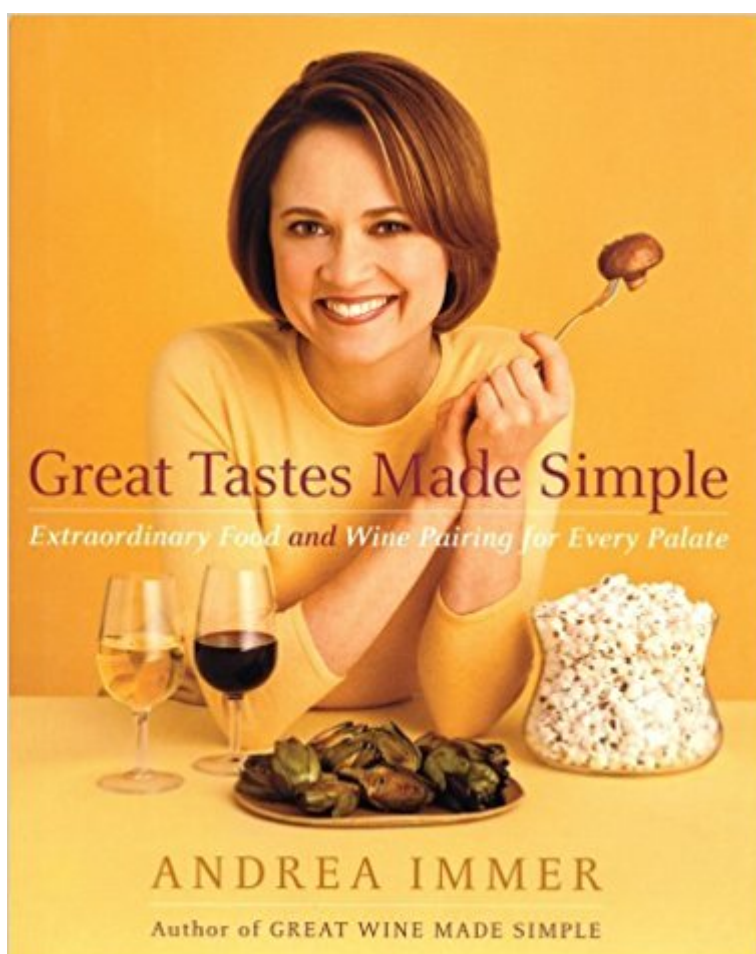


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Great Tastes Made Simple: Extraordinary Food And Wine Pairing For Every Palate



Synopsis

The author of *Great Wine Made Simple* now adds great eating to her repertoire, showing how to enhance the flavor of even the most casual meals with winning wine selections. Most wine experts' advice on wine and food pairings consists of rigid rules that apply largely to haute cuisine and luxury wines. But, in her trademark accessible style, Andrea Immer now takes the mystery out of choosing wine for food and vice versa. *Great Tastes Made Simple* unlocks the secrets of basic food tastes—sweet, earthy, savory, buttery, tart, and spicy—and their particular wine affinities. Giving even ordinary meals extraordinary flavor, Immer shows readers how to bring the flavor alchemy of wine to everyday fare from burgers (with Zinfandel) to macaroni and cheese (with Rioja Crianza). She calls Pinot Grigio her “tuna helper” and likes barbecued brisket with Valpolicella. There's also plenty of more sophisticated eating, including smoked salmon and Riesling; asparagus hollandaise and Champagne; wild mushroom risotto and California Pinot Noir, to name a few upscale matches. In fact, there isn't a food or category of food—including a panoply of cheeses, ethnic foods, and desserts—for which Immer doesn't provide a match and the reasons why they work so well. Chart of mouthwatering pairings and an easy-to-use index make finding wonderful wine and food combinations a snap. Zeroing in on “wine-loving” flavors, textures, and cooking techniques that truly dazzle when paired with wine, Immer demonstrates how to get the maximum enjoyment out of every food and wine encounter. A selection of twenty recipes—Low Country Shrimp and Grits (think Chardonnay), Beet Risotto (Pinot Noir), Short Rib Ragout (brawny reds), and Warm Chocolate Torte (Madeira)—provides delicious examples of wine-loving dishes and cooking techniques that will become part of every wine-loving cook's repertoire. Invaluable in restaurant settings and at home, this innovative guide can make every meal a cause for celebration.

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Customer Reviews

Great Tastes Made Simple sets out to teach regular people how to pair food and wine by doing just that: pairing food and wine. Andrea Immer asks her readers to cook and uncork and sample flavors, suggesting that a tasting group of friends and fellow food lovers can be invaluable. Fans of Immer's excellent Great Wine Made Simple note that her wine tastings can seem daunting, but they are in fact simple to execute and really do develop a palate. In Great Tastes Made Simple, Immer offers similar tests to help you think about food and wine. The initial exercise is irresistibly simple. She suggests opening a Sauvignon Blanc, a Chianti, and an Australian Shiraz. With that trio, you serve fresh goat cheese, prosciutto, and hummus. Then you try each wine in combination with each food, and see the emergence of flavors: sweet, earthy, smoky, fatty, tart, and hot. Rather than organizing the rest of the book around certain wines or certain foods, Immer groups her recipes by these six flavors. The elegant recipes are intriguing and usually quite simple (for instance, beet risotto paired with Pinot Noir) and are usually adapted from chefs Immer has worked with in her wine career. The book is larded with tips and surprises: there's a peak-of-summer tasting menu organized around tomatoes; Immer calls pumpkinseed oil "the most wine-loving oil I have ever tasted in my life." Andrea Immer's tastes can be haute, (for her, a good cheese isn't the best Brie at the supermarket, it's Coach Farm goat cheese via mail order), but the great thing about her writing is that she always makes the attainment of these high standards seem utterly manageable. --Claire Dederer

