

COURSE MATERIALS

Tasting sheets, wine list and resources

FOOD & WINE PAIRING





There is nothing quite like a memorable dining experience. The laughter, friendship, and love underpin an excellent meal paired with a delectable wine. It is truly the epitome of why learning about wine can be so rewarding! Being able to select fantastic wines for you and your guests based on both the menu and their taste is an admirable talent. So, how do you get there?

Pairing food and wine should be fun, not a source of stress. As foodie culture expands into the mainstream, dishes have become increasingly innovative and diverse. Properly pairing food and wine can be an excellent way to intensify meals and show your personal flair as a host.

A few ground rules can help bring your pairing experience from frazzled foodie to marvellous matchmaker. When pairing wine with food, pay attention to the big picture and the details. Before we get to making pairings, let's discuss some terms you will hear frequently when discussing wines: Portugal, or Sherry from Spain.

Basic Components of Wine

All wines have four basic components that will have an impact on the food we eat: sugar, acid, tannin and alcohol .

Sweetness

Sweetness in wine helps to enhance the fruit flavours of the wine. It softens the acidity and gives the wine extra mouth feel. When paired with dishes sweeter than the wine, it will make the wine taste less sweet and even dull. To prevent this, the wine must be sweeter than the food. Sweetness in wine will soften the peppery or hot or spicy food.

Acidity

Acidity provides freshens and a crisp lively mouth-feel. Acidity in wine balances the sweetness by reducing its intensity. Sweetness in food will accentuate the acidity in wine.

Tannin

Tannin provides structure and ageability. Tannin is perceived as bitterness on the back of the palate and astringency (dry, furry feeling) throughout the mouth. Protein, fats and oils can mellow the tannin; however , acid and salt components in food can increase the perception of tannin.

Alcohol

Alcohol gives the wine body. Typically, the higher the alcohol content the fuller the body. Alcohol also gives the perception of sweetness; therefore, high-alcohol wines will have a perception of sweetness even if classified as dry. Salty foods can make high- alcohol wines taste bitter. High alcohol wines can make hot spicy food taste even hotter.



Scents vs Tastes

Scents

Aromas and flavours are terms used to describe smells and are sensed in the retro-nasal passages. Aromas enter through the nasal passage, while flavour enters through the mouth. White wines tend to mimic pale fruity scents such as apple, pear, and grapefruit. Red wines tend to have dark or red-fleshed fruit scents such as raspberry, blueberry, and cherry.

Tastes

As you know there are four tastes: sweet, sour, salty, and bitter. Tastes are sensed on the tongue.

When trying to pair food and wine, and before getting into the nitty gritty of what elements make up the food or the wine, a quick scan of the menu can give you enough insight to pair right. I call this, 'using the big picture'. Here are some overarching rules that can get you successfully pairing today.

The Big Picture

1. Quality and Complexity

Like any combination of two things there can only be one star. This doesn't mean the wine and dish quality shouldn't be equal, however the complexity levels of each component should not. Complex and mature wine should be served with a simple dish.

2. Weight

In food pairing,

like any good relationship, it is wise to seek balance. Light food pairs well with light-bodied wine, while heavy meals pair best with full-bodied wines. If the pairing isn't balanced the heavier of the two will overpower the lighter (that can be either the wine or food).

Body or weight describes the feel of the food or wine in your mouth. Wine is described as being light, medium, or full-bodied, while a meal can be described as light or rich. Milk is a perfect example of another beverage mimicking the weight of wine.

Type of Milk	Body	Mouthfeel
Skim Milk	Light	Watery
Whole Milk	Medium	A little thicker
Cream	Full	Rich and thick

How to Tell the Body of a Wine

When reading a menu or picking a bottle off the shelf how will you know the weight of the wine? You can always ask your server or the salesperson. But sometimes neither of those people can help, or you just want to do it on your own. I respect that!

Here are a few tips that can provide insight into the weight of a wine:

The Grape Variety

White wines are usually lighter-bodied than red wines. On a scale of lightest body to the heaviest body see where some of the most popular wines fall.

