



**WEIRD
Science**
Food & Wine Reactions

Congratulations for investing in the Weird Science Food & Wine Reactions!

Below are the instructions to set up this at-home workshop so you and, hopefully, some friends can follow along. Enjoy this interactive journey to discovering the secrets of food and wine pairing.

Set Up—To follow along with the workshop at home:

1. 4 glasses for each person placed on the *Weird Science Glass Mats* with these types of wines:
 - a. White Wine #1: Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand or Pinot Blanc from Alsace, France
 - b. White Wine #2: Chardonnay with oak aging from Australia or California
 - c. Red Wine #1: Pinot Noir from California or Oregon
 - d. Red Wine #2: Cabernet Sauvignon from California, Argentina or Chile
2. Printouts of the *Weird Science Transcripts* on pages 2-11 for each person so everyone can follow along with the DVD.
3. *Weird Science Tasting Sheets* and a pen for each person to record personal observations of the food and wine reactions.
4. Arrange the following food/flavor elements on a plate or in small plastic condiment cups for each person. Taste with the wines when instructed during the DVD. You may want to pause the DVD for discussion.
 - a. **Salty:** Salt or salty food like potato chips
 - b. **Acid:** Vinaigrette dressing or other acidic food like goat cheese
 - c. **Animal Fats:** Hard cheese like parmesan reggiano
 - d. **Animal Fats:** Prosciutto or mild salami
 - e. **Sugar:** Sugar, jelly beans or other sweet food
 - f. **Spicy:** Pepperoni, Hot sauce or other spicy food
5. Water and plain crackers or bread to clear your palate
6. Bucket for spitting or dumping wine not consumed.

If you have any questions about this program email me at Laurie@TheWineCoach.com.

Cheers!

Laurie

PS If you like this video I invite you to visit my website at www.thewinecoach.com where you can sign up for my FREE value packed weekly wine articles, get information on my award winning book *The Sipping Point* and find out more about working with me to create a corporate, promotional or fundraising event.



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Seminar Transcripts

Chapter 1: Key Rules of Food & Wine Pairing

Weird Science—when I started studying wine for a career, the hardest, most fascinating, but most challenge piece, I think, is food and wine pairing. What wine goes best with what dish? You look at all these charts that will say chicken with this wine, and fish with that. It's just a memorization tool. What you really don't learn about is the basics of why a creamy sauce goes really well with a creamy Chardonnay, or why when you have salty Baltimore crabs do you need a Sauvignon Blanc with a lot of acid. No one tells us about these reactions that are going on. We're just memorizing the dishes. I went to a class where we learned some of these weird science reactions and I thought oh my gosh, this is the most important thing I've learned. I'm not counting my certification or anything I've done at the wine store. This is the single most important thing I've ever learned. I hope you guys will enjoy it.

The number one food and wine pairing you want to live by is match weights. What does that have to do with it? I haven't been to the gym in a while, so I can't tell you a lot about those weights. Heavy foods go better with heavier wines. Light foods like salad and fish with lighter wines, which do tend to be your white wines. The old adage white with white and red with red, that no longer applies. You can have a salmon with a light red wine, and you can have a heartier dish with white. You just have to match the weights. If it's a heavier dish and you want white, you need a big white. If it's a lighter fish, then you need a light red. Forget what our parents told us about that.

I always try to tell people if you think I grew up learning about the fine wines of Burgundy at my house, all I knew growing up was that wine came in a box and it was kept in the refrigerator. All of this is expected to be self taught. I think we grow up sometimes being intimidated by wine because we didn't learn about it at home, whereas in Europe, they're drinking wine from five years old. Now they might water it down a little bit, but they grew up with a culture around wine. I hope you'll get comfortable here. Match weights.

Ladies, you'll know what I'm talking about; I'll give you a little analogy. I like to picture things...that helps me really think about it the right way. It's like when you're picking out your shoes for your outfit—you know what I'm talking about—if you have a floral outfit on, are you going to wear some black, clunky pumps with that? You're going to overpower your dress with your shoes. Right? A couple of people are nodding. Maybe you would. Maybe it's new fashion. But if you're wearing a black business suit, are you going to wear floral flip flops with that? Most times not. The same thing with your food and wine. You have to match the intensity of the two together. You can't get crazy.

Aside from matching the weights, now the reactions come into play.

