

March 2018

## Natural pairing 天生一對

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### Recommended Citation

Lynam, Robin (2018) "Natural pairing 天生一對," *AMBROSIA 客道: The Magazine of The International Culinary Institute*, 42-47.  
Available at: <http://repository.vtc.edu.hk/ive-hosts-ambrosia/vol5/iss1/17>

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The potential for synergy between wineries and restaurants seems obvious today, but the winery-restaurant phenomenon is relatively new. Recent years, however, have seen such ventures flourish, and Michelin stars and multiple awards suggest it's a marriage built to last. 今天，酒莊與餐廳相輔相成的潛力已顯而易見，以致近年才流行的酒莊餐廳如雨後春筍般發展，並屢獲米芝蓮星級殊榮及各種獎項肯定。酒莊與餐廳似乎能成為天長地久的結合。 **By Robin Lynam**

# Natural 天生一對 pairing

Few wine lovers would disagree with a bold assertion made in Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin's trail-blazing 1825 treatise, *The Physiology of Taste*. "A meal without wine is like a day without sunshine," the author and enthusiastic gastronome insisted.

After all, even breakfast can be better enjoyed with a glass of champagne, and let's not forget that food improves wine. "If you are just having a cocktail party, you are looking for a simple wine, not too complicated or heavy," says Hong Kong-based wine importer and connoisseur Thomas Yip. "But heavy wines without eating are no fun at all."

But if there is harmony between food and wine, there is also rivalry. Oenophiles, in fact, often prefer to pair the finest bottles with simple dishes, so as not to overshadow the wines. Conversely, gourmets tend to choose relatively simple wines with complex dishes, to emphasise that the star of the show is on the plate.

Recent years, however, have seen restaurants operated by wine producers winning gourmet plaudits, and even Michelin stars. Although the great wine estates of the Old World have traditionally employed talented chefs for private functions, the winery-restaurant started out as a New World phenomenon.

Linked to the winery of the same name, the Restaurant at Domaine Chandon, in the Napa Valley town of Yountville, pioneered Californian winery cuisine when it opened in 1977. The eatery was later renamed Étoile, and closed in 2015, but gourmets and wine lovers alike still line up for tables at venues such as Farmstead at Long Meadow Ranch, also in the Napa Valley. Remaining in California, the Restaurant at Wente Vineyards, in Livermore, and the Restaurant at Justin, in Paso Robles, also do roaring trade.

著名美食家及作者Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin於1825年的著作《The Physiology of Taste》中強烈地表示：「沒有葡萄酒的一頓飯，就如沒有陽光的一天」，這點相信許多葡萄酒愛好者都不會反對。

不消說，有香檳佐膳，早餐會更美味；有美食佐酒，葡萄酒何嘗不是更上層樓。香港葡萄酒進口商兼專家葉福章也說：「如果是雞尾酒會，供應簡單的葡萄酒就好，太複雜或酒體太重的都不適合；醇厚的葡萄酒沒有美食相伴就太沒趣了。」

不過，食物與葡萄酒可以是相生的佳偶，也可以是相剋的敵人。事實上，品酒專家喜歡以層次豐富的佳釀搭配簡單的菜式，以免葡萄酒的光芒被菜式掩蓋。相反，美食家會挑選相對簡單的葡萄酒來搭配複雜的菜式，免得葡萄酒喧賓奪主。

然而，近年由葡萄酒釀酒廠經營的餐廳屢獲美食家好評，甚至摘下米芝蓮星，使佳釀美酒相輔相成的酒莊餐廳蔚然成風。而帶起這現象的，並非傳統上素有聘請名廚為私人宴會掌勺的舊世界酒莊，而是新世界的同業。

位於納帕谷揚特維爾鎮的Domaine Chandon酒莊同名餐廳，於1977年開業，開創了加州的酒莊餐廳先河。餐廳後來易名為Étoile，並於2015年結業，但無損加州酒莊餐廳的吸引力。納帕谷酒莊Long Meadow Ranch的Farmstead餐廳，以至利弗莫爾市Wente葡萄園和佩索羅柏斯市Justin酒莊內的餐廳，仍然其門如市，饕客、劉伶絡繹不絕。

澳洲的情況也一樣。位於西澳珀斯以南250公里、瑪格麗特河區的Leeuwin酒莊同名餐廳，以及阿德萊德郊區Penfolds酒莊的Magill Estate餐廳均大受食客歡迎，就算不是百分百的葡萄酒愛好者，也會專程前來用膳。

It's a similar story in Australia: you don't have to be a serious wine lover to want to dine at Leeuwin Estate's Leeuwin Restaurant, in Margaret River, about 250 kilometres south of Perth in Western Australia, or Penfolds Magill Estate Restaurant, just outside Adelaide.

