events. *Special offer:* Stress Buster package includes a stay in a courtyard room, 60-minute Swedish massage for two in the privacy of your room, a full breakfast and an evening wine-and-cheese reception.

• **Hope Merrill & Bosworth House, Geyserville** — Featuring eight guest rooms and a newly reopened salt water pool. *Special offer:* Pay cash and receive a 20% discount on any available room.

• **Birmingham Bed & Breakfast, Kenwood** — A “prairie style” country estate located in the picturesque Valley of the Moon. Established in 1913 as the Monroe Ranch, this B&B is now an official historic landmark, offering beautiful views of vineyards and the Mayacamas Mountains. *Special offer:* The first night is full price, and each additional night is \$100 (tax not included).

• **Auberge on the Vineyard, Cloverdale** — Combines beautiful Queen Anne Victorian architecture, French styling, and panoramic views of the surrounding Alexander Valley vineyards. *Special offer:* \$99 “Bed No Breakfast” package.

For further information and links to the various inns, visit:
<http://www.winecountryinns.com>.

VINESSE

Hot LIST

1 Hot Cookbook. California's Central Coast is a special place for growing winegrapes, home to a tightly knit community of growers. This was the area Brigit Binns chose to spotlight in *The New Wine Country Cookbook* (\$35). It's packed with wine-based recipes, along with wine-pairing suggestions.
<http://www.andrewsmcmeel.com/catalog/detail?sku=9781449419127>

2 Hot Festival. Daniel Boulud, Jacques-Olivier Borja and Guillermo Gonzalez Beristain are among the celebrity chefs scheduled to appear at the Cancun-Rivera Maya Wine & Food Festival, scheduled for March 13-16 at a number of venues. A highlight promises to be the Gourmet Tasting Village at the Moon Palace Arena, where many of the best restaurants of Cancun and the Riviera Maya will offer their acclaimed dishes. This year, a French village gourmet experience will be featured, and the wines of Baja California and the best mezcales and spirits of Mexico will be emphasized.
<http://www.crmfest.com/>

3 Hot Wine Bar. Le Verre Volé Bistro is a magnet for wine lovers living in or visiting Paris, featuring a daily market menu in addition to cheese and charcuterie plates. The wine list is well selected, and emphasizes natural and organic bottlings. It's not much to look at from the outside, but inside, the bistro is a wine lover's paradise.
<http://www.leverrevole.fr/>



Hheavy. Denotes an abundance of alcohol and extract in a wine. Not necessarily a fault, if paired with the right food.

Inky. Used to describe the purple/black color of some red wines. Typically also an indicator of high levels of tannin.

Jammy. Used to describe a red wine with a boiled fruit flavor — especially noticeable in younger wines.

Kerner. Developed in 1969, a German grape variety that's a cross of red Trollinger and white Riesling. It's similar to Riesling in flavor, and quite resistant to frost.

Liquoroso. Italian term for a wine high in alcohol, such as some sweet dessert wines.

Mammolo. A traditional variety found almost exclusively in Tuscany.

VINESSE STYLE

WINE-THEMED JEWELRY

Historically, jewelry was used to denote status. Even in ancient Roman times, one couldn't wear a ring unless they were of a certain rank.

Today, jewelry can still be a status symbol — hence the proliferation of the word, “bling” — but when a man gives jewelry to a woman, it generally carries different meaning.

In some cases, it may be a ticket out of the doghouse. But more often, it's a token of love. No wonder, then, that the weeks leading up to Valentine's Day are big for jewelry stores.

Wine Country Jewelry is a manufacturer of unique grape- and wine-themed jewelry. Located in the heart of California's Sonoma County wine region, it has been producing quality grape and wine jewelry for



Pin.

more than 30 years.

In addition to its website (www.winecountryjewelry.com), its handcrafted grape jewelry can be found in exclusive boutiques and winery gift shops across the United States.

Necklace designs include grape bunches, Ah-So cork pullers, Champagne flutes, double wine glasses, a red wine bottle with grapes, and more.

Earrings feature similar designs, as well as corkscrews, hot air balloons and wine barrels. The company also sells a grapevine earring stand.

Bracelets, charms and pins also are available in a variety of styles and designs — all stylish and thoughtful gifts for a significant other who enjoys drinking wine.



Necklace.

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APPELLATION SHOWCASE

Rheinhessen



Germany's Rheinhessen growing region lies in a valley of rolling hills, bordered on the west by the Nahe River and on the north and east by the Rhine.

This 20-by-30 mile area between the communities of Worms, Alzey, Mainz and Bingen is the largest of the German winegrowing regions, and its production is second only to that of the Pfalz.

Thanks to the varying soil types and microclimates, many grape varieties are planted, including the three traditional white varieties — Muller-Thurgau, Silvaner and Riesling — as well as new crossings.