Chapter 2: Tasting Wine

We're going to start talking about it, but first you need to learn how to taste wine and some basic wine styles. Now you all say, "Well I've been drinking for years. I know everything about tasting wine." We're going to do a little review and we'll see if you do. You have four glasses labeled 1 through 4, and you also have a program which tells you what wines you have. If you just happen to be zoning out because you've



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tasted a lot of wine today, the notes are there for you to take home so you can remember what we're saying here.

Your first wine, the wine all the way to the left, is your St. Michael's Winery Pinot Blanc. This is going to be our lightest style wine. The first thing you want to do when you get your glass is look at it. The second thing you do is smell it. The third thing is to taste it. Most of us skip steps one and two and go right to the tasting, don't we? Looking and smelling are really, really important. To look, just tilt it at a 45-degree angle. Put something white behind it if you really want to get a good vantage point. You'll notice that most fine dining restaurants have white table cloth, white napkin. It's the perfect background for your wine. You must thank them for that because they're doing a great service. Give it a tilt and just look at the color. How might we describe the color? I will tell you that there are no wrong answers in this room, so you can say whatever you want. How might you describe it? Would you say it's dark? No. Okay. Light—someone said light. What shade maybe? Straw, did somebody say? Melon. Yellow. Sure. Straw. All of that is right. It's a light color. The other thing you can see with your eyes is if you see haziness in your wine, two things, and they're both a problem. It could be a fault with your wine, which is not a good sign, or your glass was dirty, also a problem. Either of those, you probably want to send your wine back.

The other thing you can see, when I first started seeing people swirling their wine, I thought that was so pretentious. Why would they just stop swirling their wine? I didn't really understand why they were doing it. There are two real reasons to do it. One is to look at the legs. I think someone just said it up here. When you swirl your glass, and then hold it up to the light, give it a minute. You may see some little trails of wine traveling down the glass. Those are your legs. You gotta love them. You got legs on your wine. It's wonderful. They don't tell you anything about the quality of the wine. I hear people saying, "Ooo, look at the legs. This is a great wine." It doesn't really tell you if it's a great wine. What it tells you is whether it's a light-bodied wine, a medium-bodied wine, or a full-bodied wine. What do I mean by that? Remember, I need pictures in my mind. If you picture three glasses—skim milk, whole milk and heavy cream. Think of how they feel in your mouth. Think of the texture and the heaviness, the viscosity. That's the idea of light, medium and full. You know you drink some wines and they're really refreshing, and then other wines, they make you stop for a minute because whoa, you just know you have a big powerhouse, a heavy wine in your mouth. That's the difference between light, medium and full.

Let's say you're in the store and you don't know if it's a light or a medium or a full, and they won't open them. It's terrible when they won't do that. Some stores will let you try. The way you can tell is go to a bottle. If it's between 7 and 11 percent alcohol, that's a light-bodied wine. If it's 11 to 13 or 13-1/2, you're in your medium range. Anything over 13-1/2 percent alcohol is a fuller-bodied wine.

You'll notice, if you think about climate, cooler climates, the grapes will not get as ripe, so there's not...the less sugar there is, the less alcohol you're going to end up with. If you go to the store, it's really fun. Look in the France section, look in the Germany section, then go to California and Australia. You will notice that at least 1 to 2 to maybe even 3 percent alcohol difference in a lot of the wines because of the cooler climate versus the warmer climate. Warmer climate wines tend to be fuller bodied in a lot of cases.



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Everything that I generalize about, there's always an exception. For example, last night, we did a wine dinner with Oregon wines from the Willamette Valley, which is a climate similar to Burgundy France, so that is a cool climate, even though we're on the West Coast and you think it's real warm and hot. It still has the coolness.

