

Strengthen Family Ties In The Kitchen

Involve Family Members in Meal Planning and Preparation

(NAPSA)—Sharing food and wine with family can provide a perfect opportunity to strengthen bonds, enhance traditions and build memories to pass on for generations, not to mention create delicious meals. Gina Gallo, third-generation winemaker for the award-winning Gallo of Sonoma Winery, often hosts dinner parties for several generations of her family. She offers the following tips for involving family members in meal preparation to create an even more welcoming atmosphere.

Making the Menu: Involve family members in the initial stages of meal planning, inviting them to help select the menu from favorite recipes. “One of our most cherished recipes is my grandmother Gallo’s chicken ravioli,” says Gina. “It’s always a special dish to serve at gatherings, since it carries tradition along with its delicious flavor. It tastes best when paired with our Sonoma County Chardonnay.” A menu, after all, is never complete without complementary wines.

Pairing Perfection: A general rule of food and wine pairing is to match the weight of the wine with the weight of the food, pairing lighter dishes with light-bodied wines and heavier dishes with full-bodied wines. To create the best possible taste, it’s also important to match the flavors of the wine and food. For example, the tropical flavors of Gallo of Sonoma’s 2002 Pinot Gris make it an excellent complement to fish, light salads and white meats. The winery’s 2001 Cabernet Sauvignon has dark fruit qualities, which pair best with beef and lamb dishes.



Spicing it up: For many, experimenting with new recipes and new wines creates a fun atmosphere. “Try adding a hint of spice, special sauce or vegetables to old family recipes and select a new wine to pair with the dish’s updated flavor,” says Gina. “We recently introduced our first vintage of Syrah, and now we’re always adding a slight twist to prime rib, steak and venison—dishes that are perfect pairs.”

When it’s time to prepare the meal, each generation or family member can take charge of a specific dish. “It’s a tradition for my father or my brothers to grill the meats,” says Gina. Feel free to change groups and dishes, to experience cooking with everyone. Establish a relaxing environment when preparing the meal by enjoying a glass of wine. “So much joy comes from creating a special meal together,” says Gina. “Sharing the meal and wine is the ultimate reward.”