

#FOOD-TALK

What Is the Best Wine for Cooking?

You might know which wine to buy to pour yourself a glass, but when it comes to cooking with wine, the same rules don't apply.



Even if you haven't cooked with wine before, you may already have heard of many dishes that have been prepared with wine. Red wine is a crucial ingredient in many recipes, where it helps to marinate and tenderize meats to fall-apart perfection but also can serve as the base for a final glaze.

How to Use Wine for Cooking

Wine is primarily used in cooking for its acidity, which not only helps to break down cuts of meat through low-and-slow methods like braising but also retains moisture and finer texture in lighter proteins like fish.

When cooking with wine, the alcohol evaporates leaving shades of its aromatic and flavour compounds behind in the final dish.

In certain dessert applications, like a red-wine poached Apple Tart Tatin, the fruit adopts the brilliant purple stain of the wine and gives the sweetness of the dish a subtle, tangy high note - a much better foil for the spoon of vanilla ice cream you might serve alongside.

What Does Wine Add to a Recipe?

Wine can add elements of flavour, aroma and moisture to a dish. It can be used to marinate meats or vegetables or incorporate flavour straight from the heat of a pan. Red wine is more tannic and has bolder flavours than white wine which can add a light and crisp acidity.

Different varieties of wine bring their own flavour profiles and qualities to specific types of dishes. Stick to the type of wine (red, white or a fortified wine like sherry) that the recipe calls for, but feel free to experiment between different grapes and see what you like best.

How to Choose a Cooking Wine

Choosing a wine to cook with is more complicated than it sounds. Generally, you should cook with a wine that you would drink yourself. You can cook with a bottle of wine open for a few days or even a generic bottle from the corner store. If you're planning on drinking the same wine with the meal, spend a little more time finding something that you'd enjoy on its own. You're rarely using more than a good splash of wine in cooking but maybe save that top-shelf, limited-release vintage for another night. Most of what makes that fancy wine great (the



complex aromas, the maturity) will be lost through the cooking process anyway. If you have the option, try to buy a dry wine over a sweet one, as the residual sugars in the sweet wine will impart unwanted sweetness to the dish. Second to that, the varietal of wine you purchase matters most.

Cooking Wine and Regular Wine

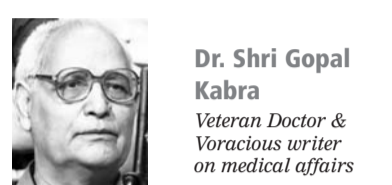
Calling something a 'cooking wine' often just refers to a regular table wine well-suited for both drinking and cooking. However, you might also see bottles that go by the same name, often shelved among the vinegar and seasonings in some grocery stores. Think of that as cooking 'wine'. It does contain alcohol, but these wines also contain salt and sometimes sugar and other spices, in order to make them both shelf-stable and more flavourful.

White Wine for Cooking

There three common white wine varietals, but as with anything in cooking if you don't have it, improvise as best as you can. Varietals with higher residual sugar, like Riesling or Gewürztraminer aren't great to cook with because the sugar might caramelize or might make a savoury dish too sweet. Wines with a similarly dry character to the below stated tips like Albarino or Chenin Blanc works great.

- Pinot Grigio is a common white wine used for cooking; thanks to its dry, crisp and uncomplicated nature. It complements the more delicate character of most seafood dishes by brightening a seasoned broth for steamed mussels or adding a nudge of dimension to shrimp and linguine showered in fresh herbs.
- Sauvignon Blanc is a crisp white wine that can add citrusy and herbaceous elements to a dish. The acidic, juicy character of Sauvignon Blanc is a perfect pairing for the dense creaminess, including it in the cooking process lays a very fine echo of that pairing into the dish itself. Learn more about Sauvignon Blanc here.
- Chardonnay is classically buttery, rich and full-bodied wine which works well in preparing a creamy chicken dish or a pasta sauce. Avoid a chardonnay that's only so because it will likely turn bitter throughout the cooking process; the uncooked chardonnay gets the job done nicely.

We children received Kaka's attention once a month when he gave us our haircuts. We sat with bowed head as he went clip-clip, admonishing us now and then to sit still and not fidget. When he had finished cutting, he would wet the hairline at the sides and back, and shape it with a cut-throat razor which he would flick open, sharpen and rub on his palm with great deliberation. The anticipation of the cold water followed by the sharp shave with the fearsome razor would send a shiver down my spine and give me goose pimples. There were no nail cutters then, so Nevgi Kaka would pare our nails with a peculiar, sleek and long steel instrument, the cutting edge of which he would sharpen before use. His movements were deft and rhythmic.