WHITE WINES	RED WINES
Champagne	
<u>Muscadet</u>	
Pinot Blanc	
Pinot Grigio (IT)	
Pinot Gris (FR)	
Sancerre or <u>Pouilly Fume</u>	
Riesling	
Gewürztraminer	
Chablis	
Sauvignon Blanc (CA)	
Viognier	
Chardonnay (<u>oaked</u>)	
	<u>Gamay</u>
	Pinot Noir
	Grenache
	Tempranillo
	Sangiovese
	Merlot
	Nebbiolo
	Syrah
	Zinfandel
	Cabernet Sauvignon
	Shiraz

Viognier, Chardonnay, Gamay, and Pinot Noir are what I like to call toss up grapes. You can pair a dish like salmon or pasta with either a white or a red, making either of them perfect for pairing with these grapes. At your next dining out experience instead of getting 6 oz of one grape varietal order a half glass of a Chardonnay and a half glass of Pinot Noir and see which you prefer with the salmon.

Another Clue to the Weight of a Wine (when it's impolite or impossible to ask

Region

The regional climate and wine maker can have a great impact on the wine. Take for example Chardonnay; a Chardonnay made in cool climate Niagara tends to be lighter bodied when compared to an oaked Chardonnay from hot California.

In the Chardonnay example another element is introduced - the barrel. Wines aged in an oak barrel tend to be a little heavier than wines made in a steel tank. In fact, other wine making techniques can alter what we may typically come to expect from a grape variety. More on that to come in a future module...patience grasshopper.

Alcohol Level

When shopping for wine and wondering what will pair well with the meal you have planned, flip the bottle around and check out the alcohol percentage. Wines that are less than 12 percent alcohol tend to be lighter-bodied compared to those over 13 percent, which are usually heavy-bodied. Pair lower alcohol level wines with lighter and spicier food.

During module 1 you learned how grapes turn into alcohol. Yeasts feed on the grapes converting sugar into alcohol. The riper a grape gets the more sugar it will have to convert to alcohol. This is where hang-time and other wine making/viticulturist techniques can influence a wine.

3. Intensity

Intensity can substitute for weight. A light-bodied wine that is peppered with intense flavour can be paired with a heavy dish. For example, an intensely aromatic Riesling pairs well with a weighty, rich dish like braised duck.

The Details

The big picture rules are great for snap pairings, or even as a good starter as you learn more about pairing. Because there are intricacies, you can have even more fun in the details. Looking deeper into ingredients is key in some pairings since cooking and wine making techniques can make for great sport when pairing food and wine. So let's play with the details.

1. Acidity

You can adjust the acidity in your food and wine selections to enhance your meals. Acidity in food can increase the perception of body, sweetness, and fruitiness in the wine that accompanies it. It can also decrease the perception of acidity in the wine itself. By pairing an acidic dish, like a tomato based recipe with a highly acidic wine, the food will bring the wine into balance and enhance its fruitiness.

If a wine with a low level of acidity is paired with a tart meal, the high acidity levels in the food can leave a wine tasting flat. Highly acidic wines also act as a palate cleanser. Both sweetness and fat coats the palate, while acidity refreshes and cleanses.

2. Texture

Food has many different textures: think of the crispiness of good fries, mushy mashed potatoes, or a buttery filet mignon ...I could go on forever....Wine also has texture; it can be silk, smooth, crisp, or rough. When pairing wine and food you want the textures to match. For example think of a piece of lamb; as you chew you feel the smooth silkiness of the meat pairing this bite with a smooth glass of Merlot as a perfect pairing. The same is true with a silky Pinot Noir paired with duck. The exception to this rule (as there is always one) when pairing fatty food try not to seek the same heavy coating feeling fat gives in the wine. Instead wines with high tannins like Cabernet Sauvignon create a drying sensation that when paired with a fatty dish will come into balance. The fattiness will alleviate the drying sensation while the tannins will break up the fat.

3. Salt

Salty foods will often increase the perception of a wines's components, just as salt is added to food to enhance flavour. This can be positive or negative. Looking at the four basic components of wine- sweet, acid, tannin, alcohol- will assist in selecting the matching wine, The best wines for salty food in general would be low alcohol, fruit - forward wines with little to no tannins and a touch of sweetness. Wines such as Riesling, Gewürztraminer, Baco Noir, Late Harvest wines, and Icewine would balance salty food items.