Elsewhere, highly rated New World winery-restaurants include Overture, at Hidden Valley Wines, in Stellenbosch, South Africa; Old Vines Restaurant, at Quails' Gate Winery, in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley, in Canada; Terrôir Restaurant, at Craggy Range Vineyards, in the Hawke's Bay district of New Zealand's North Island; and the 1884 Restaurante Francis Mallmann, at Bodega Escorihuela Gascón, in Mendoza, Argentina.

Naturally, excellent dining destinations can also be found at the great estates of the Old World. Notable restaurants include Cantinetta Antinori, at Palazzo Antinori, in the Italian city of Florence; Marqués de Riscal Restaurant, in Spain's celebrated Rioja wine region; and Barão Fladgate Restaurant, which is operated by world-famous port house Taylor's Cellars, in Porto, Portugal.

In Bordeaux, as Yip notes, chateau hospitality has traditionally been offered behind doors, closed to the general public, but some prominent estates have recently broken ranks and gone into the restaurant business, with some picking up Michelin stars in the process.

"The first would probably be the Cazes family, who own Lynch-Bages," says Bordeaux-based food and wine consultant Wendy Narby, who recently hosted a seminar on Bordeaux wine at ICI. "Jean-Michel Cazes opened a hotel and restaurant called Château Cordeillan-Bages. It's very dynamic, very innovative, and he's gone on to open a café called Café Lavinal. He has created a destination area based around the gastronomy. He was one of the pioneers. He worked for many years with [chef] Thierry Marx, who is very innovative."

Narby also highlights Château Smith Haut Lafitte, Château Angéjus and Château Troplong Mondot as estates that have been successful with fine-dining ventures. Smith Haut Lafitte's La Grand Vigne restaurant – at the winemaker's Les Sources de Caudalie hotel – and Les Belles Perdrix de Troplong Mondot have both won Michelin stars. Venerable eatery Logis de la Cadène, in St-Émilion, was founded in 1848 and is a local institution. Purchased by Château Angéjus in 2013 the restaurant was awarded its first Michelin star in 2017. "I think what these chefs do is take the wine first and build around it," says Narby. "The wine is the star, but they have terrific produce in the south west of France to work with."

At Château Cordeillan-Bages, however, chef Julien Lefebvre sees the art of matching Bordeaux wines and cuisine more as a matter of balance. "The



“I think what these chefs do is take the wine first and build around it. The wine is the star”

我相信酒莊餐廳的大廚應該是以葡萄酒為前提，然後設計能與選定佳釀配合的菜式，主角仍然是葡萄酒

– Wendy Narby

除此之外，南非史泰倫布西鎮Hidden Valley Wines的Overture、加拿大卑詩省奧肯那根谷Quails' Gate酒莊的Old Vines、紐西蘭北島霍克斯灣區Craggy Range葡萄園的Terrôir，以及阿根廷門多薩Bodega Escorihuela Gascón的1884 Restaurante Francis Mallmann等酒莊餐廳也獲得好評如潮。

當然，不少舊世界知名酒莊也擁有出色的餐廳，意大利佛羅倫斯Palazzo Antinori的Cantinetta Antinori、西班牙產區里奧哈的Marqués de Riscal，以及享譽世界的波特酒廠Taylor's於其位於波圖的酒窖內開設的Barão Fladgate，均是當中的佼佼者。

葉福章表示，波爾多酒莊傳統上只會閉門招待熟客，不會對公眾開放，但最近有些地位顯赫的波爾多酒莊開始打破傳統，進軍餐飲業，所經營的餐廳更獲米芝蓮星級美譽。早前曾在國際廚藝學院講授波爾多葡萄酒知識的餐飲顧問Wendy Narby說：「首創先河的要數擁有Lynch-Bages酒莊的Cazes家族。在Jean-Michel Cazes帶領下，他們首先開設了朝氣勃勃、創意十足的酒店連餐廳Château Cordeillan-Bages，隨後再再接再厲開辦名為Café Lavinal的咖啡館，創造了一個以美食為主題的景區。Jean-Michel是帶領這股潮流的先驅之一，多年來一直與創意澎湃的廚師Thierry Marx合作無間。」

