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What's new in the Grapevine this week?

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Romance and Red Wine

If you ask anyone what the most essential ingredients for a romantic evening are, most people will tell you that a bottle of red wine is a necessary ingredient. Did you know though that your wine will do more than just taste good with dinner? On Valentine's Day and beyond, a good bottle of vino can actually be doing double duty for folks who have a lover to romance. Even if you're not a Casanova, don't get discouraged. We're willing to bet that even he had a few tricks up his sleeve when he wooed women - namely red wine.

After much laborious research, scientists determined that 1 - 2 glasses of red wine is the ideal lubricant for both social and sexual encounters. Naturally, this study on the effects of red wine on your sex drive was conducted by Italian researchers. (Go figure!)

The findings showed that when you take the first sip of wine, the body immediately begins to experience a chemical reaction that causes people to relax, open up, and generally feel more at ease. Essentially this sensation of euphoria is the manifestation of "liquid courage" that we hear so much about.

However, there is a finite window between which you go from sober and staid to a suave, cooing Romeo. This happens after about two drinks. After that, your performance goes down. Between 1 and 2 drinks, researchers found, is the ideal level for maximum confidence, performance, and success.

While all alcohol in moderation helps get things moving and increases sexual pleasure and desire, none has more benefit than red wine. In both sexes the effects are readily apparent.

For females, the compounds in wine actually enhance the chemical levels of desire within the body. Much of this is a result of increased blood flow to

a woman's erogenous areas. As this reaction is a chemically sped up version of a natural effect, it's safe to assume red wine is indeed effective in heightening desire.

For men, the same holds true: the flow of blood to essential areas is also increased by red wine. However, this libation of Bacchus also increases the level of testosterone within the male body. This means that not only are men primed by a couple glasses of wine, but their sexual appetite is also raised.

Researchers emphasized though that moderation is key. After more than one or two drinks, the alcohol begins to take a stronger hold which can result in a less pleasurable experience.

So this Valentine's Day it appears that the best prescription for a good evening is a bottle of wine for two. Pop the cork out of your favorite red wine and split it with your special someone. That way, you'll both get the ideal amount in your system to leave you relaxed and ready for whatever the evening brings.

Valentine's Day is Tomorrow!

Valentine's Day is the day we go out of our way to boost the "amour" in our amorous relationships. I've often said that "wining and dining" is the way to put the "woo-woo!" in your woo-ing. And of course, the Wine Gallery is in favor of happy couples so we are offering a few suggestive suggestions to make your Valentine's Day memorable.

Lovers who really want to cover all the bases can order a Valentine's gift basket. We can stock it with any of our gourmet and Olivelle products or you can choose from our wide assortment of meats, cheeses, crackers, sauces, cookies and specialty gourmet foods. Whatever you choose, we can complete the thought with the stunning presentation of a Wine Gallery Gift Basket. We even have a few baskets already made up with chocolates and wine for your sweet Valentine. If you want a custom basket, give us a call or send an e-mail and we will make one up for you.

Check out our line-up of Champagnes and domestic sparkling wines for your romantic dinner next Saturday. We bought enough of our year end allocation of Veuve Cliquot to keep the Holiday price at **\$46.95**. We also have several sparkling rose' wines that will brighten up your Valentine's Dinner. Check them out—they range in price from **\$14 up to \$92**.

No one lives on wine alone. Another substance known to have an effect on your love life is chocolate. Chocolate contains two chemicals, theobromine and phenyl ethylamine, which are mild mood lifters that your brain could interpret as "I'm in love". The romantic part is that chocolate makes you feel loved and while

there is plenty of evidence for this (none of it scientific), you really need to run the experiment again and find out if chocolate is a “food of love”.

As you all know, we love to support local businesses. This year, Cupid’s assistant, Tiffany, arranged for the Wine Gallery to offer specially package chocolates from **La Chatelaine**. Add those to a bottle of bubbly and most of the bases for Valentine’s Day are covered. Just think up something mushy to say and your romance will come alive.

Wine Classes: What’s in it for me?

Did you ever want to know how to pair wine with food that went beyond “White wine with white meat; red wine with red meat”? Have you ever wondered why Pinot Noir grows well in Oregon but not in Washington? How about “What is the difference between California Chardonnay, South American Chardonnay and Chardonnay from Chablis?” Curious about how to evaluate and rate wines? Want to know how and when to decant a wine? Do you want to expand your knowledge of wine varieties and get out of the Sauvignon Blanc/Chardonnay/Pinot Noir/Cabernet rut? Can you spot the difference in flavor between French Oak and American Oak? Do you want to get geeky about yeast strains, malo-lactic fermentation and riddling Champagne bottles? Care to know the difference between Bordeaux, Burgundy and Rhone wines? Ever wonder if the shape of a wine glass makes a difference? Do you want to bump up your food and wine pairing skills to make you the envy of your friends?

If any or all of those things are of interest to you, the Wine Gallery can help. We ran a poll and it ran pretty close to 50/50 as to the preference for Monday nights or Saturday afternoons. Tiffany suggested we schedule both sessions and see who signs up. We both thought we would have to set a minimum of 8 people per class to offer the program. Let me give you the details and see what fits your own schedule.

The plan is to hold the classes at the Food Studio. We will be able to spread out and have plenty of room for demonstrations and tasting. Our plan is to have about 90 minutes of class followed by 30-40 minutes of “lab” where we taste wines that show off the salient points of the day’s lesson. The lab session will also allow us to pair wines with assorted cheese and charcuterie prepared for us by the Food Studio.

The first sessions will be Saturday, **March 30 and Monday, April 1st**. Subsequent sessions will be held over the next two months on Saturday afternoon and Monday evenings. Both Saturday and Monday sessions will be identical but

offered for the most convenience of your schedule. The first session will cover the basic history and development of wine, how wine is made, tips on tasting, wine evaluation method, and wine etiquette. Later sessions will cover the main wine regions and wine grapes of the world, wine pairing, reading a wine label, wine customs and law, and a host of other topics related to a well-rounded background in wine.

The cost for each session is \$49 and includes the study materials, food pairing and wines for the “lab”. You can sign up by calling 586-8828 or sending an e-mail to bozemanwinegallery@gmail.com.

93 point Tasting Update

Imagine being in a restaurant for a special occasion and reading the wine list to find something for the table. Without ever having the chance to taste the wine first, you must make a decision on a bottle that could cost \$75 - \$99 in one of Bozeman’s better restaurants. How do you know what it’s like? It is a very expensive gamble to just point and hope. So, how can you get a less expensive education?

For what you would pay for just one of those bottles we will be offering wine tasters a chance to taste from our line-up of 50 wines rated 93 points and above at our Annual 93 Point Tasting on March 9th. A wine rated 93 points or higher is an extraordinary wine of profound and complex character displaying all the attributes expected of a classic wine of its variety. Wines of this caliber are worth a special effort to find, purchase, and consume. It would be impossible to taste all of the wines we’ll show but it only takes a tablespoon of any these wonderful wines to give your taste buds the information you need to make a decision to buy or not.

Our venue will be the Food Studio on West Kagy and the fun will start at 7 PM. Light hors d’oeuvres, cheeses and charcuterie will give tasters the chance to compare these world class wines with food. You can call us at 586-8828 or send an e-mail to bozemanwinegallery@gmail.com to reserve your seat. I know the event is a month away but over half the tickets are sold so don’t dilly-dally too long if you want to get in on the best wine tasting event of the year.