Dr. Shri Gopal Kabra
Veteran Doctor & Voracious reader on medical affairs

How They Ruled Us!

#THOSE DAYS

In the joint families of rural Rajasthan, a particular pair of domestic helps played a vital role and enjoyed an elevated status. They were the haveli barber and his wife, known as Nevgi Kaka (barber uncle) and Nayan Kaki (barber's wife) respectively. All helps, domestic or otherwise, were traditionally addressed according to their hierarchy, and therefore as uncle/auntie or brother/sister. While Nevgi Kaka ministered to the males (mardana), Nayan Kaki cared for the females (zanana). Besides, in the daily chores of the haveli inmates, they played specific and unique roles in rituals associated with birth, marriage and death in the family. Figuratively speaking, they ruled the roost in their respective domains.

Every morning, Nevgi Kaka would be found in the outer mardana court shaving, paring nails, giving a haircut, performing a champi (head massage) or whole body massage and arranging baths for the men folk. A typical morning in the haveli would see the men leisurely sitting in the open on cots, brushing their teeth with a neem or babul datun (brush) and waiting for their turn to be pampered by Nevgi Kaka. Traditionally, males bathed in the open seated on a wooden takhi (table). A bucket of water and a tumbler was made available and Kaka would bring the bather a fresh set of clothes.

Significant Caregiver

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Besides these daily chores, it is he who would prepare the arthi (bier) using bamboo sticks and moonj cord, ignite a dung cake, place it in a brass pot and walk with it in front of the pall bearers to the cremation ground. The pyre was lighted with the fire brought from home. The ritual is still followed among Hindus. He would tuncure the sons and grandsons of the deceased before they participated in the funeral. At the end of the cremation, he would arrange for a bath for all family members, following which only could they return home. Later, Kaka would attend on all those who came to mourn.

Nevgi Kaka had a special role to play in marriages also. He would dress the bridegroom, help him mount the mare and accompany him in the bridegroom's procession. When the procession reached the bride's residence, he was accorded virtually the same status as that of the groom's mama (maternal uncle).



Since he was considered a very intimate member of the groom's family, he had to be kept in good humour lest he return with a poor opinion of the bride's family. Family barbers and their spouses were known to trade gossip with their counterparts in other havelis in the village - or even beyond - and thus collectively constituted an institution feared for its notoriety as a channel of potentially damaging information.

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Constant Confidant

Nevgi Kaka was the intermediary between the family and the rest of the village folk and thus an important contact person. He possessed a detailed knowledge of all the families in the village. He would go to invite them for most functions held outside the four walls of the haveli. He was the jaman or jyonhar (marriage feast) or mauser (death feast). Nevgi Kaka and Nayan Kaki virtually operated a messenger service in the village.

His wife's domain was the zanana (ladies) interior of the haveli. Nevgi Kaki would help ladies perform their daily chores which included sweeping the house and grinding grain (chakki peesana). The haveli women folk generally took their bath in their



bedrooms for which there was a provision. Kaki would arrange the bath, following that she would comb and oil the ladies' hair and pleat it. Kaki would sit on a low stool while the lady being groomed sat on the ground between her knees.

During these sessions, she would chatter constantly and update the ladies on whatever was happening outside the four walls of the haveli. She would carry out their errands, whether open or secret. She would accompany them whenever they



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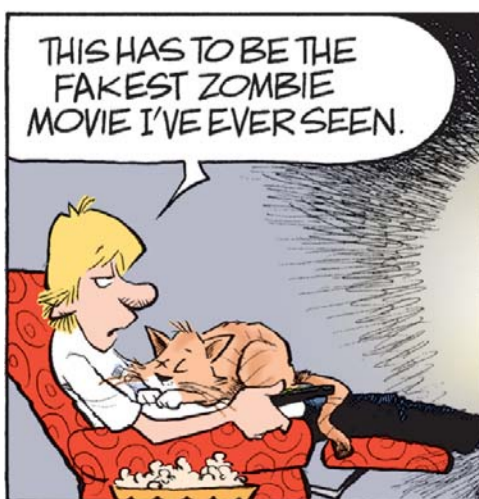
More than all the above, even at the age of 84, I remember Nayan Kaki for the vivid tales of Bhoot, Bhoontri (ghost of a dead person), Dayan (witch), Dakan (ghoul) Chudel (variant of a witch) and Kacha Kalwa (goblin) that she narrated while attending on the ladies. Bhoot or Bhoontri were evil invisible spirits that lurked in solitary places. They were departed souls that did not get moksha (salvation) because their children did not properly perform their last rites. These evil souls would enter the body of a lady when she unsuspectingly visited the place where the bhoot or bhoontri resided. Through the lady so possessed, the evil spirit would ask to be appeased.