Narby亦特別指出Château Smith Haut Lafitte、Château Angéjus及Château Troplong Mondot等酒莊在發展高級餐飲業務方面均表現出色，Château Smith Haut Lafitte於旗下Les Sources de Caudalie酒店內開設的La Grand Vigne，與Les Belles Perdrix de Troplong Mondot餐廳雙雙摘得米芝蓮星星。Angéjus酒莊則於2013年收購聖艾美濃歷史悠久、當地家喻戶曉的餐廳Logis de la Cadène，並使該1848年開業的餐廳於2017年獲得米芝蓮一星殊榮。Narby說：「我相信酒莊餐廳的大廚應該是以葡萄酒為前提，然後設計能與選定佳釀配合的菜式，主角仍然是葡萄酒，而法國西南部有許多優質農產品可以利用。」



不過Château Cordeillan-Bages大廚Julien Lefebvre卻指波爾多葡萄酒和佳餚的搭配著重互相協調。他說：「當我們擬定葡萄酒配對餐單時，主要會考慮季節、氣候和農產品三個方面。我們會先寫好食譜，再由首席侍酒師挑選能配合菜式的最佳葡萄酒和陳年佳釀，兩者應是平起平坐，沒有誰蓋過誰。」

Les Belles Perdrix de Troplong Mondot主廚David Charrier則相信，先有菜式或先選定美酒都無關宏旨，他表示：「不論是根據葡萄酒的特色設計菜單，還是根據菜式如野味或海鮮等來挑選葡萄酒，兩者均可。如果是以松露或野味為主的餐單，考慮會更加多方面，不單是選擇哪一款陳年佳釀，蔬菜或煙燻肉類的酸性等，每一樣都要深入研究及反覆試味。」

Narby指出波爾多大部分土地都是葡萄園，其他農作物的產量有限，不過全球酒莊餐廳的大廚們均對葡萄酒與地道農產品結合的當地風土特色給予肯定。Lefebvre表示：「與春天蔬菜一起烹調的波亞克羊肉，可以搭配優雅的波亞克或Saint-Estèphe陳年佳釀，如2000年的Château Lynch-Bages紅酒：這款佳釀味道複雜、層次豐富，雪松、李子和熟透的黑加侖子香味久久不散。」

在加拿大奧肯那根谷的Old Vines餐廳，大廚Roger Sleiman積極為顧客提供「奧肯那根谷的真正味道」，盡量採用當地及區內出產的有機農作物，以由農場直接送



CHATEAU CORDEILLAN-BAGES RESTAURANT IMAGE BY GIANNI VILLA

season, the climate and the produce are primary considerations when we devise a menu for pairing," he says. "The recipe is defined first, and then the chief sommelier thinks of the best wine and vintage to match. It is a 'marriage' based on balance, where one must not overpower the other."

Chef David Charrier, at Les Belles Perdrix de Troplong Mondot, believes that either food or wine can be taken as the starting point. "The approach to menu creation can be to create dishes according to wines, or to bring wines in accordance with a menu, such as game or seafood products," he says. "If we work on a menu of truffles or game, everything comes into account: the vintages, but also the acidity of a vegetable or the smoked meat – everything must be studied and tasted."

Bordeaux, points out Narby, is so intensively planted with vineyards that other agriculture is limited, but chefs in winery-linked restaurants across the world recognise affinities between wines and local produce that are



related to terroir. “The lamb of Pauillac, prepared with spring vegetables,” says Lefebvre, “can be matched with an elegant Pauillac or Saint-Estèphe wine of a vintage such as 2000 from Château Lynch-Bages, which has great complexity, depth and an array of lasting flavours such as cedar, cassis and plum.”

At Old Vines Restaurant in Canada’s Okanagan Valley, chef Roger Sleiman works to provide what he calls “a true taste of the Okanagan”, working as far as possible with local and regional organic produce, and offering farm-to-table menus matched to Quails’ Gate’s award-winning wines. At New Zealand’s Terrôir Restaurant, at Craggy Range Vineyards, head chef Casey McDonald works with local cheese and vegetables, but goes a step further to get a taste of terroir into his food.

“One of our signature dishes is the halloumi, which is served with beetroots smoked amongst vine cuttings from our estate owned vineyards,” McDonald says. “The vine cuttings add an interesting smoke flavour, giving depth to the beetroot and a savoury element to the dish. This, matched with the Craggy Range Gimblett Gravels Syrah, is a winner. The Syrah shows a real earthy element, along with lifted violet florals, which matched with the beetroot is a fantastic combination.”

Some restaurants in wine country have to contend with the extra challenge of coming up with dishes for expensive, iconic wines that are usually ordered only on special occasions. This is certainly true of several restaurants in Bordeaux, but also for others such as Penfolds Magill Estate Restaurant on the outskirts of Adelaide. Penfolds makes Grange, a wine sometimes referred to as “Australia’s first growth”.