Now we know our legs. If they travel fast, that means it's a light-bodied wine, slow is a heavy-bodied. Now the other reason for swirling is to smell. Up through your retronasal passage—that's in your nose, back there—you have something called the olfactory bulb. I know it sounds really geeky, but it's basically your file folder how your brain knows what things smell like. I have some really bad news for all of you. Your tongue is not really that smart. Your tongue only knows sweet, sour, salty and bitter. We all think that our mouth does the workhorse of the tasting process, but your nose does 80% of the tasting. Anybody here have a cold right now? That's great because we'd be really sad for you. If you have a cold...do you ever notice how you eat because your stomach is hungry, but you don't enjoy the food? It's sort of like you're only getting half of it. It's because your nose is not there. If you love mango or peach or banana or any of those flavors, those are all perceived from your olfactory, not your tongue. If you don't believe me, try eating with your nose pinched and you'll notice you get nothing. Smelling is key. The only way to smell is a vapor, and when you swirl, you vaporize the alcohol. Don't be shy. Stick your whole nose right down. That's why the glass is tapered, so you can fit your nose in there. We're all friends by now, right, so we do this. Give it a smell and tell me what you smell. Again, this is challenging. People say, "I don't know. It smells like wine." Of course it does smell like wine. Do you smell apple or pear or peach? It takes a while to train yourself to be able to...you feel like it's on the tip of your tongue, but you can't quite connect it. You know what, we spend all of our time thinking these days. Smelling is a primal skill, and we're just not in touch with it. Great wine tasters are people like chefs or people that work with food because they smell all day long. If you want to be a better taster, just go to The Giant. Don't worry what people think about you. Run around, smell all the fruit. Smell the produce. People will think you're weird. It's fine. Go to the spice rack. Start smelling that. Then you'll be able to connect to is it a clove smell or a cumin smell or is it the skin of a tomato versus the flesh of a tomato. That's where the skill comes in. What do you smell here? Grapefruit. Citrus. Apricot. Melon. Perfect. Wow! You guys...were you studying before you came in? Everybody was studying in line. I love it.

Second thing—we talked about the body. I'm going to let you taste this and you're going to tell me what body style you think this is. The other thing I want you to pay attention to is acidity. For white wine, acidity is key to the structure of the wine. What do I mean by that? Think of a lemon. The pucker of a lemon. Really tart lemonade. Makes you pucker. Makes you salivate a little bit. You're like, "Ooo!" It kind of wakes up your mouth, doesn't it? I love acidity. That's important. If a wine gives you that feeling, it's a high acid wine or a crisp wine. Anybody here a Sauvignon Blanc fan? I'm a huge one. That is epitome of a crisp wine. I call it like the Sprite of wine because it's just lemon, lime, all those great flavors. Who likes buttery Chardonnay? Nice, full body. Okay, great. Perfect. That is on the other end of the spectrum. Soft, mellow, heavier on your palate. Go ahead. Give this one a taste.

I'm going to show you two tricks we do at professional tastings. One is to chew the wine. I bet you didn't know you could do that. The other is to feather, it's going to kind of look I'm doing a backward whistle I'm kind of gurgling with the wine. Don't make laugh because I might spit it, and I don't want to do that. Here's



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how it goes. We might spit, too, but I'm not going to make you do that today, because we're here for fun. [Demonstrating] I'm gurgling it around. I'm chewing on it. That's to coat your mouth so you can really feel it, and also get it up your retro-nasal so you can smell it even better. Go ahead. Give it a try, and then tell me what you think about the body and the acidity factor on this wine. Does it feel heavy? No, pretty light. Do you feel a little tanginess from this wine? There is a little tanginess there. Not maybe to the extent of a Sauvignon Blanc, of course. This is a Pinot Blanc from St. Michael's Winery, right here in St. Michael's. We could not have one of our own wines here in the lineup. Lighter bodied. Pinot Blanc's really famous in Alsace. I love them. It's one of my favorite grapes. Now in California more and more people are making Pinot Blanc. I hope you're enjoying this. They make it in Italy, Northern Italy as well. This is our first—light, crisp style wine. We talked about the flavors.

If we move to the second glass...now that you guys are becoming pros, we can go through these. Give it a tilt. Do you see any difference in the color? A little bit darker, right? You can pretty much equate the intensity of the color to the intensity of the wine. As they start to get darker, many times, they do start to become bigger, bolder wines. Give it a swirl. Do we smell anything different on this one? What do we smell? Less fruity. Did somebody say buttery? Butter. Creamy. People might say a little bit of oak aspect there. Give it a taste. This is the Wolf Blass Yellow Label Chardonnay from Australia. It's a very classic Chardonnay. I think it has the oak aspect, but it's not too overly done. Do you feel how much heavier this is in your mouth and how lingering it is? It's a fuller bodied, and it didn't have that zing of acidity that our first wine had. Right? How many people liked the Pinot Blanc the best? How many people liked the Chardonnay the best? Okay, great.