4. Bitterness

Bitterness has an astringent feeling in the mouth. Both wine and food can be bitter so be careful when pairing. To experience bitterness try a strong black coffee or almond skin. Bitterness in wine comes from the tannin. Bitterness in food can boost the sense of bitterness in a wine. Consider pairing white wines or low-tannin reds with bitter foods like olives, unsweetened cocoa, or dishes containing citrus peels.

5. Sweetness

Sweetness leaves a coated feeling in your mouth. Think of eating a molten brownie cake. This is a game of balance: levels of sweetness in wine must be at least equal to that of the selected food or one component may overpower the other.

6. Heat

Hot or spicy food can increase the perception of bitterness, acidity, and alcohol burn in wine, along with the elements of heat in spicy food. Spicy food decreases the perception of body, richness, sweetness and fruitiness in wine, so wines with higher levels of these qualities can be used to mitigate this effect. Eats with heat can be paired with white wines or low-tannin reds, both with low alcohol content. These pairings will reduce any bitterness and alcohol burn that may be highlighted for sensitive tasters.



PARTNER WORK

If you've ever danced with someone, you know your partner can make or break the dance. This is the same for pairing any two things. Let's take a look at how to pick great individual partners to ensure a good meeting of the two.

The Wine

A good wine is a balanced wine. Balance speaks to a good collaboration of the soft and hard elements in a wine. Soft elements in wine refer to fruit-sugar that brings out the fruit flavour. While hard elements refer to acidity, tannin makes the wine firm and has structure. A wine with lots of sugar and no tannin will feel flabby. A great balanced wine will have good aromas, structure, feel good in the mouth - along with a great finish.

The Food

Food also has soft and hard components. Softer ingredients in food are sugar, fat and umami (umami is used as a descriptor for hard to pinpoint deliciousness, richness, or savoury). Hard components are acid and bitters. Salt can go either way - a little bit adds flavour, too much can overpower the food and wine. Fats in any form add density to a dish.



Pay Attention to the Cooking Technique

Dishes that are steamed, poached or boiled are lightest and pair well with light bodied wine. Fried, braised or stewed are richer and pair well with medium bodied wine. Grilled food pairs well with medium to heavy bodied wine as the smoky caramelized flavours add the perception of weight to food. Roasted food is a very concentrated way of cooking and pairs well with a heavy-bodied wine.

The Proof is in the Sauce

A dish can be transformed by the sauce or dressing. When you think of a salad; you automatically think a light dish. However a salad in a light vinaigrette will be much lighter than one coated in a thick creamy salad dressing.

Stay Away!

There are food elements that fail to work well with wine. They can make a wine taste bitter, hard, metallic, or oddly sweet. Some of these foods are things we love; I am not saying you must give them up in the name of wine; instead I will leave you with a couple of tricks that make even the worst pairings work...this is where my psychology study comes in handy.

Green Vegetables

Asparagus, Artichoke and spinach all contain oxalic acid which makes many wines taste too sweet. The Fix: Balance the oxalic acid in the dish with butter, cheese or oil. Steer clear of wines with residual sugar when eating these vegetables. A crisp Sauvignon Blanc is always a good bet with green vegetables. If the vegetables incorporate butter, a buttery Chardonnay can provide a tasty complement (just avoid a heavily oaked style).

Oily Fish

This can make a wine taste metallic. To avoid this stay away from wines that are high in tannins. Oily fish also makes the fruit flavours in wine taste off.

The Fix: Go for wines with high acidity and low levels of fruit. Vinho Verdes are great wines.

Garlic

I love a great roasted garlic, especially when it remains in its cloves, along with some hot, freshly baked bread. But garlic can overwhelm your taste buds dulling the flavours in wine.

The Fix: Cooking or roasting the garlic does help, but the best fix is not to serve your favourite bottle when using heavy garlic.

Cream and Butter

Cream sauces and buttery dishes, to complement and contrast - that is the question. If choosing a wine such as a creamy, buttery oaked Chardonnay, the match will complement. But contrasting is another option; select a high - acid Riesling and the acidity will cut through the cream sauce to refresh the palate.

Ground Black Pepper

The next favourite part of a meal, this is after the waiter brings you your meal and wine, is when they ask “fresh cheese or black pepper?” The inclination is to say, “Yes load it up”. But black pepper can also overwhelm the delicacy of a wine.

The Fix: If you must add the freshly ground black pepper go for a fruit-forward wine to pair.