Nayan Kaki played a very important role in the marriage of a girl. She would give her facials to make her face glow, apply a paste of milk and haldi (turmeric) to her body to make it soft, give her a head bath with aritha (soap nut) to make the hair soft and supple and manicure

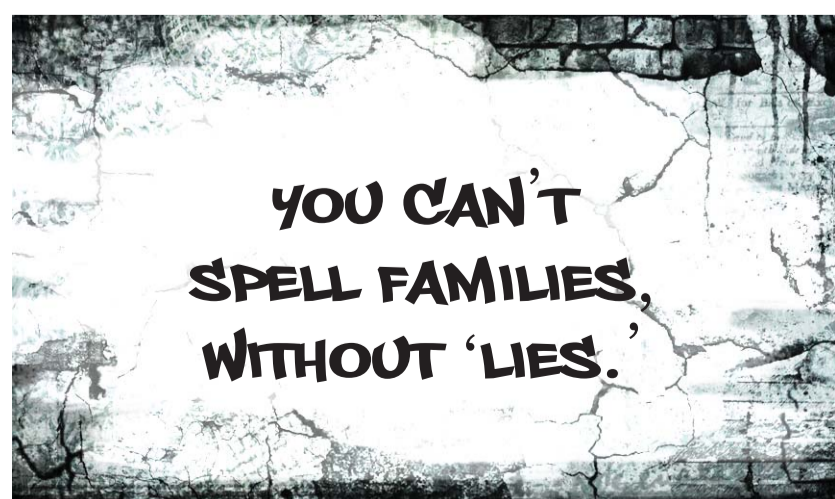


By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

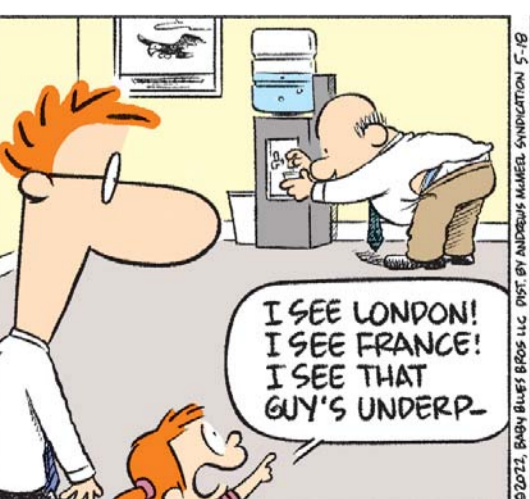
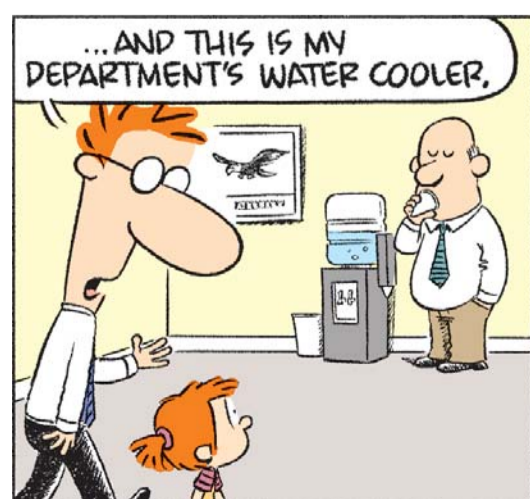
ZITS



THE WALL



BABY BLUES



Pride Month

Pride Month is considered to be an important holiday, one that details the history of the LGBT community finding acceptance in the world, as well as honouring Stonewall Riots of 1968. While it's more widely accepted today than ever before history is able to tell long stories of why this was not the case for a very long time. Pride Month is a time for each individual to be proud of who they are and their uniqueness.



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#COVID-19

Even Vaccinated People Can Get Long Covid

Vaccinations reduce the risk of hospitalization and dying from COVID-19. But vaccines seem to only provide modest protection against long COVID.



Even vaccinated people with mild breakthrough COVID-19 infections can experience long COVID with debilitating, lingering symptoms that affect the heart, brain, lungs and other parts of the body, new research shows. The study of more than 13 million veterans also found that vaccination against the virus that causes COVID-19 reduces the risk of death by 34% and the risk of getting long COVID by 15%, compared with unvaccinated patients infected with the virus.