Now you're only tasting things by themselves. We're not introducing food. I told people in the class yesterday, in America, for some reason, we grew up thinking of wine as a cocktail. Wine is actually part of the recipe of your meal. It's part of your meal. It's a food product. In Italy, they don't put that warning label on the wine bottles that say, "Oh no, this is really bad for you." It's a food product like cheese is or like anything else. That's the way I think about a lot of wines. I might not like wine number two by itself, but with a pasta with a cream sauce, it would be delicious. Wine number one I like by itself. We can't always judge wines just by one sip without food. That's what this class is going to be about.

Chapter 3: Weird Science – Salt + Wine

In front of you, you have some plates. We're going to start now with the white wines experimenting. One of the first weird science rules is salt will reduce the perception of acidity. Remember our first wine was lighter bodied, our melon, our citrus fruits, with some acidity. Our second wine is a lot fuller, mellow, with more of the oaky vanilla, creamy thing going on. Low acid. Salt reduces the perception of acidity. You have a little container there with salt. What I want you to do...I told everybody yesterday, the way to see how a wine changes with food is to make a **wine sandwich**. This is the way I think of it. It's delicious. It's really, really good. You take one sip of the wine. You take a little touch of the salt you have in your container, and then take a second sip of the wine. Wine, salt, wine. You have a little cup of salt. You can just put it on your finger or just take a little taste of it. You have a spoon there if you want to do it that way. Do it first with wine number one. Sip of the wine, taste the salt, and then sip the wine a second time. On the second sip of wine number one, I want to see what you think. This is the ah-ha moment. Right? Yeah, it just flat...somebody up front said it just flattens out the acidity. Right? This is one of the key, key rules to food and wine pairing. Nobody ever told us about this. Well, thankfully somebody told me about it.



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When you have foods that have salt in them...what foods have salt in them? Everything we eat basically. Unless you're on a restricted salt diet, everything we eat basically has salt. Acidity in wine...sometimes by itself, a lot of us didn't like this wine by itself. Anybody like the wine better with the salt than did alone? Perfect. One time I had some guy put the salt in the wine, which I do not recommend. That's wine abuse. You can see how in the presence of some food, you start liking a wine which at first you might not have liked. I hope you...now you see it.

Now we're going to move to the second wine, which remember, was a lower acid wine. Try your wine sandwich with the salt with the Chardonnay, and then let's see what you think there. Wines from cooler climates tend to retain their acidity better. Cooler areas like the Willamette Valley, like a lot of areas of Europe, have a lot of acidity. Chablis—real Chablis from France—tends to have a real steely acidity. A lot of people taste them and say, "I don't like that." But they don't taste it with food. Once you're in the presence of food, those wines will stand up to food so much better because they can stand up to salt and acids, which we're going to talk about next, things like vinaigrettes and goat cheese.

What do we think about the Chardonnay? How did that stand up to the test? Not so good. But a lot of you liked it by itself. Right? Do you like it as much now as you did before? Right. This is it, right. I always say it's kind of like people. Sometimes you'll meet people, and you don't really like them at first, and then you get to know them and you kind of soften up to them and you kind of get what they have to offer. Some people, you like them right away, but then you kind of find out later that maybe you made a wrong first impression. Same thing with the wine. I hope you will tend to give your wines more than a one sip chance from now on.

Chapter 4: Weird Science – Acid + Wine

Let's try something else. You have a little container with vinaigrette. You have a spoon there so you can just kind of dip it in there and taste. The second thing that reduces our perception of acidity is acid. I talked about acid in our wine, but lots of foods have acid, like vinegars, goat cheese, all kinds of acid is prevalent. What I want you to do is do your wine sandwich number—wine, food, wine—with both of these two whites, and let's see... If you need to clear your palate with a cracker, I think that's a good idea, too. Let's see what you think about what the vinaigrette does to the wine. Who knew it could be so much fun, right? It's like a little experiment. I thought food and wine pairing was so stressful because I always thought it was a big memorization game about every dish and what wine went through it, but then when I talked to a lot of sommeliers when I first started getting into the business, they said, "Well you know what we do? We come up with our hypothesis and then we go back into the kitchen with the chef and we taste his sauce and we taste it with the wine, and you play with it." It's all a matter of experimenting. Doesn't that feel so much freer than having one perfect wine? And you know what? We had a table last night where we didn't always agree on what the one perfect wine was because it is subjective. What I like may not be what you like. That's what's great about wine. There's something for everyone. I love when there's a disagreement because that makes the discussion so much more interesting, I think. Maybe it's the Jersey in me coming out.

