

# Sierra Wine & Grape Growers Association

## Wine & Food Pairing June 15, 2017

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**Which comes first?** The food or the wine?

**What makes a good match?** Or a bad match? How would you know?

**Dining a la Francaise** and other thoughts about wine and food pairing

**What did we do before there was conventional thinking?**

**White wine with fish, red wine with meat.** Where did that come from?

**Textures** that match or contrast

**Flavors** that mirror, echo, or contrast

**Local connections**, if it grows together, does it go together?

**If it sounds good** together, that makes it go well together, right?

**Does Any Of That Matter, Or Is It All About Taste?**

**Talking Taste With Six Simple Rules.**

- #1 Any foods that have sweetness will make any wine taste stronger, drier, more astringent & more tannic.
- #2 Any foods that are acidic will make any wine taste milder, sweeter, & more fruity.
- #3 Salt blocks bitterness making strong wines milder.
- #4 Pair to taste, not to aroma. Use the Key Ingredient theory.
- #5 Pair to the preparation, not to protein.
- #6 Pair to wine style, not to varietal.

**A Few Simple Experiments To Try At Home**

- #1 Start with any wine of your choosing. It might be a sweet fruity white, or one that is dry and oaky. Or try this with a light-bodied red or one that is bold and robust. Better yet, try it with all of them.
- #2 Remember the proper sequence, a sip of wine, a bite of food, a second sip of the same wine.
- #3 Lemon wedge. Take a sip of wine, gently press a lemon wedge through your lips. Take another sip. What happens?
- #4 Apple wedge. Take a sip of wine, a bite of the apple and another sip of wine. What happens?
- #5 Cooked, unseasoned beef. Take a sip of wine, a bite of beef and another sip of wine. What happens?
- #6 Cooked, salted beef. Take a sip of wine, a bite of seasoned beef and another sip of wine. What happens?
- #7 The taste of umami. Cut a plain mushroom in half. Taste one half. Put the other half (no seasonings) in the microwave for 30 seconds. The cooked one will give you a taste of umami. Meats, parmesan cheese, mushrooms, shell fish, black olives, soy sauce, and tomatoes are all foods high in umami.
- #8 Practice. As you are preparing a meal, take whatever you are chopping or dicing, including herbs, and try the sip, taste, sip test. How does each ingredient effect the wine?
- #9 Learn the aromas. Take the same ingredient, put it in a empty, covered glass, and smell it in five minutes.

### **Just to be sure:**

**Taste:** one of five basic sensations in the mouth including sweet, sour, salty, bitter and umami (savory).

**Flavor:** A sensation in the mouth and nose arising from a combination of taste, smell and touch sensations.