

Format revised 2025
Syllabus revised in 2025

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SCHOOL OF FOOD AND WINE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF WINE AND CULTURE
COURSE TITLE: PAIRING FOOD AND WINE
COURSE CODE: FWWCPF335
3 semester credits

1. DESCRIPTION

This course presents an exploration of the pleasure of food and wine pairing. This course goes beyond a classic approach to pairing, demystifying the terminology and the methodology of matching wine and food. Whether preparing a meal at home or ordering in a restaurant, participants leave with an enhanced knowledge of pairing that can create a harmony and synergy between wine and food, providing a sublime connection of the mind, the mouth, memories and experiences. Particular focus will be given to the Italian cultural approach, tasting the major wine areas and classic Italian recipes.

2. OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Recognize quality standards in food preparation and presentation.
- Discuss grape varietals and how they match with different foods.
- Understand the principles of food and wine pairing.
- Identify hard to pair foods and their reaction to wines.
- Demonstrate various cooking methods and their interaction with different wines.
- Evaluate classic wine and food combinations from different regions of the world.
- Demonstrate the need to be sensitive to a multicultural approach to wine and food pairing.

3. REQUIREMENTS

There are no prerequisites for this course.

4. METHOD

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects, and interaction with the local community. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, integrate relevant academic sources, may include multimedia references, propose creative problem-solving, and other appropriate forms of delivery as deemed appropriate to the course's purpose.

5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

Maresca T., The right wine, Grove Press, 1992 – ISBN 9780802132970.

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

FURTHER READINGS

J Halliday – H. Johnson, *The Art and Science of Wine*, Firefly Books, 2007
J. McInerney, *Bacchus and Me*, Vintage 2002
N. Belfrage NW, *The Finest Wines of Tuscany and Central Italy*, Aurum Press, 2009
T. Standage, *A History of World in 6 Glasses*, Bloomsbury, 2005
G. Grunner – B. Lipinsky, *Italian Wine Notes*, 2013
S. Charters, *Wine & Society*, Routledge, 2010
RJ. Harrington, *Food and Wine Pairing*, John Wiley & Sons, 2008
RW. Small – M. Couturier, *Beverage Basics*, John Wiley & Sons, 2011
S. Kolpan et al., *Exploring Wine*, John Wiley & Sons, 2010 (3 ed.)
R. Phillips, *A short History of Wine*, Harper Collins Publishers, 2000
J. Varriano, *Wine A Cultural History*, Reaktion Books, 2007
P. Guy, *Wine of Italy*, Tide-mark Press, 2003
Daniele Cernilli, Marco Sabellico, *The New Italy, a Complete Guide to Contemporary Italian Wine*, Sterling 2008
E. Asimov – F. Fabricant, *Wine with Food*, Rizzoli, 2014
A. Dornenburg – K. Page, *What to Drink with what to Eat*, Bulfinch Press, 2006
K. Arnone – J. Simonetti Bryan, *Pairing with The Masters*, Delmar, 2013
H. Johnson, *Tuscany and its Wines*, Octopus Publishing, 2000
Slow Wine guide 2014, Slow Food Editore, 2014
E. Goldstein, *Perfect Pairings*, University of California Press, 2006
M. Schuster M, *Essential Wine Tasting*, M. Beazley 2000
MacNeill, Karen, *The Wine Bible*, Workman Publishing Company, 2001
De Mori, L. - Lowe, J., *The real flavour of Tuscany*, Quadrille Publishing, 2007: Sergio Pollini, Tripe Vendor
Massimo Montanari, *Let the Meatball Rest*, Columbia University Press, 2009
Alberto Capatti, Massimo Montanari, *Italian Cuisine a Cultural History*, Columbia University Press 2003

LIBRARY

Course participants may access the campus library. Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times. Texts may be consulted on-site, and scanning/internet services available.

6. COURSE MATERIALS

No additional course materials are necessary.

7. COURSE FEES

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. If this course requires a fee, the exact amount is communicated prior to enrollment.

8. GRADING AND EVALUATION & ATTENDANCE

10% Attendance

30% Class Participation and Assignments

20% Midterm Exam, Field Learning project (if applicable), Special/Research Project (if applicable)

20% Final Exam

20% Paper/Project

The above grade breakdown percentages reflect the grading scale standards in the “Grading and Evaluation System” section of the catalog.

Attendance

Class participation is mandatory. Based on the hours defined in the Academic Catalog’s attendance policy, students may miss up to 2 class encounters delivered as lecture hours. A third absence constitutes a course failure.

Please note that absence hours may vary according to the learning methodology, as per the academic catalog policy on credit hours:

https://catalog.fua.it/standard_regulation

9. EXAMS / PROJECTS / ASSIGNMENTS

Midterm Assessment (11 weeks semester ONLY): accounts for 20% of the final course grade. Topic will be assigned on Lesson 5 and is due by Lesson 6. The Midterm assessment must be uploaded on the course portal.