Vinegar and Fruits

Vinegar is high in acidity and most wines cannot stand up to it.

The Fix: When eating foods with high levels of vinegar try adding extra oil to mellow the vinegar. Replace vinegar with a squeeze of lemon or use wines with high acidity to make the sauce. Fruits such as tomatoes are high in acidity and will need high acidity wines to pair well with them.

Chocolate and Wine

I don't care what anyone says, chocolate and wine are meant to be together! Especially on nights when you are alone watching a favourite movie. But pairing the two does have some shortcomings.

The Fix: Chocolate is extremely sweet; a wine will need to be fruit forward to pair with the chocolate. If not the sweetness in the chocolate will strip all the sweetness in the wine making it tannic, hard, and even bitter. For those who enjoy the bite of the tannin or enjoy things a little hard or bitter, forget about this rule. Try Merlot, Red Zinfandel, or Port to stand up to this effect.

Chocolate, like other fats, coats the mouth, so you will need a wine that can cleanse and refresh. Pair with wines that are high in alcohol or acidity.

Other Fixes:

Change the chocolate: go for bitter or less-sweet chocolate.

Change the wine: go for balance and find that wine that professes to be sweet with aromas of berries.

Your Archetype

A perfect pairing depends on your taste preference. The technicalities discussed only serve to help you discover what you love. Let's take coffee for an example. Black coffee on its own can be very bitter, but lovely if your taste preferences skew towards bitter. Those who enjoy black coffee may also enjoy tannin in their wine. Some people must add cream and sugar to balance the coffee; these people will prefer less tannic reds.

Decoding a Menu

When in doubt go for the food friendly wines. Food friendly wines tend to be moderate to high in acidity. Acidity increases the production of saliva that helps to both break down food and bring forward the food's flavours.

Light to medium bodied wines are good partners as most foods we eat fall within this weight range. Low to moderate alcohol is best since high alcoholic wines can overpower food. As we read before wines with high alcohol tend to be heavier in body which can overpower food. Go for a lower oak influence, as oak can also overwhelm a dish.

Some examples of the top food friendly wines: Pinot Grigio, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir, Beaujolais, and Chianti. Although these wines will pair well with most dishes, every wine has a dish it will partner well with.

Here is a quick 15 step guide from Food and Wine that you can always use:

1. Pinot Noir goes well with earthy flavours. If you see mushrooms and truffles then grab a glass of Pinot Noir or Dolcetto, which are light-bodied but full of savoury depth.
2. Chardonnay goes with a fatty fish or in a rich sauce. Chardonnays from California, Chile or Australia are delicious with fish like salmon or any kind of seafood in a lush sauce.
3. Champagne goes well with salty. Most dry sparkling wines, such as brut Champagne and Spanish Cava, actually have a faint touch of sweetness. That makes them extra-refreshing when served with salty foods, like crispy udon noodles with nori salt.
4. Cabernet Sauvignon is fabulous with juicy red meat! California Cabernet, Bordeaux and Bordeaux-style blends are terrific with steaks or chops, like lamb chops with frizzled herbs. The firm tannins in these wines refresh the palate after each bite of meat.
5. Sauvignon Blanc: Goes with tart dressings and sauces. Tangy foods, like scallops with grapefruit-onion salad, won't overwhelm zippy wines like Sauvignon Blanc, Vinho Verde from Portugal, or Verdejo from Spain.
6. Dry Rosé: For rich, cheesy dishes
Some cheeses go better with white wine, some with red; yet almost all pair well with dry rosé, which has the acidity of white wine and the fruit character of red. For an indulgent cheese dish, try Triple-Decker Baked Italian Cheese Sandwiches.
7. Pinot Grigio: Pairs with light fish dishes. Light seafood dishes, like seafood tostada bites, seem to take on more flavour when matched with equally delicate white wines, such as Pinot Grigio or Arneis from Italy or Chablis from France.
8. Malbec: Won't be overshadowed by sweet-spicy barbecue sauces. Malbec, Shiraz and Côtes-du-Rhône are big and bold enough to drink with foods brushed with heavily spiced barbecue sauces, like chicken drumsticks with Asian barbecue sauce.
9. Moscato d'Asti: Loves fruit desserts. Moderately sweet sparkling wines such as Moscato d'Asti, demi-sec Champagne and Asti Spumante help emphasize the fruit in the dessert, rather than the sugar. Try it with honeyed fig crostatas.



