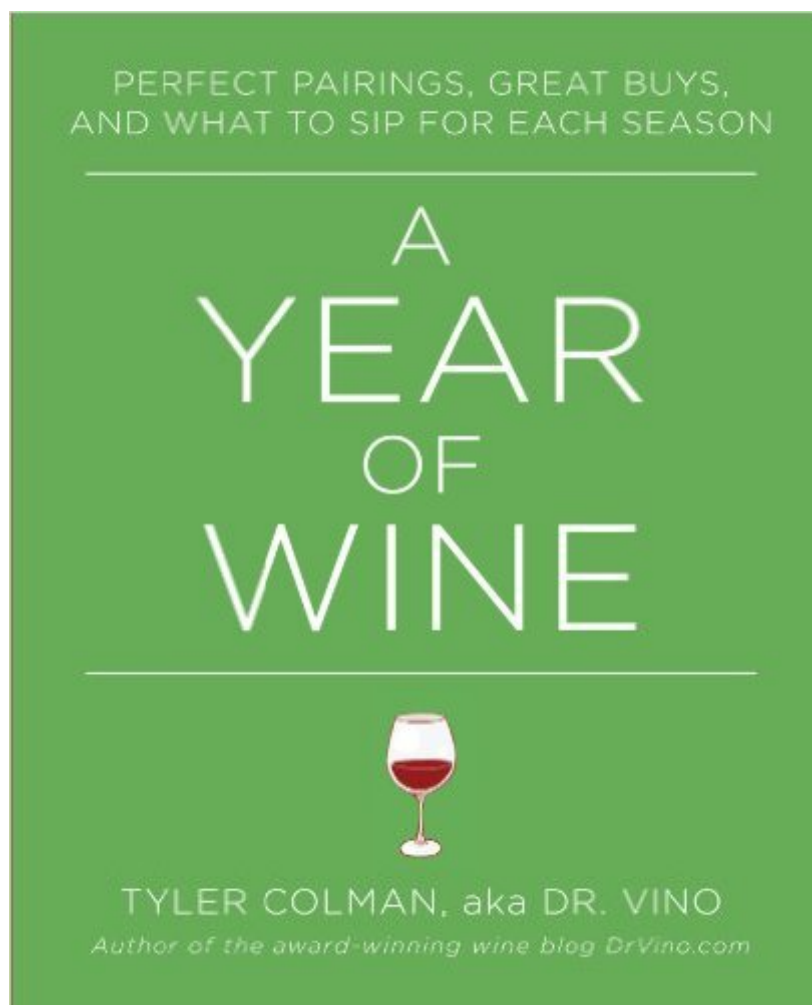


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A Year Of Wine: Perfect Pairings, Great Buys, And What To Sip For



Synopsis

A lively and informative guide to a year of wine enjoyment and appreciation from acclaimed wine expert and blogger Tyler Colman, aka "Dr. Vino" In *A Year of Wine*, award-winning educator Tyler "Dr. Vino" Colman, whose wine blog was hailed by *Food & Wine* magazine as "one of the seven best" views winter, spring, summer, and fall through the glass of his favorite impact-resistant stemware, pairing each month with its perfect ports, Pinots, and bubbies - and offering good value recommendations for them all. Throughout, Colman reminds readers to try to pair their pours with context, which is wildly underrated when it comes to enjoying your favorite bottle. And while people tend naturally to drink lighter, more refreshing wines during the warm months and heavier, more serious wines during the winter months, Colman takes the seasonal approach a step further by offering innovative recommendations and enlightening facts that will allow readers to impress their friends for twelve months straight. Is there a perfect wine to serve with chips and salsa on Super Bowl Sunday? Which bottles will help you drown away your tax-day blues without blowing your new budget? Colman answers these questions and much more as he pairs wines with each season, occasion, and moment. Recommending thoughtful and affordable wines for special celebrations and everyday enjoyment, offering tips on beginning a wine collection or spring cleaning the one you have, exploring how to drink with the smallest possible carbon footprint, and explaining how to maximize your wine experience when you dine out, Colman makes wine easy to understand and, most important, to savor. Colman also shares the secret gems of his favorite wine tourism destinations - where to find the best wine shops in Paris, which Portuguese vintners still crush grapes with their bare feet, and how you can take a ten-tasting-room tour with one stop in a tiny Oregon town