Special Project (Intensive sessions only): accounts for 20% of the final course grade. The project details will be assigned the first day of class. It is due by Lesson 6 and must be uploaded on the course portal.

Final Exam: accounts for 20% of the final course grade.

The Final Exam is divided into three sections:

- Part I: 10 Multiple choice questions. Each correct answer is worth 2 points, for a total of 20 points.
- Part II: 10 short-answer questions. Each correct and complete answer (concise explanations, main ideas, key words, names, etc.) is worth 5 points, for a total 50 points.
- Part III: two essay questions; each correct and complete answer is worth 15 points (based on content, vocabulary, detail, etc.) for a total of 30 points.

The final exam is cumulative.

Final Project: accounts for 20% of the final course grade. The project details will be assigned the first day of class. The Final Project is due by Lesson 9.

Assignments: This course requires at least 3 assignments as per the course outline in the syllabus.

Assignment #1: Understanding and Pairing Umami

Students will explore the concept of umami — the so-called “fifth taste” — analyzing its origin, chemical basis, and sensory impact in food and wine pairing. Due by Lesson 4.

Assignment #2: Pairing for a Special Occasion

Students will create a detailed three-course menu (starter, main, and dessert) for a special occasion assigned by the instructor. Due by Lesson 7.

Assignment #3: Tuscan Wines and Their Traditional Pairings

Students will analyze key Tuscan wines and their sensory traits, identifying traditional dishes paired with each and explaining the cultural and sensory logic behind these pairings. Due by Lesson 10.

Further details are provided in the course portal.

10. COURSE OUTLINE

| Lesson 1 | |
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| Meet | In Class |
| Lecture | Overview of the wine culture in Italy. The importance of wine within the Italian socio-economic framework |
| Objectives | Presentation of the course Class organization & syllabus review Understand the role of the wine in the Italian culture |
| Tasting in class | Tasting of a white wine from native grapes |
| Readings/ Assignments | Textbook - pp. XV – XIX (introduction) Daniele Cernilli, Marco Sabellico, <i>The New Italy, a Complete Guide to Contemporary Italian Wine</i> , Sterling 2008: The Story of Italian Wine (pp. 8-29) Assignment #1 Understanding and Pairing Umami assigned, due by LESSON 4 |

| Lesson 2 | |
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| Meet | In Class |
| Lecture | The occasion How to organize a meal: selecting the menu, and paring the wines – Festivities in Italy and their wine staples |
| Objectives | Understand the impact of: Salt, Bitterness, and Bubbles. Explain different styles of sparkling wines Identify the main Italian Festivities in the calendar and their tradition Identify some examples of traditional dishes and their wine pairing Assess the difference between 'spumante', 'prosecco' and champagne |
| Tasting in class | Tasting of a Tuscan antipasto and a sparkling wine |
| Readings/ Assignments | Textbook - pp. 89 – 121 <i>Speak the Culture Italy</i> , Thorogood 2010, Food and Drink (233-269) |

| Lesson 3 | |
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| Meet | In Class |
| Lecture | The varieties of wine and their reaction to food. Special focus on White wines – Tasting and pairing of food |
| Objectives | Understand Food and Wine Pairing System Understand Key Elements of Wine and Food Explain the different styles of wine Assess the main phases of production of white wines |
| Tasting in class | Wine and Food Tasting: The tasting will be based on 1 white wine from international grapes + 1 food tasting |

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| Readings/ Assignments | Textbook - pp. 17 – 35 Nicholas Belfrage, <i>Brunello to Zibibbo</i> , Faber and Faber 2001: Central Italy West, Grapes, Wine and Producers, White (pp. 180-210) |
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| Lesson 4 | |
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| Meet | In Class |
| Lecture | Basic definition of wines How to distinguish between the red, white and rosé Special focus on – Tuscan red wine areas and some of their peculiarities in food pairing |
| Objectives | Understand the Impact of Sweetness and Acidity Levels in Wine and Food Outline classic wine regions Describe the different wine styles from the different grape varieties Outline typical food pairings for the different wines obtained from the different grape varieties |
| Tasting in class | Wine and Food Tasting: The tasting will be based on red wine from Tuscany and food tasting |
| Readings/ Assignments | Textbook - pp. 36 – 47 MacNeill, Karen, <i>The Wine Bible</i> , Workman Publishing Company, 2001 – Tuscany (pp. 372-392) Assignment #1 DUE. Assignment #2 Pairing for a Special Occasion assigned, due by LESSON 7. FINAL PROJECT OVERVIEW. |

| Lesson 5 | |
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| Meet | In Class |
| Lecture | Everyday life, meals and wine choices |
| Objectives | Understand how to taste a glass of wine Explain the Italian wine classification system Assess the basic differences in wine types Identify the main meals and traditions/habits of Italian everyday life |
| Visit | WINE EXPERIENCE – a cultural experience into traditional street food and wine. |
| Readings/ Assignments | Textbook - pp. 3 – 16 De Mori, L. - Lowe, J., <i>The real flavour of Tuscany</i> , Quadrille Publishing, 2007: Sergio Pollini, Tripe Vendor (pp. 76-80), MIDTERM ASSESSMENT ASSIGNED, due prior to next class meet. |

