

Here's how to make your Valentine fizz

What better way to celebrate love than popping a champagne cork on Valentine's Day?

There is something eternally romantic about clinking a fizzing champagne flute with the one you love.

Champagne is so special because of its long history and the care that goes into making it.

Only sparkling wine from the Northern French region of Champagne, around the towns of Reims and Epernay, can legally be labelled champagne.

And with many champagne houses still doing things by hand rather than machine, they can command the highest prices in the wine world.

Most champagne is made from a blend of three grapes, surprisingly two of which are red grapes, chardonnay (white), pinot noir (red) and pinot meunier (red).

Cut a red grape in half and you'll see the juice is clear. The champagne maker's trick is to press the grapes very gently so the juice doesn't take on any colour from the skins.

The most romantic champagne has to be rosé. The enticing pink colour comes from the red grape skins that are left in contact with the juice for a short time.

In the past, rosé champagne might have seemed girly and frivolous, but what woman wouldn't swoon at the classic clichés of a box of chocolates, a dozen red roses and a glass of delicious pink bubbles. Leave this page open and hope he gets the message!

There are two main flavour characteristics to champagne, fruity and biscuity, and it's matter of personal taste as to which you

prefer. A fruity fizz will smell and taste of green apple, citrus fruit or summer fruits, if it's rosé, while others will still be fruity, but will also have biscuit, toast or even nutty flavours and generally be more full-bodied. Tiny bubbles generally mean good quality.

Opening a bottle of champagne can be nerve-wracking, not to mention dangerous! So chill the bottle, upright and overnight if possible, as it calms the bubbles. Carefully remove the foil and wire and try to keep your thumb over the cork. Twist the bottle, not the cork and it should come out easily in your hand without a drop wasted. Whilst pouring, if you think the bubbles are going to froth up over the glass, just put your little finger on the glass rim and it should stop the rising fizz in its tracks. Your Valentine will be so impressed with your technique, he'll love you even more!

Champagne ideas to make your Valentine's Day sparkle:

■ Rosé – Oudinot Cuvée Rosé, Marks and Spencer, reduced from £22.99 to £17.99

■ Fruity – Nicolas Feuillatte Brut NV, tesco.com, reduced from £26.92 to £17.92

■ Biscuity – Taittinger Brut Reserve NV, Oddbins, reduced from £35.99 to £23.99

■ Sparkling alternative – Lindauer Brut NV, Majestic, £9.99 or buy 2 bottles save 25%

Emma has set up a wine tasting company to offer a wine tasting service for events and parties and also offers free wine tips/advice for anyone who's stumped as to what to buy. It's called The Wine Taster and any inquiries can come to me at emma@thewinetaster.co.uk

Emma Bailie is charity manager at Preston's Rock FM and Magic 999 and runs the radio stations' charity Cash for Kids but in her spare time she is working her way through the internationally recognised WSET qualifications (Wine and Spirit Education Trust) through Harvey Nichols in Manchester.

Specially for What Women Want readers, Emma has put together a series of sparkling recommendations for which champagnes or fizz to choose for Valentines Day.



natural solution

...with natural health expert
MIKE ARNOLD



How do I deal with weeks of indigestion?

I have been suffering with severe indigestion since having a tummy bug a few weeks ago. I also feel bloated, especially after eating a heavy meal. Over-the-counter indigestion remedies only bring temporary relief. Can you suggest any natural alternatives?

It can be a long time before the digestive system returns to normal after we have had a stomach bug. This can be particularly so when there has been lots of vomiting and/or diarrhoea.

The digestive system produces enzymes to break down food. As we grow older our bodies decrease production of these enzymes. Many over-the-counter remedies for indigestion are known as antacids and work by neutralising acid in the stomach. They can be counter-productive as the acid the stomach produces is needed to break food down, and creating an alkaline environment can cause the stomach to over-compensate by producing excess acid.

I recommend that you try the High Potency Digestive Aid produced by Viridian Nutrition. This contains the right balance of betaine hydrochloride and digestive enzymes such as Lipase (for breaking down fats), Amylase (for breaking down starchy food) and Protease (for breaking down proteins). Each capsule also contains peppermint and ginger which aid good digestion. The capsules will supplement the enzymes that your body produces naturally, helping with the more efficient breakdown of food and a consequent feeling of comfort, and loss of that bloated feeling after meals. The best results seem to be when three capsules are taken just before the evening meal.

Many people can have an instant relief from weeks or months of digestive problems after taking a product like Viridian's High Potency Digestive Aid. I recommend that you reduce the dose gradually; first to two capsules and then to one before the final meal of the day. Some people find the digestive system can return to normal after discontinuing using digestive enzymes. If it does not, you may need to check if you are eating too many foods the digestive system is unable to cope with, in which case it may be that a food sensitivity test is advisable.

Viridian's High Potency Digestive Aid is available from most good health food stores and they cost £7.95 for 30 capsules, £15.50 for 90.

Email me with your enquiries at naturalhealthadvice@sky.com.

Super slim dad has a new addition

LEE Philipson has been a lone man among many women in his time at a Preston slimming club but his dedication has paid off. Since he joined Slimming World in 2006 at the Blessed Sacrament Social Club in Ribbleson, Lee has steadily shed the pounds to reduce his weight by three stone.

And when he announced to fellow group members that he and wife Angie had a fourth addition to their family in the shape of baby Jude, they immediately decided to mark the occasion with a baby shower – a special party to mark the youngster's arrival.

Nicola Corcoran, group leader, said: "Lee is a fantastic member of the group. He's the only man but he joins in with everything and he's our bargain hunter, always tracking down the best deals on slimming products."



PARTY: Lee Philipson with wife Angela, baby Jude and other Slimming World members