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Customer Reviews

"A Year of Wine" comes in time for the new year. He maps out wine travel, selections and other themes across your calendar. Mr. Coleman has quite a bit of information to give you. A large portion is meant for today and this year. He uncorks two guiding themes that he terms: "Call for Context" and "Drink Different". Alliteration seems not lost on this PhD (hence Dr. Vino). This guy is something of a big deal. Besides his top rated blog, he teaches (according to the jacket) wine classes at two really big deal private universities, Chicago and New York. He takes us to his Caribbean vacation incident. He was at a "swanky" restaurant (by which he means a color-free tent with techo music, perhaps by Dieter and Der Sprokets), where he was disappointed by the big hot California reds that some see as all the rage now. He thinks they need a fireplace in the cold background. I was surprised he did not understand their ability to stand up to the strong spices of some of that cuisine, especially after sunset. Light and fruity by day is true enough, but his axe-grinding is, well, just that and not useful to the beginner. His two themes do not play well, context and different. In Southern France, where he loves his rose wine in warm weather is perhaps his epitome of NOT "drinking different". And why French wine is less enjoyable in Chicago is beyond me. Also, the French have a long tradition of not drinking different (sic). They always like rose in warm weather and Champagne in months containing vowels. He also confuses context with terroir, that big buzz word. I believe he knows the difference, but he is not careful enough to say.

Before receiving this book I was not familiar with the author's blog so I found myself pleasantly surprised with this book. It takes you through a year of wine with suggestions about what to drink throughout the year. His recommendations are rooted in the idea that so much of what affects the wine drinking experience is the circumstances around it. He makes the point that a fine bottle of wine drunk on vacation say in Italy will never taste the same at home in the US so it's about pairing wine with the circumstances and company. I thought this was an interesting take. However, it doesn't mean he throws all conventional lessons out the door. Despite sharing his unique take, he still manages to share more conventional basic knowledge that I appreciated. Even though I really enjoy drinking wine and going to wine tastings I admit I don't know as much as I would like and this book helped to fill in the gaps. Although the approach mentioned above of recommending wine for

the circumstances and time of year is unique, it was his tone of voice that really sold me. He does a good job of making learning about wine approachable, and yet still coming off as credible. This is a tough balancing act and he masters it well. I didn't realize how much I appreciated this until I found myself WANTING to read it while on the stationary bike at the gym. So many reference books about wine, cheese, or other culinary topics are very dry and encyclopedic. That is, the kind of book you would reference if you had a specific question, but that you wouldn't want to read for fun. As you might have guessed from my taking it to the gym, this is not true with *A Year of Wine: Perfect Pairings, Great Buys, and What to Sip for Each Season*.

The major appeal of this book is Tyler Colman's focus on context. He exhorts us to think about the who, what, when, where, and why of our wine-quaffing experience. With whom were we when tasting that lovely Rhone? (Not to mention, whom were we? A college Freshman trying Blue Nun for the first time? A new parent toasting the birth of our first child? A retiree uncorking a celebratory bottle of champagne?) What was going on when we opened Dad's bottle of Vintage port? When did we have that delightful Prosecco? Where was that forgettable resort where we wasted a fabulous chianti with some lukewarm pizza? And, last but not least, how were we feeling? Did we just get sacked from our job, buy our first home, or lose half our retirement fund in an economic crisis? To Colman, context is everything; and, I agree with him. The greatest bottle will be remembered as well if it's downed in unpleasant circumstances. There are a number of very reader-friendly aspects to this book: an enjoyable and elucidating "Sommelier Survey" at the end of each chapter where Dr. Vino (his alias) interviews a well respected sommelier, and side bars where Colman educates us about: Riedel stemware vs. Tritan Force, decanters, spotting fraudulent wines, sulphur allergies, and what wine goes well with chocolate (a particular favorite of mine; see chocolateratings.wordpress.com for more on that topic). As a holistically oriented soul I was entranced by his synopsis of biodynamic wine-making inspired by Rudolph Steiner (the founder of Waldorf Schools). A large subtext of the book is his focus on seasonality. A topic worthy of all the attention he lavishes on it, as it can make or break our experience. Who really wants a heavy Bordeaux on a hot August day?

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