| Lesson 6 |
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| Meet | In Class |
| Lecture | Special focus on ITALIAN REGIONAL WINES PART1 |
| Objectives | <p>Understand the geography of Italy and climate conditions that influence wine production</p> <p>Describe characteristics, of some of the wines coming from the different Italian regions</p> <p>Describe the different wine styles from the different grape varieties</p> <p>Outline typical food pairings for the different wines obtained from the different grape varieties</p> |
| Tasting in class | Wine and Food Tasting: The tasting will be based on rosé wine with food tasting |
| Readings/ Assignments | <p>Textbook - pp. 122 – 126, pp. 142 – 148</p> <p>Massimo Montanari, <i>Let the Meatball Rest</i>, Columbia University Press, 2009 (Identity declined in the plural, pp. 157-169).</p> <p>Assignment#3 Tuscan Wines and Their Traditional Pairings assigned, due by LESSON 10.</p> <p>MIDTERM ASSESSMENT/SPECIAL PROJECT DUE.</p> |

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| Lesson 7 | |
| Meet | In Class |
| Lecture | <p>Wine in Italian culture and its stereotypes demistified.</p> <p>New meals – the brunch and aperitivo time.</p> <p>Prosecco and aperitivo</p> <p>Sweet wines, how to complete a meal</p> |
| Objectives | <p>Identify new tendencies in meal habits in Italy and their perspective towards wine</p> <p>Assess some of the stereotypes that surround Italian wine</p> <p>Identify the different varieties of sweet wines and their area of production in Italy</p> |
| Tasting in class | Wine and Food Tasting: The tasting will be based on 1 aperitivo white dry wine and 1 food tasting and 1 passito dessert wine from Central Italy and 1 food tasting |
| Readings/ Assignments | <p>Textbook - pp. 180 – 181, pp. 198 – 209</p> <p>J. McInerney, <i>Bacchus and Me</i>, Vintage 2002: A ticket to Veneto (pp. 57-59), Sweet Stuff from Italy: Vini Dolci (pp. 159-162)</p> <p>Assignment #2 DUE.</p> |

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| Lesson 8 | |
| Meet | In Class |
| Lecture | <p>Ordering in restaurants</p> <p>The wine list & The Menu</p> <p>Differences in menus according to the food venue</p> |

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| Objectives | <p>Identify the different types of restaurant available in Italian culture</p> <p>Understand how to analyze a wine list</p> <p>Identify how to choose a wine pairing with the dishes available in the restaurant</p> <p>Understand how to read a menu according to the type of restaurant chosen</p> <p>Assess the expectations customers might have, according to the type of restaurant</p> |
| Visit | WINE experience – A meal with wine pairings |
| Readings/Assignments | <p>Textbook - pp. 233 – 270</p> <p>Some examples of Restaurant Wine Lists (handouts)</p> <p>Jay Mc Inerney, Bacchus and Me, Vintage 2002: Not your Grandfather's Food and Wine Combinations, (pp. 247-248,) Traditional Food and Wine Combinations (pp. 249-250).</p> <p>Textbook - pp. 270 – 310</p> <p>Examples of different menus (handouts)</p> <p>Alberto Capatti, Massimo Montanari, Italian Cuisine a Cultural History, Columbia University Press 2003 (Chapter four, The Sequence of Dishes, pp. 121-154)</p> |

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| Lesson 9 | |
| Meet | In Class |
| Lecture | Special focus on - ITALIAN REGIONAL WINES PART 2 |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand the geography of Italy and climate conditions that influence wine production - Describe characteristics, of some of the wines coming from the different Italian regions - Describe the different wine styles from the different grape varieties - Outline typical food pairings for the different wines obtained from the different grape varieties |
| Tasting in class | Wine and Food Tasting: The tasting will be based on 1 red wine from native grapes and + 1 food tasting |
| Readings/Assignments | <p>Textbook - pp. 148 – 158</p> <p>MacNeill, Karen, <i>The Wine Bible</i>, Workman Publishing Company, 2001 – Italy (pp. 315-323)</p> <p>FINAL PROJECT DUE.</p> |

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| Lesson 10 | |
| Meet | In Class |
| Lecture | <p>Life in the cellar</p> <p>How wine can age</p> <p>Final Review: conclusions and recap of all concepts</p> |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how a cellar is organized • Describe the different aging lengths, according to the wine |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify some of the main aging methods |
| Visit | Wine Activity – visit of a wine venue in the city with tasting |
| Readings/ Assignments | Textbook - references from lesson 1 to 13 See additional material on the course portal. Assignment #3 DUE. |

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| Lesson 11 Final Exam | |
| Meet | In Class |
| Lecture | FINAL EXAM |