

Introducing a new wine column by a local food and wine lover  
**Getting Your Bearings on Pairings**  
By Bill Garlough

I am an Aurora resident that started an upscale catering business in Naperville seventeen years ago. With a business background, a love for food and wine and plenty of elbow grease, our venture has grown nicely over the years. Both my wife and I had good cooks in our families, so we were raised in homes where food was appreciated. We have enjoyed many food experiences over the thirty years we have known each other, both at home and at restaurants. I remember fondly the first time I enjoyed a good bottle of French white burgundy at a corporate dinner and an excellent bottle of Bordeaux at an anniversary dinner with my wife. This opened my eyes to the flavorful experience wine can bring to a meal. Wanting to replicate this experience at home on a more affordable basis, I started collecting wine in the mid-eighties. To broaden my knowledge and palate, I began subscribing to wine magazines, which introduced me to a wide variety of new wines.



The catering business gave me an additional outlet to explore my interest in wine. I select wines for clients that may be served to hundreds of guests at an event or for intimate dinner parties that wish to more precisely match food and wine. My goal has always been to give the client the best possible experience within their budget.

As I have accumulated a deeper appreciation and understanding for wine over the years, I decided to challenge myself by taking the level one course offered by the Court Of Master Sommeliers in 2004. It was an intensive experience and I thankfully passed the exam.

All this has led to this new wine column. In this monthly column, I plan to offer two sections. The first will be devoted to a topic in the wine world, ranging from seasonal issues, types and styles of wines, the local wine scene and general wine information. The second area will be food and wine pairing suggestions. We add spices to dishes to enhance their flavors, so it is only natural that a properly matched wine can also add to the dining experience. What is challenging to all of us is that there are an overwhelming number of wines to consider and that the quality may vary from year to year. In this column, I will stay with more mainstream wines that should be readily available, so you can explore my pairing suggestions. Candidly, obscure wines can be frustrating, as there is little opportunity to experience them. Most of us want a pleasant, affordable wine on hand for casual sipping and some "nicer" wines for special occasions. I will try to offer both levels in this column.

I thought it is appropriate to introduce myself to you, as I would with a friend on the back deck. Hopefully, you will find this column to be helpful by providing practical information on wine and pairings that you can enjoy with family and friends throughout the year. See you next month.

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