However, vaccines were shown to be most effective in preventing some of the most worrisome manifestations of long COVID-Jung and blood-clotting disorders-which declined about 49% and 58%, respectively

whom she then used for personal pleasure and discarded. A dakan was born with a morbid desire to harm people, drink their blood or even kill and devour them. A chudel, according to Kaki, was an evil spirit that would appear in the form of a beautiful lady. She would plead with a camel rider to give her a lift. She would sit behind the rider talking softly to him. Her legs would keep on lengthening till her feet touched the ground, whereupon she would effectively brake the camel's progress. When the surprised rider turned around to check on his passenger, she would bare her fangs and then suck his blood. Kaki would say that if only the man had looked at the feet of the beautiful lady he would have recognized her as a dayan because a dayan's feet point backward. A relatively benign ghoul that Kaki used to tell us about was kacha kalwa. This was the spirit of a child who had not been properly buried (a child is not cremated). A kacha kalwa would reside in a banyan or peepal tree, and by its shrill cry, frighten any person who happened to pass by at night. It would need the arrival of a saintly person to deliver the possessed individual from his rakshas yoni (demonic state).

One can imagine the influence the narrator had on the receptive listeners. Much worse was the effect it had on us children who were intent on eavesdropping. Even now I shiver when I recollect them. ||||| writetoarbit@ashtradrout.com

among the vaccinated people. "Vaccinations remain critically important in the fight against COVID-19," says Ziyad Al-Aly, a clinical epidemiologist at Washington University in St Louis and first author of the paper in Nature Medicine. "Vaccinations reduce the risk of hospitalization and dying from COVID-19. But vaccines seem to only provide modest protection against long COVID. People recovering from breakthrough COVID-19 infection should continue to monitor their health and see a health care provider if lingering symptoms make it difficult to carry out daily activities." The researchers classified patients as fully vaccinated if they had received two doses of the Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen vaccine. At the time the research took place, the database used for this study did not include information about whether patients received boosters.

What Else Would Help? "Now that we understand that COVID-19 can have lingering health consequences even among the vaccinated, we need to move toward developing miti-

gation strategies that can be implemented for the longer term since it does not appear that COVID-19 is going away any time soon," says Al-Aly, who is also the chief of research and development at the VA St Louis Health Care System. "We need to urgently develop and deploy additional layers of protection that could be sustainably implemented to reduce the risk of long COVID."

Such protective layers could include nasal vaccines that are more convenient or potent than the current shots or other types of vaccines or drugs aimed at minimizing the risks of long COVID. "Getting COVID-19, even among vaccinated people, seems almost unavoidable nowadays," says Al-Aly, noting that 8 to 12% of vaccinated people with breakthrough infections may develop long COVID.

"Our current approach will likely leave a large number of people with chronic and potentially disabling conditions that have no treatments. This will not only affect people's health, but their ability to work, life expectancy, economic productivity and societal well-being. We need to have a candid national conversation about the consequences of our current approach."

Since the pandemic started, more than 524 million people globally have been infected with the virus; of those, more than 6 million have died-including more than 1 million in the United States alone.

"Let's say SARS-CoV-2 is here for 10 years," Al-Aly continues. "People are sick and tired of masking and social distancing, and it's simply not sustainable to ask that they continue to do so. We need to come up with additional layers of protection that allow us to resume normal life while co-existing with the virus. Current vaccines are only part of the solution."

Long Covid Data

For the study, researchers analysed the de-identified medical records of more than 13 million veterans. The records are in a database the US Department of Veterans Affairs, the nation's largest integrated health-care



delivery system, maintains. The researchers examined data of 113,474 unvaccinated COVID-19 patients and 33,940 vaccinated patients who had experienced COVID-19 breakthrough infections, all from January 1 through October 31, 2021. The patients with COVID-19 were mostly older, white men; however, the researchers also analysed data that included more than 1.3 million women and adults of all ages and races.

Among the study's other findings: In addition to complications involving the heart, brain, and lungs, other symptoms associated with long COVID included disorders involving the kidneys, blood clotting, mental health, metabolism, the gastrointestinal and musculoskeletal systems.

Long COVID risks were 17% higher among vaccinated immune compromised people with breakthrough infections compared with previously healthy, vaccinated people who experienced breakthrough infections. An analysis of 3,667 vaccinated patients who were hospitalized with breakthrough COVID-19 infections showed that they experienced 2.5 times the risk of death than people who were hospitalized with influenza. They also had a 27% higher risk of long COVID in the first 30 days after diagnosis compared with 14,337 people who were hospitalized with seasonal influenza.

The datasets also compared long-term health outcomes with a pre-pandemic control group of more than 5.75 million people (meaning they had never had COVID-19 because it hadn't yet existed). Across the board, people who had breakthrough COVID-19 faced significantly higher risks of death and illness such as heart and lung diseases, neurological conditions and kidney failure.

"The constellation of findings shows that the burden of death and disease experienced by people with breakthrough COVID-19 infections is not trivial," Al-Aly says.

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman