



February 2014

Grapevine

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Romantic Wines for Valentine's Day

There are many legends that claim to explain the origin of Valentine's Day — a priest named Valentine sentenced to death by the Roman emperor for performing marriages in secret despite the emperor's dictates; and a martyr, also named Valentine, killed for his religious beliefs, and who happened to have left a letter for his beloved, are two of many legends.

Whichever legend you prefer, Valentine's Day is about celebrating love, and it usually involves cards, chocolates, flowers, arrow-strewn hearts, candles and, of course, wine. Singles celebrate SAD — Singles Awareness Day — on the same date to pronounce everyone's entitlement to celebrate and be loved. Attached or single, why not celebrate with a truly special wine? And by special, I don't necessarily mean expensive; it's about finding something that suits your tastes and budget, and something that harmonizes with your festive evening.

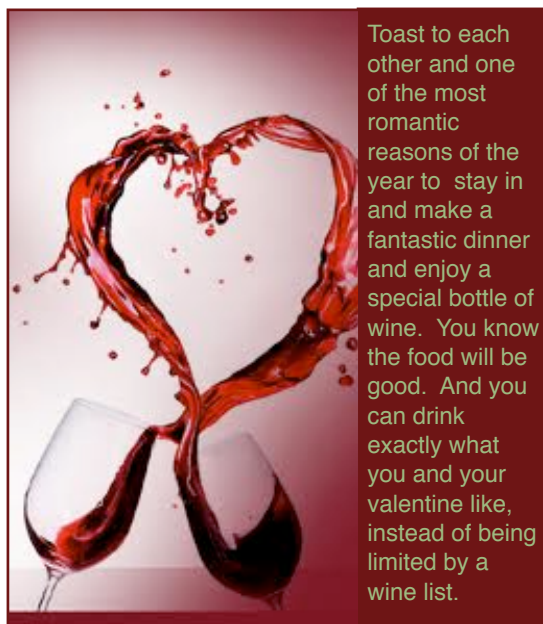
Nothing says romance and celebration like Champagne or sparkling wine. If bubbly is what you plan to enjoy, any dinner will pair beautifully — from elegant scallops or crab cakes to steak Diane or pork tenderloin. For a terrific Champagne — sparkling wine from France's Champagne region — consider Pierre Moncuit's Brut, a Grower's Champagne, so called because the winemaker also grows the grapes. \$36.99 (reg \$43.99). Villa Sandi Il Fresco Spumante Brut \$10.99 (reg \$12.99), an Italian Rosé sparkler would lend a rose-hued romantic touch. If your budget demands a lower price point or you simply prefer a different style of sparkling, you can't go wrong with Italy's Lamarca Prosecco \$12.99 (reg \$14.99).

If you and your valentine don't like Champagne, white wine fans might

swoon over a classic Chardonnay. What makes Chardonnay a fitting choice is its pale to golden color and luscious body and mouthfeel. If that is where your heart and palate reside, a rich California Chard like the 2012 Mac Murray Ranch Chardonnay from Sonoma's Russian River Valley \$14.49 (reg \$16.99) would complement your rich baked stuffed lobster or unctuous fettuccine Alfredo. And if a leaner Burgundian style is more to your liking, the 2011 A & F Boudin Domaine Chantemerle Fourchaume Chablis 89-91 Pts (RP) \$17.89 (reg \$20.99) would be wonderful paired with scallops. It is also made from the Chardonnay grape, but in a style that emphasizes more

fruit and soil characteristics than oak.

The grumblings of red wine lovers in the midst of all this fuss about sparklers and whites are audible, to say the least. If your heart belongs to red, consider the 2011 A to Z Pinot Noir from Oregon \$16.99 (reg \$19.99) 90 Pts (WS) with your filet mignon or coral-hued salmon fillet with olives and capers. Your red wine lover across the table will be captivated by Pinot's lighter, silken body and jewel tones. For a dry aged New York strip, the 2011 Oberon Cabernet Sauvignon made by the Michael Mondavi family — love, American style — will set his or her heart on fire.



Toast to each other and one of the most romantic reasons of the year to stay in and make a fantastic dinner and enjoy a special bottle of wine. You know the food will be good. And you can drink exactly what you and your valentine like, instead of being limited by a wine list.

Maybe you could care less about cooking dinner and prefer to go straight from a cheese plate to dessert. Dessert first, or only, does not make you a heathen — impatient or passionate, perhaps, but that is forgivable. Barbadillo Cream Sherry \$10.19 (reg \$11.99), a full, rich dessert wine from Spain will balance the nuttiness of Gruyere or toffee undertones of aged Gouda or heart-shaped buttery shortbread. Chocolate lovers rejoice: Decadent chocolate mousse or dark chocolate truffles and Sandeman's Founders Reserve Porto \$18.29 (reg \$21.49) would make all the music you'll need to serenade your Valentine.

Whatever your taste, there is a special wine that will make your romantic evening even better. Sure, you can call it a Hallmark holiday, but does it really matter if it means that you get to spoil and be spoiled by the one you love? Happy Valentine's Day! ♦

Did you know...

Fruity vs. sweet — Fruity wines have concentrated flavors of recognizable fruits that may be mistakenly perceived as sweet. Sweet wines, however, display and contain a higher level of residual sugar — sugar that did not ferment to alcohol — and have a sweet finish and a lower alcohol content, due to the higher percentage of sugar remaining in the finished wine.

Incredible Savings!
15% off all Wine —
Every Bottle,
Every Day!!!

Wine Tastings Fri, 4-7 & Sat, 2-5

Fri 2/7: Wines from the 90s Club: A selection of wines rated 90 Points or more by the experts.

Sat 2/8: New Arrivals: We'll pour a line-up of our latest, greatest discoveries.

Fri 2/14: Valentine's Wines: Sultry Sparklers, Whites and Romantic Reds to make your Valentine fall in love all over again.

Sat 2/15: New Arrivals: Check out our newest discoveries that we hope you'll love as much as we do.

Fri 2/21: Staff Picks: A stellar line-up of what the Wine & Spirits of Slingerlands staff likes to drink.

Sat 2/22: New Arrivals: We keep hoping that our newest vinous discoveries will be your newest vinous treasures. Prove us right by stopping in and falling in love.

Fri 2/28: Wines from the Pacific Northwest: Reds and Whites from Washington and Oregon.

At Wine & Spirits of Slingerlands, we don't just sell wine, we love it — reading about it, talking about it and of course drinking it. We also love to share everything we know and learn about it with our customers. Shelf talkers with descriptions of the wines and any expert ratings along with a display of Staff Picks or other featured wines are just a couple of changes you'll notice when you next stop by the store. Looking for a special bottle or inspiration for a food and wine pairing? Browse the shelves and always feel free to ask questions. After all, you are our reason for being here.

Join Our Email Club Sign up as a member of our email club! We'll send weekly emails to let you know what we'll be pouring at the weekend tastings, Bellini's Tuesday specials-wine pairings and any special events. You'll receive a free bottle of wine from the Three-fer section during your birthday month when you bring in a copy of the email.



No-Bake Chocolate Custard

Adapted from *Food and Wine Magazine*



1/4 cup milk
3 tablespoons sugar
1 large egg yolk
3 ounces bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped, plus shaved chocolate, for serving
Pinch of salt
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
1/2 cup heavy cream
Pinch of ground cinnamon

Directions

In a small saucepan, combine the milk and 2 tablespoons of the sugar and heat until steaming and the sugar is dissolved. Put the egg yolk in a small bowl and gradually whisk in the hot milk. Return the mixture to the saucepan and cook over moderate heat, whisking constantly, until slightly thickened, about 2 minutes.

Off the heat, add the chopped chocolate and salt and whisk until smooth. Whisk in the butter. Pour the custard into 2 shallow bowls and refrigerate briefly, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, beat the heavy cream with the cinnamon and the remaining 1 tablespoon of sugar until softly whipped. Dollop the cream on the custards, sprinkle the chocolate shavings on the cream and serve each other, spoon for spoon, in between sips of Tawny Port or your favorite dessert wine.

Amore Vietato — *Forbidden Love, oh-la-la!* Adapted from *Cosmopolitan Magazine*

4 oz. Hendricks gin
2 oz. blood orange juice
Dash simple syrup
Generous splash of Prosecco
2 strawberries
orange zest



Make simple syrup by bringing equal parts sugar and water to a boil; simmer until the sugar is dissolved, 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool completely. Muddle fruit with simple syrup, add gin and blood orange juice. Shake and strain into two martini glasses and top with Prosecco. Garnish with strawberries and orange zest.

February 2014 Staff Wine Picks

Sheila: 2011 Starmont Chardonnay (Napa Valley) \$15.29 (reg \$17.99) An elegant palate of apple, citrus and stone fruit with a hint of toast and spice, and a long, lingering finish. With crab cakes...a match made in heaven.

Ted: 2012 Camino de Navaherreros (Spain) \$11.99 (reg \$13.99) 91 Pts (ST) Fragrant with raspberry, potpourri and Asian spices. Silky, penetrating red fruit and a vibrant finish in this Garnacha. Pair with braised lamb shanks.

Joe: 2012 Chakana Estate Selection Malbec (Mendoza, ARG) \$20.49 (reg \$23.99) 92 Pts (WA) Plum, brambly berries, spices and violets apparent on the nose. Intense fruit with velvety tannins to balance rich breast of duck.

Bill: 2012 Wyatt Cabernet Sauvignon (California) \$10.99 (reg \$12.99) 86 Pts (RP) Blended with a touch of Merlot and Petit Verdot, this Cab reveals elegant notes of cedar, tobacco and currant notes. Perfect with grilled steak.

Graham: 2012 Terenzuola Colli di Luni Vermentino (Tuscany) \$11.49 (reg \$13.49) Bright and crisp, this Vermentino displays notes of lemon, minerals and orange zest. Beautiful with a green salad topped with shrimp and avocado.

Damian: 2012 Nobile Sauvignon Blanc (New Zealand) \$10.69 (reg \$12.49) Fresh, crisp and clean with zesty flavors of passion fruit and pineapple with subtle hints of nettle. Perfect with a lemon-spiked, herb-flecked risotto.

Jared: 2009 Secco-Bertani Ripasso (Veneto) \$16.19 (reg \$18.99) This classic Valpolicella blend of Corvina and Rondinella has notes of black cherry, tart blackberry, anise, and black olives. Enjoy with fettuccine and mushrooms.