What do we think about the vinaigrette and how that affects the wine? It definitely...did you feel the tone of the acidity as well. And it went further. Okay. Meaning you got a longer linger, a longer finish with the wine. Great. But did you see how it also reduced that zing of the Pinot Blanc, and sort of took a little bit away from the Chardonnay? The Chardonnay doesn't have the acidity to stand up to either of these things.



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You have to have the acidity if you're in the presence of some real salt or some real acid. A lot of us, when we go out to dinner...this is the way I grew up doing it, too, you sit down and say what would you like to drink? And you just order your wine with no thought of what you're going to have to eat, "Oh, I'll have a Merlot. For an appetizer, I'll have the spicy mussels." Ohhhh. But, you know, we just didn't grow up thinking that way, so no one ever... So now, I love it, because I always start out with some sparkling wine and then I'll have some white wine with the appetizers...that's why half bottles are great. If you have a restaurant that has half bottles, that's amazing because you can do a different wine with each course and not overdo it.

You see how salt comes in. Salt reduces the perception of acidity. Acidity tones down the acidity. It's not going to...it's not additive...it didn't make it a sour bomb. Right? It actually softened it. It's a balancing act. They kind of balance each other out.

Chapter 5: Tasting Red Wines

Now let's move on and taste our two red wines, and then we're going to start experimenting with some other things. If you want to go to glass number three, this is a New Zealand Pinot Noir from Stoneleigh. Give a look at the color. It's really great to see it right next to the other red because color with reds is so much more vibrant. Do you see a difference between three and four in color intensity? You see it right off the bat. You can see through this wine, so right away you know it's sort of a lighter bodied, less intense. There are some exceptions. I'm a big fan of Barolo...some of you were here with me yesterday for the Barolo class. Barolo's tend to be not as darkly colored, even though they're real bold and big. Yes.

Yes, I know. There was just a substitution for this one, so it's actually the Stoneleigh Pinot Noir. If you want to email me, also before I can email all the names of these wines to you. We substituted a few wines.

This is a New Zealand, not a California. We'll give a look it. You can see it's already see-through. Give it a swirl. What do you smell? Wine. Anybody? Any kinds of fruits? Blackberry. Wonderful. Raisin. Good. I get a little cherry. Cherries. People are liking cherries. It smells good, right? It smells fruity. Black cherry, or blackberry. Great. Give it a taste and notice what happens in your mouth.

What makes red wine different than white wine other than the color? One thing called tannins. Red wine is only red because we let the skins sit with the juice of the grape and give it a color. It's kind of like making tea. You let the tea bag sit in the water and it colors the water. Tea, by the way, is high in tannin. Tea leaves have tannin, too. Tannin feels in your mouth, not that I've ever had this experience, like cotton mouth. You know that dry mouth feeling you might get if you had a little too much wine the night before. Your mouth is devoid of moisture, a little dry mouth. That's the way tannin feels. People sometimes call it a bite, "I don't like that red wine because it has a bite." It just kind of dries the moisture out. How does that feel with regard to this wine? Do you get that sensation with this one? It's nice.

The thing to distinguish with red is that there can be acidity in here, which is pucker, and salivation on the sides of your tongue versus all over mouth dry mouth feel. I would say that this wine has a nice amount of acid, as I'm salivating. I want to eat something. Acidic wines make you want to eat something. It's just



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natural. But I don't get that dry mouth. It is more refreshing than I think you're going to find the next wine. I think it'll make more sense as we move into the Cabernet.

This Pinot has some good acidity to it. It has good fruit. That's why Pinot Noir is considered one of the most food friendly wines because it has good fruit, it has good acid, and pretty soft tannins. The acidity helps it stand up to a lot of different kinds of food. Salads with vinaigrettes and things like that, are best as sort of a high acid, white wines in many cases. Pinot's are one of the few things that can kind of stand up to that sort of thing because it does have acidity in it.

