

Red, White Wine, Fish And Science

29 October 2009, By Jim Dawson

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The long-standing rule of matching wine and food -- red wine with red meat and white wine with fish -- actually has a scientific explanation, according to two scientists working for the Mercian Corporation, a Japanese producer and marketer of wine.

The research, published in the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, found that the small amounts of iron found in many red wines caused those who eat fish to have a strong, fishy aftertaste.

Researchers had wine tasters sample 36 red wines and 26 white wines while dining on scallops. The wines varied by country of origin, variety and vintage, but the samples that contained irons were consistently rated as having a fishy aftertaste.

When the scientists increased the amount of iron in a particular wine, the nastiness of the aftertaste increased. The reports of the bad aftertaste went away when a substance that binds to [iron](#) was added to the offending wines.

Fish were then soaked in high-iron [wine](#) and several compounds related to the "[fish](#)" taste increased measurably.

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