10. Syrah: Matches with highly spiced dishes

When a meat is heavily seasoned, like cumin-spiced burgers with harissa mayo, look for a red wine with lots of spicy notes. Syrah from Washington, Cabernet Franc from France and Xinomavro from Greece are all good choices.

11. Grüner Veltliner: Pairs with dishes that have lots of fresh herbs. Austrian Grüner Veltliner's citrus-and-clover scent is lovely when there are lots of fresh herbs in a dish, like zucchini linguine with herbs. Other go-to grapes in a similar style include Albariño from Spain and Vermentino from Italy.

12. Zinfandel: For pâtés, mousses and terrines

If you can use the same adjectives to describe a wine and a dish, the pairing will often work. For instance, the words rustic and rich describe Zinfandel, Italy's Nero d'Avola and Spain's Monastrell as well as creamy chicken-liver mousse.

13. Off-Dry Riesling: Pairs with sweet & spicy dishes

The slight sweetness of many Rieslings, Gewürztraminers, and Vouvrays helps tame the heat of spicy Asian and Indian dishes, like Thai green salad with duck cracklings.

14. Rosé Champagne: Great with dinner, not just hors d'oeuvres

Rosé sparkling wines, such as rosé Champagne, cava and sparkling wine from California, have the depth of flavour and richness to go with a wide range of main courses, like beet risotto.

15. Old World Wines: Are intrinsically good with Old World dishes The flavours of foods and wines that have grown up together over the centuries. Tuscan recipes and Tuscan wines, for instance, are almost always a natural fit. Thus, pappardelle with veal ragù pairs well with a medium-bodied Chianti, for example.



- A wine opener
- A white napkin to see the colour profile in a wine
- An ice bucket to keep wine chilled
- A decanter or aerator; to help release aromas in the wine
- Tasting card for notes (page 8)
- An aroma grid to help identify the aromas of the wine (page 9)
- Glassware
- Wine

The goal of this tasting is to see what wines and food work well together

Food items needed for tasting

- Lemon, one wedge, per person
- Asparagus (or other green vegetable)
- Sugar, Salt (a pinch)
- Salami
- Milk and Dark chocolate

