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Recommended Wine Classes For All Levels

By Ian White on November 07, 2012 1:00 PM

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Image courtesy of the SF Wine Center

Looking to impress your friends or a date with a little knowledge about fine wine and food pairings? Or perhaps you're seriously considering a career in the wine industry? Whatever your level of interest may be, knowing your wines and what to serve them with will certainly serve you well. Here are our favorite places and classes, at all levels, to get you on the road to becoming an educated Oenophile:



Image of Wine & Wall by John A. Benson



GUIDES

- [The Big Eat 2012: 100 Things to Try Before You Die](#)
- [The Big Eat 2011: 100 Things to Try Before You Die](#)
- [The Big Veg 2011: 50 Vegetarian \(Or Vegan\) Things to Eat Before You Die](#)
- [Four Ways To Escape the Cold in Mexico](#)
- [Jams We Love: Our Weekly Playlists](#)
- [10 Best Dishes \\$10 in the Inner Sunset](#)
- [Rise and Dine: A Guide to Brunch at SF's Best Restaurants](#)
- [The Best Cheese in SF \(Recommendations from Local Cheese Shops\)](#)
- [Refreshingly Unhip: The Best Vanilla Ice Cream in SF](#)
- [The 20 Best Dishes Under \\$10 in the Tenderloin & Tenderloin](#)
- [12 Best Cookies in SF](#)
- [Community Gardens Around the City](#)
- [Horseback Riding Within 1.5 Hours of SF](#)
- [Four Awesome Northern California Hot Springs](#)
- [Refreshingly Unhip: SF's Old-School Pastrami Sandwiches](#)
- [The 7 Best Carne Asada Burritos in San Francisco](#)
- [The 10 Best Dishes Under \\$10 in the Outer Sunset](#)
- [The 20 Best Dishes Under \\$10 in the Mission](#)
- [The 10 Best Dishes Under \\$10 in Bernal Heights](#)
- [The 10 Best Dishes Under \\$10 in the Lower Haight](#)

Beginner

The word Oenophile is Greek for the love (philia) of wine (oinos). If you rolled your eyes, then it's best you start with fun and experiential classes offered at wine shops and wineries like these:

Wine & Wall in San Francisco offers classes and educational mixers featuring subjects like *Chardonnay 101*, *Old World vs. New World*, and *Essentials of Wine & Food Pairing at Home*. You can also design your own class. \$55 per person.

B Cellar's Wine Blending Boot Camp, like Wine & Wall, has experienced and knowledgeable teachers who keep it light. This experience is fantastic for a group or a birthday party, as you'll be able make your own blend, compete, and take your wine home if you win.

There are other **wineries that offer a range of blending experiences**. We also suggest educational events by **The Right Blend** or winemaker events at local boutiques like **biondivino**.



Photo of Raymond Vineyards Rutherford Classroom by Scott Chebegia

Intermediate

If you have a solid grasp of the basics (like knowing the difference between Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc, but unsure what to serve them with), you're ready for some intermediate classes.

The **San Francisco Wine Center** offers classes ranging from *Extreme Sonoma Coast*, where you'll learn all about the wines of the Sonoma Coast and the associated terrior, to *In Pursuit of Balance*, which promotes understanding of balance in wines. Classes range from \$60 - \$90.

The **Cheese School of San Francisco** has a variety of wine and cheese classes for about \$75 that are designed to be easy and accessible for every level of "casiophile" (cheese lover) or Oenophile. Classes range from *Winter Cheeses & Wines* to *British Cheese and the Wines that Love Them*.

Intermediate classes are also available at many wineries, like **Raymond Vineyards**, the **CIA** (Culinary Institute of America) in St. Helena, and the locations in the 'beginners' section above.

[The 10 Best Lunches in Union Square Under \\$10](#)

[Refreshingly Unhip: The Best Glazed Doughnuts in SF](#)

[Expert Advice on Parking in The City](#)

[5 Ways to Get the Wine You Want in Restaurants](#)

[San Francisco's Best Dance Classes: 9 Places to Bust A Move](#)

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Advanced

Advanced doesn't necessarily mean you're an expert, but it does mean you should be ready to commit to a series of classes or thoughtful study.

If that sounds appealing, the best place to start is the [CIA](#). They have everything from **Wine Lovers Boot Camps** (which I recommend) to [professional studies](#) for those looking to start a career, and everything in-between.

If you're really serious, check out [certification classes at the Grape Experience](#), the [education program by the Court of Master Sommeliers](#), and the schools recommended in the 3rd installment of *7x7's How to get a Job in the Wine Industry*.

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Lauren Marsh • 2 hours ago

I have thoroughly enjoyed my WSET studies with Adam Chase at Grape Experience - excellent overview, Ian!

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Matthew Levy • 2 hours ago

Fun article. Don't forget about Camp Schramsberg. It's a 3-day intensive wine & food program that walks through the production of sparkling wine with the Schramsberg winemakers. Plus, you spend time looking at how to pair food with sparkling wines to create a memorable dining experience, led by Chef/Enologist Holly