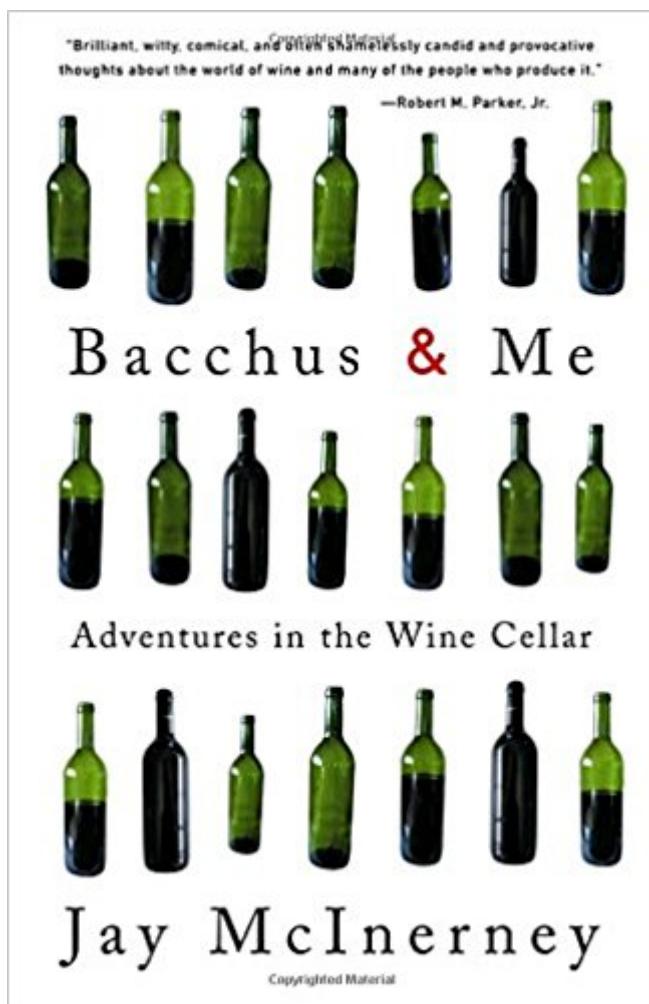


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Bacchus And Me: Adventures In The Wine Cellar



Synopsis

Jay McInerney on wine? Yes, Jay McInerney on wine! The best-selling novelist has turned his command of language and flair for metaphor on the world of wine, providing this sublime collection of untraditional musings on wine and wine culture that is as fit for someone looking for "a nice Chardonnay" as it is for the oenophile. On champagne: "Is Dom Pérignon worth four bottles of Moët & Chandon? If you are a connoisseur, a lover, a snob, or the owner of a large oceangoing craft, the answer . . . is probably yes." On the difficulty of picking a wine for a vegetarian meal: "Like boys and girls locked away in same-sex prep schools, most wines yearn for a bit of flesh." On telling the difference between Burgundy and Bordeaux: "If it's red, French, costs too much, and tastes like the water that's left in the vase after the flowers have died, it's probably Burgundy." On the fungus responsible for the heavenly flavor of the dessert wine called Sauternes: "Not since Baudelaire smoked opium has corruption resulted in such beauty." Includes new material plus recommendations on the world's most romantic wines and the best wines to pair with a meal.

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Customer Reviews

Bright lights: Krug, Latour, Lafite, Montrose. Big cities: Montalcino, Hampstead, Reims, Geyserville. Welcome to *Bacchus & Me: Adventures in the Wine Cellar*, bestselling novelist Jay McInerney's mixed four-case lot of wine essays culled primarily from his output of "Uncorked" pieces written for

House & Garden magazine. Reflecting the author's wit and opinion, it's tasty and stylish stuff. And nestled between glossy pages of photos depicting, say, a 396-square-foot TriBeCa loft decorated with a pair of Eames chairs purchased at a Brooklyn swap meet for \$45, McInerney's blend of self-deprecation (his "eyebrows raised and jaw dropped" when H&G editors broached his name as wine columnist) and irreverence (on straw-covered Chianti bottles: the "bong component of choice in dorm rooms around the world") is refreshing juice. Unfortunately, as a compilation, it serves more to unmask a Eurocentric name-dropper: the bon-mot-coining D2 dilettante on an expense account who got the gig because he knew the editor. It's distressing, because there's so much to like here: "A Ticket to the Veneto" is a sparkling meld of ego and yeast; questioning whether or not to cellar wine, he concludes, "What could be more all-American than instant gratification?