Muller-Thurgau is a pleasant, flowery, delicately fruity wine with a subtle nutmeg aroma that continues to be well represented on local wine lists. Silvaner produces wines of the finest quality (Pradikatsweine), a mildly acidic white with aromas of fruit and meadow herbs — making it the perfect accompaniment to fish dishes and asparagus. Riesling was established in Rheinhessen in the 15th century. The steep, heat-retaining hillsides of the river valleys provide ideal growing conditions for the variety.

Many of Germany's aromatic, early-ripening new crossings

were bred in Rheinhessen by Professor Georg Scheu, after whom the Scheurebe grape is named (pronounced "shoy"). The region also is the birthplace of Liebfraumilch, the soft, mellow white wine originally made from grapes grown in vineyards surrounding the Liebfrauenkirche, or Church of Our Lady, in Worms.

Dornfelder is the most frequently planted red variety, and the area around Ingelheim is known for its noble, full-bodied Spatburgunder (Pinot Noir) wine.

Rheinfront and Rheinterrasse are names given to the vineyards on gentle slopes directly facing the Rhein (Rhine) near the town of Nierstein. There, some of the finest wines in Germany are produced, especially from the Riesling grape.

There already were admirers of Rheinhessen's mild, agreeable, fragrant wines during the Carolingian period. Charlemagne, who had a fortress at Ingelheim, was one of the earliest promoters of these elixirs.



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Q I know this may sound like a strange question this time of the year, but it came up at a meeting for a community festival that our town puts on each summer. We're thinking of having a wine booth, and we were wondering if there is any wine that goes well with grilled corn. We sell more corn on the cob than anything else at the festival.

A Corn on the cob? Slathered with butter? We'll take 10 tickets to the festival, please! And to accompany that summertime treat, we'd suggest a big, creamy, "California-style" Chardonnay — one that has undergone malolactic fermentation, but isn't overly oaky. As you can see, it's a little bit tricky because of all the flavor sensations going on — sweetness from the corn, enhanced by the grilling... the butter... and perhaps a sprinkling of salt. But it *can* be done... and what a treat your festival-goers have in store for themselves.

This May, June and November, three dozen lucky people (12 per trip) will be able to experience the Bordeaux region of France in high style. During those three months, the French Wine Explorers will present five-night stays at Chateau Pichon-Longueville, featuring tours of several First Growth and Second Growth estates. Excursions to Burgundy also are offered, and you can get all the details on the French Wine Explorers' website: <http://wine-tours-france.com>.

“ I moved to a flat acre with an enormous lawn and ridiculously high water bills, and I thought, ‘I’ll build a vineyard here and create my own view.’ ”



— Actor Emilio Estevez, explaining how he got into the wine business. (Source: *Sunset magazine*)

You know the old saying, “When in Rome, do as the Romans do”? Well, when it comes to food and wine pairing, there is great wisdom in that observation. For reasons we’ve never heard explained convincingly, the wines of a given region seem to match very nicely with the regional cuisine. For instance, when in the Alsace, a diner could do far worse than to nosh on pork or fresh-water fish dishes while sipping a glass of Alsatian Pinot Blanc or Gewurztraminer. Likewise, no wine is more sublime with Beef Bourguignon than Pinot Noir (i.e., French Burgundy). So which is it — the wine adapting to the food, or the food adapting to the wine? We’ll answer that question with another question: Who cares? Just remember: When in Rome...

99

Percentage of wines made in Bolivia that stay in that country. (Source: *Food and Wine magazine*)

The winegrowers of Long Island have really hit their stride since the turn of the millennium, with an array of bottlings claiming attention on the global wine stage. And like farmers around the world, more and more of Long Island’s grape growers are embracing sustainable practices. In fact, they now include a comprehensive, easy-to-understand primer on sustainability on their website.



Check it out at: <http://www.lisustainablewine.org/sustainable-viticulture.html>.

FOOD & WINE PAIRINGS

PINOT NOIR AND SPARKLING WINE

Romance and wine go hand in hand, and that helps make Valentine's Day quite profitable for restaurants and wine bars. (Why should Hallmark have all the fun?)

There are two schools of thought when it comes to "romantic" wines. One school teaches that the wine must be red — the color most closely associated with love, passion and... well... you know.

Another school advocates for sparkling wine — be it Champagne from France, Prosecco from Italy, Cava from Spain or various bubbly bottlings from the United States or elsewhere. After all, sparkling wine is used for toasting at weddings, the ultimate symbols of romance.



Among red wines, the most "romantic," hands down, is Pinot Noir. (See "Cellarmaster" on page 3.) And what makes it our top choice for Valentine's Day dining is its affinity for food.

Pinot Noir is at its most sublime when paired with dishes that have earthy ingredients such as mushrooms (see "The Grapevine Cookbook" on page 12 for a tasty mushroom-based recipe), or gamey meats such as duck or lamb.

