

Wine Trends and Tips From Olive & Ivy's Sommelier, Chris Genung - Nightlife

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Wine Trends and Tips From Olive & Ivy's Sommelier, Chris Genung

SUZANNE KOCH, MAY 22, 2019

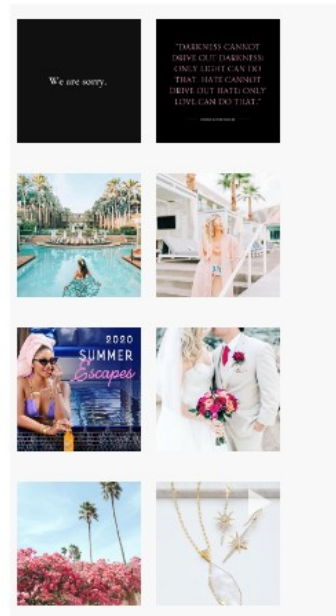
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Nothing says Saturday (or Sunday, Monday, Tuesday...) like enjoying a big glass of wine. From bold, dry reds to crisp, refreshing whites and everything in between, there isn't a vino we don't like. So of course we're celebrating this Saturday, National Wine Day (May 25), by upping our grape knowledge and drinking some pinot. Enter: Sommelier Chris Genung, a.k.a. the hero of the beverage game who's pouring out tips, tricks and insider knowledge for us on upcoming wine trends, do's and don'ts of food pairing, his fave rosés and more.

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As a complete industry veteran, Genung has been Olive & Ivy's sommelier for almost four years and he, like us, believes wine should be approachable. After all, nothing makes us more approachable than when we have a glass of wine in hand. Genung enjoys guiding customers through the restaurant's large wine list and leading them to their long, lost soulmate. Keep reading to uncork your match made in heaven.



Arizona Foothills Magazine: What wine trends are you noticing in the restaurant? Anything guests are ordering more of lately?

Chris Genung: We've noticed that guests want **premium quality when ordering wines by the glass**. In the last year, we've had success offering wines by the glass that would traditionally only be available in bottle format. We have a monthly program that allows us to highlight different bottles of wine this way.

AFM: Are there any up and coming types of wine or regions that should be on our radar?

CG: I'm a big believer in **Spanish wines**. I think they have tremendous value for their quality versus French, California and Italian wines of similar cost. Several talented winemakers have found their way to Spain to make wine in the last 20 years and the product is showing the fruits of their labor. I also am anticipating **Arizona wines** to gain a national foothold soon. Our infancy has begun to subside, and some amazing wines are beginning to come out of Southern Arizona. Rune in Sonoita and Caduceus Cellars are two stars in the making.

AFM: What are some tips, do's and don'ts, for pairing wine with a meal?

CG: At a restaurant, **trust the staff**. They know their lists and the food better than anyone. **Communicate your preferences** and let them guide you to what works best for everyone. At home, pair high-acid wine with spicy food. Avoid more tannic wine with fish. Most importantly though, **experiment** and drink the wine that you want!

AFM: Rosé is all the rage right now. Do you foresee the next wine trend?

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CG: I don't think rosé is going anywhere soon! As for the next trend, wine is experiencing something that has been happening with food—increased consumer interest in knowing who is making the product and what is going into it. **Boutique wineries and producers** are gaining a stronger foothold and soon, I think they will be leading the marketplace. These wineries are producing some fun, esoteric blends that many guests in our restaurant are loving.



AFM: Speaking of rosé, do you have suggestions for a great poolside rosé during the summer?

CG: At Olive & Ivy, we're launching **Summer of Rose**, which encourages our guests to enjoy any of four unique, premium rosés at the restaurant by the glass, or to take home—any of these are great poolside. **Lucy**, from the Santa Lucia Highlands, is a traditional rosé of Pinot Noir, with subtle floral notes and orange peel balancing the wine. I personally like **Azur** from Julien Fayard in California. Azur is made primarily from Syrah, giving it more weight and texture. **Rosehaven** is light and airy for those warmer days late in July. And finally, **Miraval**, from Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, is a rosé that's great year-around, but sings during the summer months. This summer, if you purchase one of these bottles from the Olive & Ivy Marketplace, you get 20% off, and 50% off when you purchase all four.

AFM: Lastly, what are your favorite wines on the Olive & Ivy menu and why?

CG: This is like choosing a favorite child. One of my favorites is the **Montinore Pinot Gris**. This is a gorgeous white that pairs with much of our food. We also have the incredible **Chateauneuf-du-Pape** from Domaine de Cristia. It tells a story in the glass, starting with bright red fruit and finishing with some ethereal earthiness. Truly poetic. When searching for more power in a wine, I seek out **Hudson's Phoenix** which is a Bordeaux-style blend showcasing both the power of Cabernet and the nuance of Merlot.

For more information on Olive & Ivy, visit: oliveandivyrestaurant.com

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