

Study: How restaurants reap higher wine sales

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A Cornell study has identified four strategies that restaurants use to reap higher wine sales: including the wine list on the food menu; listing [prices](#) without a dollar sign; listing wines from certain wineries known for their quality; and including "reserve" wines or another special section.

"We've seen dozens of suggestions for how restaurateurs should present their wines," said Michael Lynn, professor of consumer behavior and marketing at the Cornell School of Hotel Administration, who conducted the study with doctoral student Sybil Yang, "but we haven't seen any research evidence of how presentations are connected with higher sales."

The researchers tested 46 different attributes of the wine lists in 270 restaurants and found that only four attributes were linked with higher sales across all the restaurants. One tactic was connected with lower sales -- using wine style (e.g., sweet, bold, dry) as an organizational category on the list.

The researchers also found that wine sales tend to decline as price increases at casual dining restaurants, but price seemed to have no relationship with sales at fine dining restaurants. They also found that having a longer wine list reaped more sales only at casual dining restaurants, where wine sales increased with the length of the list, up to

about 150 wines.

Yang and Lynn caution that their wine research was based on correlation and not causation. Additionally, some of the tactics they tested may be effective but so subtle that they could not be seen in this study.

More information: The report, "Wine List Characteristics Associated With Greater [Wine Sales](#)," is available free through Cornell's Center for Hospitality Research at www.hotelschool.cornell.edu/reports/reports/2009.html .

Provided by Cornell University ([news](#) : [web](#))

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