“Brilliant, witty, comical, and often shamelessly candid and provocative thoughts about the world of wine and many of the people who produce it.”
“McInerney’s wine judgments are sound, his anecdotes witty and his literary references impeccable. Not many wine books are good reads; this one is.”
“In the fruity, buttery world of wine writing, there’s nothing else like it.”
“Atlanta Journal

I love this book. I read it years ago and found it to be a fun way to learn more about wine. Some of the humorous ways he compares wines puts things into context better than more academically written books. I bought this copy for my sister as she's learning more about wine for work and she seems to enjoy it despite not being as big of a wine enthusiast as myself.

A great writer!

I must confess that I picked this book up only because I recognized the author's name and knew that I was long overdue to read something of Jay McInerney's. He's a local boy and one who enjoys a possibly worldwide reputation thanks to the likes of BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG CITY. I read a few pages and decided I'd give it a go. Jay's style, while not singular, is quite amusing. He writes like a very gifted kid, though also like one who's not overwhelmed with his own genius (no names, please). Since I pay my rent and my kids' tuition with

the money I make from the business Jay writes about in these pages, I suppose I know a little about the business. I also spent a decade of my "professional student" career in Europe — specifically, in Switzerland; Austria; Italy; (then) West Germany; the (then) Soviet Union; and Spain — and was able to sample a variety of Old World wines. Just short of a year ago, I read a little thing titled *WINE (ALL-IN-ONE) FOR DUMMIES* — yes, all 600+ pages of it. And, given my employment, I probably now read a little something about wine every day. All of that said, I can easily recommend this book, whether to the neophyte or to the experienced connoisseur, as a worthwhile read. The former will find it educational; the latter will find it, at the very least, entertaining. McInerney touches upon the history, geography and topology of the wine-making and drinking business just enough to render the book educational — and does so in a kind of wine-spritzer style to render the subject entertaining. If you have to start anywhere in this continually evolving world of wine, this is as good a place as I can imagine to get your feet wet and your palate titillated. If I have any criticism at all (and this frankly doesn't count as a valid criticism, given the subject-matter and its requirements), it's that the book seems just a tad dated. But in some sense at least, books about wine — just like books about gardening or cooking — never age out. And although this book may well be a mere collection of essays written over months or years for the likes of *House & Garden*, Jay McInerney's prose doesn't age out either. Unlike many of the wines he describes, he's good to go — right now.

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Reading over fellow book critics, the observation came up that Jay McInerney is far too involved in this book for his own good. I suggest readers take it for what it is. This guy, like Brett Easton Ellis has made his cool cash depicting the decadent world of America in the 1980s and early 90s. So what does a man do with his cool cash and his passion for wine? He spends it, he hob-nobs with the rich and famous. This book has its fun and comical points ("Anyone who starts analyzing the taste of a rose in public should be thrown in the pool immediately" or "...the more expensive California Chardonnay tended to resemble the women of *Playboy* and *Beverly Hills*") and he enjoys meeting wine makers, describing Angelo Gaja's driving as "Jackie Steward on crystal Meth" - which made me laugh. The book is at best an irreverent, almost comedian-like take on wine. It is serious only for a moment. He has a few pointers but again, unless you have thousands in your bank account, you most likely won't follow his advice. He isn't a sommelier or someone in the industry.

He's honest, he explains where he's coming from. He's a writer that has a passion for wine. And like most American wine writers, he misuses the word 'varietal' instead of using 'variety' ('varietal' is an adjective, describing a type of wine, not the grape variety itself - how come the British always get it right?). When it comes to tasting notes, he is more pop culture which after a hundred pages, began to tire. But look at the title 'Bacchus and Me'. That says it all. You can hate this book, find it pompous and elitist (which it can be) or you can take it for what it is - Jay McInerney and wine. How else would he write? What else would he write about? Himself, his money, his wine. There is no real depth here. It's a beach read at best but if you can pick up a pointer and giggle along the way, it's not that bad.

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