Unlike almost any other red wine, Pinot Noir also pairs nicely with fish, a fact that spawned a best-selling book, aptly titled, *Red Wine With Fish*. The specific fish that pairs perfectly with lighter renditions of Pinot Noir is salmon.

If you're a sparkling wine fancier, the food pairing possibilities are almost endless, thanks to bubbly's "neutral" flavors. Sparkling wine can handle fish, fowl, heat, spice, fatty foods and assertive flavors.

According to sources as disparate as *Cosmopolitan* and *Good Housekeeping*, among the foods considered to be aphrodisiacs are asparagus, avocados, oysters, walnuts, almonds, basil, arugula and garlic. And every one of them pairs nicely with sparkling wine — making them perfect choices for Valentine's Day wining, dining... and wooing.



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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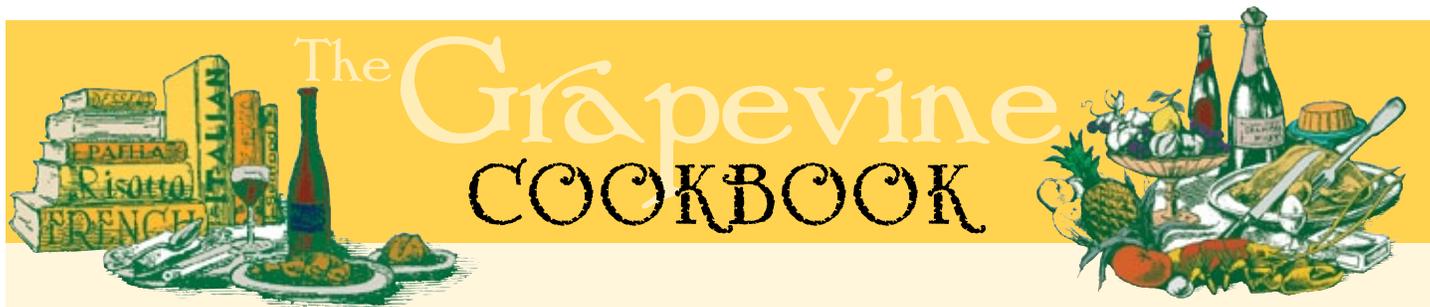
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YAKITORI SCALLOPS

Because of the saltiness of this dish, a perfect pairing partner would be Champagne or almost any other type of sparkling wine — perfect for Valentine’s Day toasting. This recipe yields two servings.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons dry white wine
- 2 tablespoons mirin
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon molasses
- 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon minced fresh ginger
- 12 small-to-medium dry sea scallops, cut in half, tough muscle removed
- 8 medium button mushrooms, halved
- 6 scallions

Preparation

1. Combine soy sauce, wine, mirin, sugar, molasses, Worcestershire and ginger in a small saucepan. Bring to a simmer over medium heat and cook until reduced to 1/4 cup (about 3 minutes). Remove from heat, pour into a medium bowl, and cool to room temperature (about 20 minutes).
2. Reserve 1 tablespoon of the sauce in a small bowl.
3. Add scallops and mushrooms to the remaining sauce, and stir well to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
4. Preheat grill to medium. Oil the grill rack.
5. Trim scallion whites. Separate scallion greens into individual long greens. Wrap one scallion green around the perimeter of each scallop, and thread the scallops onto skewers, piercing through the sides to keep the scallions in place. Alternate 4 mushroom halves and 3 scallion-wrapped scallops on each skewer.

6. Grill the skewers, basting with some of the reserved sauce, for 3 minutes. Turn, baste, and continue grilling until the scallops are firm and opaque (about 3 minutes more).

HERB-STUFFED MUSHROOMS

This dish can work as an appetizer for several people, or a full meal for 2. Because of the earthiness of the mushrooms, it pairs beautifully with Pinot Noir — which often exhibits a somewhat earthy character.

Ingredients

- 24 medium mushrooms (about 1-lb.)
- 6 tablespoons reduced-fat stick margarine
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 package (3-oz.) low-fat cream cheese, softened
- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan
- 2 teaspoons dried parsley flakes
- 1 cup packaged herb-seasoned stuffing croutons

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.
2. Remove stems from mushrooms. Chop enough stems to make 1 cup.
3. Melt 2 tablespoons margarine in saucepan. Brush mushroom cap tops with margarine, place top side down in shallow baking pan, and brush undersides of caps.
4. Heat remaining margarine in same saucepan. Add chopped mushroom stems, onion and garlic, and cook until tender.
5. Stir in cream cheese, combining with fork if necessary.
6. Add Parmesan cheese and herb seasoned stuffing, and mix thoroughly.
7. Spoon 1 tablespoon stuffing mixture into each mushroom cap, and bake until heated through.

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