

The Gastronomic experience of Fine Australian Shiraz wines



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Introduction and Objectives

Food and wine pairing has been a valuable tool for the wine industry to increase consumer satisfaction and spending; however, to address more contemporary experience-driven consumer needs, this study set out to investigate pre-consumption effect (provenance information) on core and post-consumption consumer experiences of food and wine pairings, and to identify sensory attributes of the most appropriate pairings.

Materials and Methods

Complex food samples (n=7), and commercially available fine Shiraz wines (n=8) from diverse Australian wine regions were evaluated separately by a **descriptive analysis** (DA) panel (n=8). From this analysis, a subset of food samples (n=4) were evaluated in pairings with a subset of Shiraz (n=4) wines, yielding 16 wine and food combinations (Fig 1).

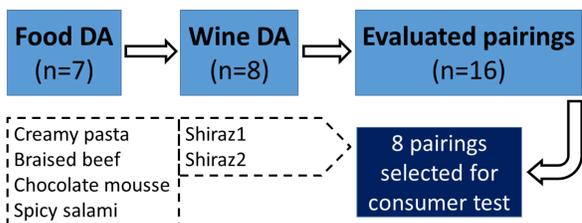


Fig 1. Descriptive analysis of Food, Shiraz and Chardonnay wines and food pairings by a trained panel (n=8).

Australian consumers (n=152) evaluated the selected food and wine pairings (n=8), stating their **liking, appropriateness, balance, and complexity** of the pairing, **expected price to pay** for the wine in a restaurant, and **pairing-evoked emotions** (Fig 2). One week after the tasting, consumers completed a follow-up survey to capture post consumption experience (**vividness, remembered liking, memorability and loyalty**) of the wine they rated in food pairings.

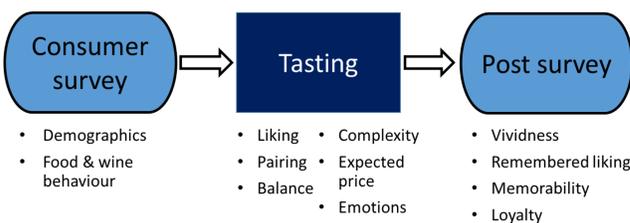


Fig 2. Consumer preference test of Shiraz (n=152) wine and food pairings

Results

Sensory profile of appropriate food and wine pairings

The sensory drivers of the most appropriate pairings were “flavour intensity”, “toasty/smoky”, “meaty”, “umami”, “salty”, “mouthfeel complexity”, “mouth coating”, fuller “body”, and were slightly dominated by the wine component of the pairing (Fig 3). In comparison, pairings rated high in “acidity”, “astringency”, “hot spice” were considered less appropriate.

Information of wine provenance effect on consumer behaviour

During core consumption, information level significantly impacted ratings for sensory complexity, 15 emotion terms and during post-consumption the vividness of the tasting (Fig 4). The significant pairing by information level interaction on remembered liking was found.

Sensory properties of food and wine pairings in relation to consumer behaviour, evoked emotions, and memorability

- Food items of the pairings were more important overall than wine items, as they significantly influenced consumers’ preferences and behaviour.
- Higher pairing suitability scores corresponded with increased liking, complexity, expected prices to pay for wine, and generated positive post-consumption experience (vividness, remembered liking, memorability, loyalty) (Fig 3).
- More appropriate pairings evoked more positive emotions, such as “calm”, “contented”, “happy”, “nostalgic”, “adventurous” and less negative emotions (Fig 3).
- Consumers expected to pay over 20% more for a wine as part of an appropriate pairing than if it was in a less appropriate pairing (Fig 5).

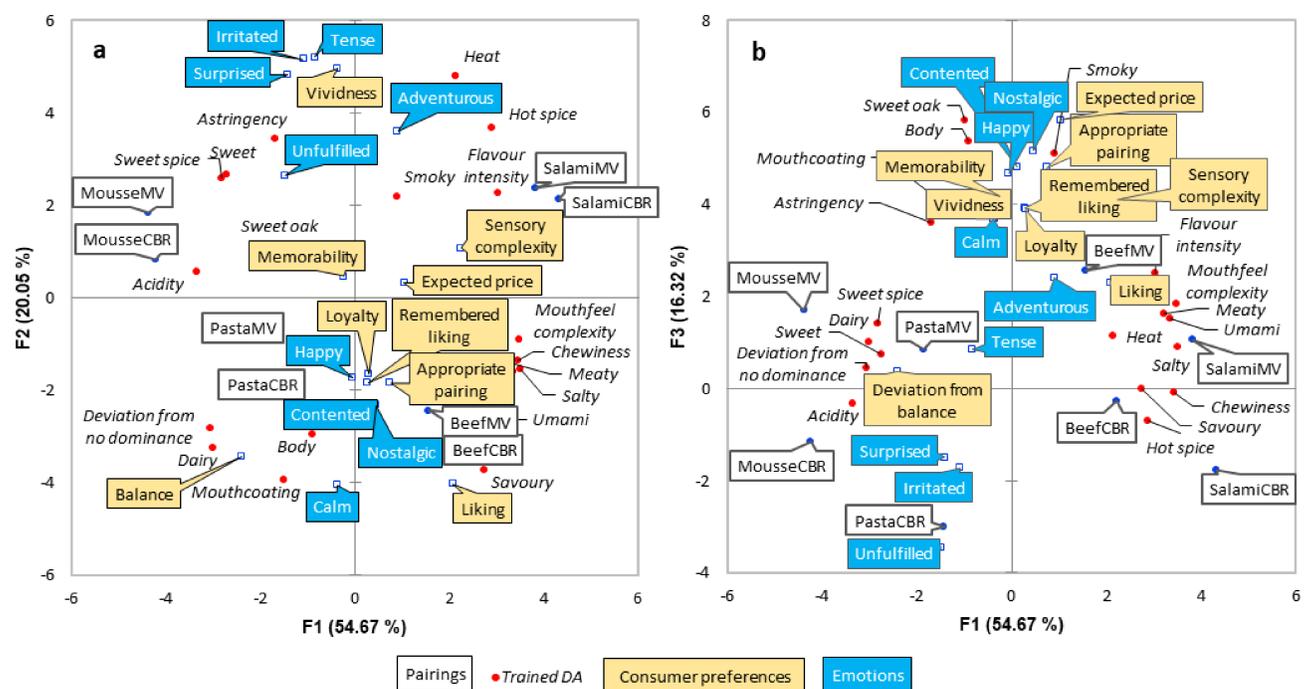


Fig 3. PCA biplots (F1&F2 and F1&F3) of Shiraz wine and food pairings with significant descriptors arising from the descriptive analysis as main variables and consumer preferences and evoked emotions as supplementary variables.

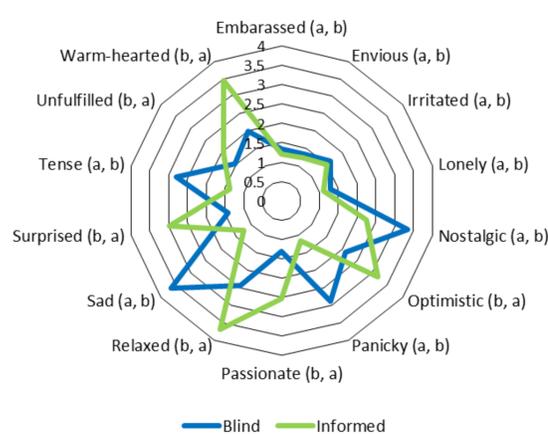


Fig 4. Food and wine pairing experience-evoked emotion profiles for two different information levels (blind or wine provenance information).

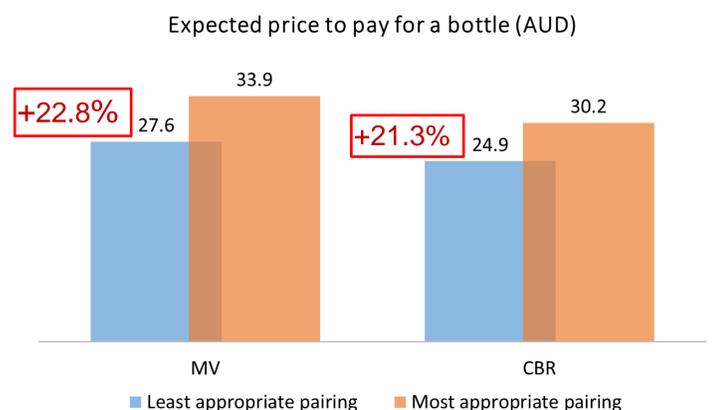


Fig 5. Expected price to pay (AUD) for a bottle of Shiraz wine from McLaren Vale (MV) and Canberra (CBR) in the least and the most appropriate food and wine pairings.

Conclusions and industry implications

- Information about wine provenance did not effect consumer behaviour.
- Food items had a larger effect on the pairing than wine within the same grape variety.
- Food and wine pairing is desired by consumers and can be translated into financial gain.
- Winery restaurants and tasting rooms operating with fixed wine lists may achieve more appropriate pairings by pairing the food to the wine and not the other way around.
- Beyond just offering food and wine bundles, delivering appropriate pairings may be important for positive gastronomic experience, word-of-mouth effect, and can provide businesses higher customer satisfaction and spending.
- Further work including other grape varieties and wine styles is required to confirm the influence of food and wine pairings on consumer preference and emotions.

Acknowledgments

This project has been funded by Wine Australia with matching funds from the Australian government. Additionally, we would like to thank the supporting wineries for providing the wines for this project, and colleagues and partners helping throughout the consumer test.