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# Wine Passion for the Young at Heart: 'It's a Food, Not a Drink'

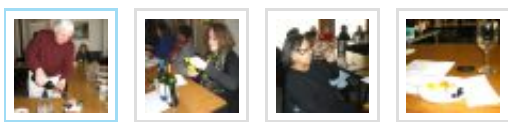
A Catonsville sommelier enlightens a senior center crowd on the intricacies of wine appreciation.

Posted by [Jennifer Donatelli](#) (Editor) , January 28, 2014 at 05:41 PM



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wine for students during a wine tasting class Tuesday at  
onate



**By Jennifer Donatelli**

Like almost any teacher preparing to instruct his class, David Bond handed out a syllabus, or list of topics to be covered, to his students Tuesday.

But that's where the similarities between Bond's class and others end. His students are members of the Catonsville Senior Center. Bond is a member of the center donating his time to teach his fellow members about wine.

Yes, wine. Bond is a certified sommelier teaching a 10-week course about wine to center members at a reduced rate of \$15.

"I enjoy doing it. I have a ball," said Bond, who told his students he worried about being long-winded. "For me, (wine is) a passion. It's always been a passion for me. It's a food, not a drink."

Bond moved to Catonsville just two months ago from Philadelphia. He obtained his certification

as a sommelier at the Sommelier Society of America in New York in 2006 after retiring from his previous job. He usually teaches classes and holds wine tastings for corporate events and some private parties.

Not long after he arrived in Catonsville, he went to the senior center to volunteer, thinking he'd be helping check in fellow members. Center Director Nicole Sheehan learned about his business and immediately asked him to share his expertise, he said.

Bond first held two demonstrations: around Thanksgiving, wines to serve during the holidays, and then in December, wines to serve during the Christmas season, said Grace McDowell, the center's assistant director. Both were well-received, she said.

From there, the idea of Bond teaching classes was a natural fit that would employ a member's talents, McDowell said.

"They love the class," she said of the students. "It's not just about tasting wine. He talks about where the grapes are grown, a whole bunch of things."

Anyone attending the class can see the rapport Bond has with his students, and he said he loves it as much as they do. He showed a video - "The Great Courses: The Everyday Guide to the Wines of France," featuring Jennifer Simonetti-Bryan, a master of wine, which Bond described as similar to someone having a doctorate.

This class focused on wines from the Bordeaux region of France, and Bond had four to be tasted: white bordeaux, margaux, basic bordeaux, and sauterne.

Each of the 14 students had a setting of a glass and small plate of dried fruit, dried blueberries, pate and Ghiarardelli 72 percent chocolate. Bond offered four different kinds of wine to be sipped - or slurped, which he said is the proper way to taste wine because it fills more of the mouth - and explained which wine paired best with the foods.

As an example, Bond said the sauterne wine, which has a deep golden color, pairs with spicy food. Although it can be sipped alone, eating something spicy and then sipping the sauterne changes the flavor of the wine, he said.

"It's a good time. We have fun. When you leave, you're in a better mood than when you came in," Bond said before the class started.

Indeed, before long, students were chuckling and laughing. Many lingered at the end to talk to Bond. One even took the leftover sauterne before others realized it was gone.

Several students said they appreciated Bond's offering to teach the class at a reduced cost.

"He's an incredible speaker. You can tell how much he loves wine," said Toby Eagle of Catonsville. "I was so upset last week with the snow when they canceled class at the center."

And although students don't imbibe enough to get drunk, sometimes people outside the center do give them looks, said Mickey Brock, a Baltimore resident who sometimes catches a Maryland Transit Administration bus to her home after the classes.

"Last time, I had to get the MTA bus, and I know the driver was looking at me like, 'What are they doing in that senior center,'" she said, laughing.

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**Caryl Sue Johnson** January 29, 2014 at 08:04 AM

great article and it's all so true, David Bond is such a dedicated teacher and really knows his wines.  
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