Demystifying wine for the American audience is a worthy goal, and here Master Sommelier Immer (she's one of just 10 women to hold the title) makes an accomplished stab at a difficult task. In chapters such as "Smoke, Sizzle, Savor," and "Can She Make a Cherry Pie," Immer (Great Wine Made Simple) details the right wines to choose for tomatoes, barbecue, herbal dishes and even Thai takeout. In language that is appealing and approachable, Immer emphasizes how a good understanding of wine does not require a trip to Europe and buckets of cash, but rather a simple willingness to try new things. She also offers easy recipes and the wines to match them, suggesting, for example, a Dry Creek Vineyard Reserve Zinfandel from California with a "Red and Blue" Short

Rib Ragu. Finally, Immer provides handy charts (e.g., "Matching Mushrooms, Truffles, and Wine" and "Matching Peak-Sweet Seafood and Wine") and tasting ideas, such as a comparison of Pinot Blanc and Chianti, so that the novice oenophile can teach herself to love wine more-or at least fear it less. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

A wine book sans the snobbery. And a wine book that knows foodies need their food and wine to taste good together. But again, a wine book without the snobbery is the biggest reason to pick up and enjoy. The author decided that wine should be inclusive and that wine and food pairings could be magic without all the fuss. What a radical concept!

I loved this book, I bought it because I was going to do a wine tasting for friends and I wanted to provide tasty snacks that would also compliment the various wines. This book guided me in a total understanding of how to pair wines with food and she takes a lot of the complication out of it. I am no longer fearing the wine list in a restaurant!!!

Excellent service. I received the book on time and in excellent condition. It is a great book that really explains wine and wine pairings in simple, easy to understand language.

I thought the style of this book was too "chatty" & overall was not as enjoyable as other books I've read on the topic. On the plus side, I think her comments in general were accurate & the tables she provided were very informative. I guess I just didn't like her writing style.

Andrea Immer always has an interesting, informative book to share with her readers. Being one of a very few female Master Sommeliers makes her remarks more extensive. Explaining labels, areas that grapes are grown. Help in pairing foods has the underlying love of wine in so many uses. Definitely worth reading.

A real Immer fan, here Andrea is over the top with what many of us really need, how to match great food with great wine. Immer is well trained and experienced with both, and here she combines her normal passion for her subject matter along with clarity and creativity. This work encourages one to experiment with important contrasts, looking for earthiness vs. spiciness, and the acidity and richness of wine with the food. This she accomplishes with great text along with Tasting Charts featuring "Matching Food ... with Wine Styles to Try." There one will find unusual combos which we

would not normally even attempt, but here are great recommendations to venture out into the world of wine and find new combos. Even the tougher combos, e.g. Sweet and sour are covered, as she provides a great chart on this matching, getting one such as myself to try stuff like Dry Muscat and Viognier which I never would have attempted on my own. This book is like "Wine Water Wings" which allows one to venture out into deeper wine water to find that ultimate taste explosion with excellent food. Will become a great companion!

With this book Immer provides still more useful information for people interested in making wine part of the dinner table. Quite an accomplishment, considering her "Great Wines Made Simple" was for me the most useful wine volume ever encountered. Here, Immer moves beyond the beverage and provides the reader with her accessible theories about how food flavors connect to wine flavors. For someone like me, someone interested in home entertaining and striving to give a guest a memorable dining experience, this book moves past anything else I've read concerning the wine arena. Unlike other authors who provide esoteric descriptions of wines-- descriptions they don't seem to realize may vary according to the individual inclinations of the taster-- Immer acknowledges the variety of preferences amongst diners. She does not come from an attitude of "informing" readers of her Vast Knowledge; rather she lends teaching tools that enable readers to form their own intelligent opinions of what works and does not work for their particular tastes. A natural educator, she alternates between easily-digested theories, theories often summarized in simple chart form, and hands-on, effective experiments. Her experiments are the most pragmatic kind: tastings. In this way, she promotes an understanding of flavor combinations in a way that is most visceral-- through the mouth. Her theories make sense, and they work-- I know because I've tried them! Her reading inspired me to spend way too much on sample wines and test them with various foods. Because she is not merely presenting a list of try-this-wine-with-that-cheese, pair-Wine-A-with-Recipe-X, but rather because she is giving us readers categorical theories about why some wine styles connect to certain types of foods, we can develop our own menus based on what foods we are interested in and what wines please our palates. In this way, her book can sit on the shelf beside such theory-driven volumes as "Culinary Artistry," Peterson's "Sauces," Gold's cookbooks, and Schneider's "A New Way To Cook." Immer puts the reader in the creative position rather than calling for imitation with an encyclopedia of recipes. What is still more appealing about her approach is that she is dedicated to making wine a part of everyday dining. She acknowledges good flavor combinations at every level of cost, time, and creativity. Her enthusiasm for her subject is contagious. It might tempt a reader to obtain her third book, the "Wine Buying Guide." But while

Immer's "Wine Buying" guide is fine, it is an example of the "old guard" of wine information: a guide that lets the reader get lost in the forest for all the trees. For me, "Great Tastes" provides a far superior way of thinking, because it empowers me to make choices based on the information on the wine label rather than in a wine guide.

If you love wine and entertaining as I do, this is a great book. The beginning has a great section on understanding wines and the recipes I've found to be great and love how she matches them up with wine for great entertaining! If you love wine and entertaining and building your knowledge, this is a great book!

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