**You don't need to have all these items try to have at least two*

Shopping guide

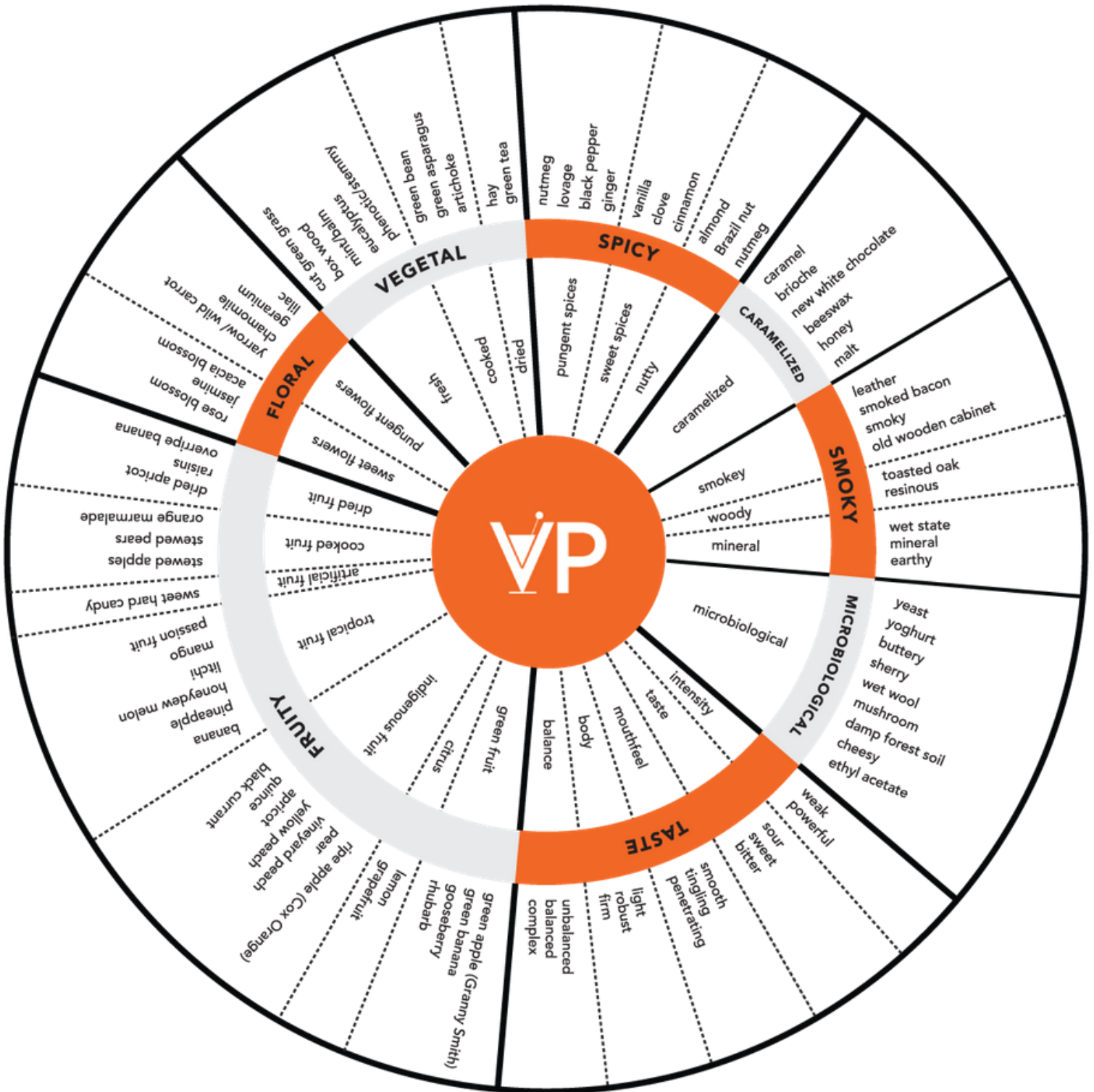
Wines you will need:

- Unoaked Sauvignon Blanc
- Cabernet Sauvignon from California, South Africa or Chile

TASTING GRID

	Food:	Food:	Food:	Food:	Food:
Wine: Fruit: Acid: Tannin: Body:	Impact on Food: Impact on wine:	Impact on Food: Impact on wine:	Impact on Food: Impact on wine:	Impact on Food: Impact on wine:	Impact on Food: Impact on wine:
Wine: Fruit: Acid: Tannin: Body:	Impact on Food: Impact on wine:	Impact on Food: Impact on wine:	Impact on Food: Impact on wine:	Impact on Food: Impact on wine:	Impact on Food: Impact on wine:
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AROMA WHEEL



COLOUR GUIDE

Types of Wine



Almost Clear

Sparkling Wine,
Vinho Verde,
Muscadet,
Riesling



Green Yellow

Sauvignon Blanc,
Verdejo, Grüner
Veltliner



Platinum Yellow

Albariño, Pinot
Gris, Sémillon,
Gargenega



Pale Yellow

Chenin Blanc,
Moscato, Pinot
Blanc, Gewürztra-
miner



Pale Gold

Chardonnay,
Roussanne,
Viognier



Deep Gold

'noble rot' Wines
Riesling, Chenin
Blanc, Sémillon



Pale Salmon

Rosé of Pinot
Noir, Carginan,
and Zinfandel



Deep Pink

Rosé of Merlot,
Grenache and
Sangiovese



Deep Salmon

Rosé of Cabernet
Sauvignon and
Tempranillo



Pale Ruby

Pinot Noir, Gamay,
Nebbiolo and
Grenache



Deep Violet

Sangiovese,
Merlot, Cabernet
Franc, Zinfandel,
Tempranillo,
Barbera



Deep Purple

Syrah, Cabernet
Sauvignon, Malbec,
Mourvedre, Petite
Sirah, Petit Verdot,
Nero d'Avola,
Aglianico



Tawny

Sherry, Port,
Madeira, Marsala,
Muscat and very
old wines

RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

If you started on this journey with me then you are at the end of your three month subscription but don't go yet! I have decided to keep the club going and there are so many surprises to come. So please renew your membership; do so in September to get the same price. I am so excited for the growing and evolving of this club!

Love Chanile.



Thank you.
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