Let's move on to the Kaiken Cabernet. It's from Argentina. We already know it's a little more intense from the color. We notice that right off the bat. Give it a swirl. What do you smell? It should have a much different nose profile. We got leather. It's funny because smell is really memory dependent. In one of my certification classes somebody said, "This smells like my grandfather's barn when I used to play there when I was 10 years old." Wooo! It really can take you back to a specific time and place. I always seem to relate it to candy. My mom used to let us...I guess we ate whatever candy we wanted because I know all these candies, I'm like licorice, Good 'N Plenty, black Necco wafer. I get all excited about it. Whatever it is for you, it doesn't have to be the right word or what a critic would write in a critique. Did you get some berry fruits on this? I think there's a lot more blacker fruit like currant, really dark. But I think the leather and the oak aspects. She said chocolate, coffee. Those sorts of things usually come from aging in oak barrels. Smokiness sometimes...we had a Pinot last night that had a smoky aspect. The reason that you get that is when they make oak barrels; sometimes they char the inside of the barrel. The wine maker orders a toast level, whether it's lightly toasted, medium toast or heavy toast, kind of like when we make our toast in the morning. Some of us like it burnt, some of us like it really lightly done. Same thing for the oak barrels. That imparts a flavor in the wine. Flavors like leather and chocolate tend to come from the oak. Did you guys taste this? Do you feel a little drying on the roof of your mouth, your tongue, all of that? It's different than when you had the Pinot, right? The Pinot was acidity; this is tannin. The red grape skins impart the tannin to the juice. Champagne is made from three grapes, two of which are red grapes, but we make it into a white wine. It's only the skins that color the wine and give it that tannin. Who likes that feeling of the dry kind of grip at the end? I love it. It makes my whole mouth feel resurfaced. It's just fresh. Some people like it; some people don't.

Chapter 6: Tannins + Animal Fats

Just like acidity had a purpose in food and wine pairing, tannin has a process. Tannin binds with animal proteins. What has animal proteins? Cheese and meat. What I want you to try is, experiment with the cheese, with our two reds—the Pinot and the Cabernet. Make the wine sandwich—wine, food, wine; wine, cheese, wine. Notice how the wines change. The Pinot doesn't have much tannin, but the Cabernet does. The good thing about tannin, even for those of you who may not like it, tannins are antioxidants. They're good for your heart. There's a medicinal reason for drinking this Cabernet. Other things, though, if you want to get tannins and not through your wine, walnuts are high in tannin. Those are very high. Blueberries, cranberries—those are the super foods, and that's why, because the tannins fight free radicals. They also help you look a little bit younger. Even if maybe it's not your cup of tea, I think you'll notice with the wine sandwich that the tannic wines can be toned down just by picking the right dish.



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You have meat here, too, so... Did anybody try a wine sandwich with the cheese with the Cabernet? Did you feel it soften on the tannin factor on the finish? Kind of like what the salt did with the Pinot Blanc. This Kaiken Cabernet is from the Mendoza Region of Argentina. It's the same people...have you ever had Montes Alpha...is another winery? They own this winery. They were actually...the founders of that company were responsible for building the wine industry in Argentina. They really were huge.

You see how tannins are softened by animal proteins. That's where that whole adage about red wine with red meat—that's where that came from because it's a different wine. Who liked the Cabernet the begin with? Anybody like it now and didn't like it to begin with? See that's it. Isn't that amazing? Might you have taken one sip of that wine and just dismiss it and say, "I don't like that. I'm done." It's kind of like your mom tells you not to judge a book by its cover when you meet people. You don't give them a chance. If you didn't give this wine a chance with a little piece of steak or a little piece of cheese, you wouldn't have all those great fruit flavors and the tannin kind of disappears in that essence.

We have some other things on the plate. We talked about salt. We talked about acids. We talked about tannins with animal proteins. There are some other things, too. We said that the Chardonnay had a creamy aspect. You have some butter there. Just straight butter. My daughter is four. She like to eat straight butter. Here's your chance to do it. I'm actually telling you to do it. We don't get to do this anymore as adults, but now you can do it. Go ahead and try your wine sandwich with any of your whites or reds with the butter.

Notice that one of the ways of pairing is to find a bridge flavor. What I mean by that is find a flavor in the wine that's also present in the food. You have creaminess in your Chardonnay and you have creaminess with the butter. But notice how you like the butter with the other wines as well. Go ahead. I'm going to let you guys experiment with the butter. Experiment with the butter, and in a minute, we're going to try the yummy crummies.

Participant: I already ate mine.