“We are fortunate at Penfolds Magill Estate to have such a vast collection of back vintage Penfolds wines to choose from,” says head chef Scott Huggins. “We look to identify wines drinking now at their optimal best. Our focus is always to create synergy between the wine and the food. A great match is 1967 Penfolds Bin 7 with 21-day Dry-aged Duck, Beetroot and Watercress. Both food and wine have age and incredible depth and complexity that work well with each other. Another is Mayura Station Wagyu cooked over wood, with garlic and soy, paired with 2008 Grange. The soy burnt onto the crust of the wagyu over fire gives extreme, bold complexity that complements Penfolds Grange perfectly.”

Today, the fit between winemakers and eateries seems to be a natural one, and the surprising thing is that the winery-restaurant phenomenon took so long to evolve. “The harmony between a wine and a dish brings a new dimension to both the wine and the dish,” says Aymeric de Gironde, CEO of Château Troplong Mondot. “It is the marriage of flavours, textures and aromas that transcends them, and gives a particular emotion. It is therefore a permanent exercise to go and return between the wine and the dish.” 🍷



This page, from top right to bottom: Chef Scott Huggins of Penfolds Magill Estate Restaurant; the restaurant at Château Cordeillan-Bages  
本頁上至下: Penfolds Magill Estate 大廚Scott Huggins ; Château Cordeillan-Bages酒莊內的餐廳

🍷 We look to identify wines drinking now at their optimal best. Our focus is always to create synergy between the wine and the food

我們一般會挑選正值最佳飲用期的葡萄酒，並炮製能與葡萄酒相輔相成的美食 🍷  
- Scott Huggins



This page, from top to bottom: Putting pairing into practice amidst the vineyards of Quails’ Gate Winery; Grand Cru chocolate “crèmeux” perfumed

with mint from the garden, Monsieur Delrieu’s raspberry mousse and sorbet at Les Belles Perdrix de Troplong Mondot

本頁上至下: 在Quails’ Gate酒莊內體現酒舖配對; Les Belles Perdrix de Troplong Mondot餐廳以新鮮薄荷葉裝飾的Monsieur Delrieu紅莓慕斯及雪芭配朱古力醬



抵的農產烹調的美食配合Quails’ Gate的得獎佳釀。在紐西蘭Craggy Range葡萄園內的Terrôir餐廳，主廚Casey McDonald不止採用地道的芝士及蔬菜作食材，還更進一步地把風土特色融入食物之中。

McDonald說：「我們的招牌菜式之一是哈羅米芝士配煙燻紅菜頭，紅菜頭與摘自我們酒莊的葡萄藤一起煙燻，為紅菜頭帶來獨特的煙燻味，增添味道的層次，搭配Craggy Range Gimblett Gravels Syrah，可說是所向披靡。」這款酒帶有土壤的氣息，夾雜著紫色鮮花的香氣，與紅菜頭配搭恰恰到好處。

有些酒莊出產的經典佳釀，價錢昂貴。要為這些只有在特別場合才喝的美酒設計菜式，是艱巨的挑戰。波爾多部分酒莊餐廳顯然要面對這樣的挑戰，但想不到在阿德萊德郊區的Penfolds Magill Estate餐廳也有同樣的煩惱，因為Penfolds釀製的Grange，有「澳洲一級佳釀」美譽。

主廚Scott Huggins表示：「我們很幸運，因為在Penfolds Magill Estate，陳年佳釀實在多不勝數，選擇琳琅滿目。我們一般會挑選正值最佳飲用期的葡萄酒，並炮製能與葡萄酒相輔相成的美食。其中一個配搭是1967年Penfolds Bin 7紅酒和21天乾式熟成鴨肉配紅菜頭及西洋菜，食物跟葡萄酒都經過熟成的步驟，味道同樣層次豐富及複雜，確是相得益彰。用柴火燒烤的香蒜醬油Mayura Station和牛搭配2008年的Grange是另一最佳拍檔，和牛燒得香脆的表面吸收了濃濃的醬油，味道強烈而複雜，與Penfolds的Grange配合得天衣無縫。」

今天，釀酒廠和餐廳的結合已變得順理成章，倒是酒莊餐廳現象的演變過程漫長得教人意想不到。Château Troplong Mondot行政總裁Aymeric de Gironde說：「酒與食物之間的和諧互補能同時提升葡萄酒和菜式的層次，味道、質感和香氣的結合，可令兩者更上層樓，令人產生一種特殊的情感。因此我們要不斷在葡萄酒與菜式之間作出嘗試，這是永不休止的練習。」 🍷