He couldn't help himself. [PAUSE] Wild Irish Rose and pizza—that's what I'm being told is a really good combination. I'll have to give that a try. Maybe tonight.

Question: How often are you tasting wine?

I try to try four to six wines every day, myself, just to try them. As far as doing events, I do a radio show once a week and I write some columns and I do some emails. Some of you are on my email list, so you already get my wine tips. I try not do more than one event a day because my husband will have my head, but sometimes I do two or three. But I'm not always drinking. I'm here to help you have fun. I'm working.

What do we think about the butter? What was the favorite combination? Anybody? With the Chardonnay. Anybody like the butter with the reds? Somebody did! Which one? With the Cabernet. Okay, that's interesting because that has animal fat in it. You see how you can experiment, but we're not all going to agree on what our favorite is. That's what makes it fun, I think.



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Chapter 7: Sugar

We talked about the salts. We talked about the acids. We talked about creaminess and matching that with creaminess in our wine. Sugar. Anybody have your wine left over from dinner and you try to drink it through dessert? Sometimes that can work with certain red wines and chocolate. But did you ever try to drink a Chardonnay with a chocolate dessert? Sometimes your wine just starts becoming tasteless or bitter with dessert. That's because when you have sugar in the dish, you need matching sugar or fruitiness in the wine. It's just like our acids matching each other out. With sugar, you need sugar. That's why dessert wines are sweet. You need your wine to be just a tad sweeter than the dessert itself so that it can stand up to the sugar in the dish. I'm specifically talking about desserts.

I want to experiment with one that doesn't work. What you have is some little pieces of pecans and they're covered in sugar. There's a lady right next to me in the bandstand pavilion, Pecan Yummies, and these are hers. They're great. They're addictive, people, so just watch out. Try some little pieces of the pecan yummys, and then try drinking some of your wines—red, white, whatever—and just notice how the sugar affects the wine.

I haven't been able to really taste around the festival. Are there some vendors that are serving dessert wines here? Sweet wines. Okay. What you need to do is you need to go to Amy over at Pecan Yummies. Get some yummys and then go bring them to the dessert wine table because that will show you the way it should be done. Do you notice...what's happening to your wine? Flat. No flavor. Bitter somebody said. Because there's no sugar in the wine to match the sugar in the dish. It's all like a balancing act—our acidity with our acidity or our salt to our acidity. You really have to sort of try to balance things out. Sugar can kill it.

Sometimes people make dinner dishes that have a sweet fruit chutney or some sort of sauce that has a sweetness. When you know that's happening, you have to account for that in your wine. You want a wine...we had a Riesling last night that had some sweetness, so that's going to be able to stand up to some dishes with a fruit aspect to them.

Chapter 8: Spicy Foods & Summary

Spicy foods—I didn't do that to you today because...sometimes I do hot sauce, and I love to watch the faces, but I know you want to go out and taste more wines, so I didn't do it to you. Spicy foods are great paired with wines with a little bit of sweetness or at least a lot of fruitiness. That's going to tone down the hot. If you try to drink a really high alcohol, buttery Chardonnay with spicy food, it's like putting gasoline on the fire. Would you do that? No, you wouldn't do it. But we do it. Thai restaurants, Indian restaurants, next time you go, look at the wine list you'll see—Riesling, Gewurztraminer, you'll see a lot of wines that either have a little bit of residual sugar, meaning sugar that wasn't fermented over to alcohol or at least a lot of fruit to stand up to the spiciness of the dish. You really need to kind of take that.

Try it at home. To me, this is the perfect dinner party what we just did. Invite your friends over. Now you can make real dishes. You don't have to make them eat salt, but it would be fun, wouldn't it? Invite them over. Have a salty dish. Have a goat cheese aspect because goat cheese is high in acid, so that could be your vinaigrette portion. Have a spicy shrimp dish with a Riesling with a little bit of...and then have different wines and then it's something for the whole dinner party to talk about. Do two wines with each of the courses—one that works and one that doesn't.



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That's always good. I do a lot of ladies' events and I always say you never know when you have a good guy until you've had a bad one. You need to have something to compare it to. I know you're all here with the good ones. Right? You're all here with the good ones. You really need to have something to compare it to. If you only ever had a perfect pairing of wine, you'd never know what a bad one is. I hope this has inspired you guys to do some experimenting on your own!