



Sauce: Wine by the half-pint

by Joanna Simon

Does the idea of drinking wine by the half-pint sound gross? If it does, think again. You could already be doing it. The 250ml wine glass that bars, clubs and pubs increasingly offer may look sleeker than a half-pint beer glass, but the amount of liquid it holds is not far off - just under nine fluid ounces compared with 10 in a half-pint. If the wine is 14% abv, a 250ml measure also contains 3½ units of alcohol, which exceeds the recommended daily limit of two to three units for women and is right on the button for men.

I dislike the nanny tendency as much as anybody, but it makes sense to know how much you are drinking, especially as wine is stronger than it used to be and measures are larger.

If you want to watch your intake without relinquishing quality and flavour, look for wines with naturally low alcohol, including Côtes de Gascogne, riesling, English and German wines, Vinho Verde, Australian semillon, prosecco, cava and Txakoli from Spain. And pour less in your glass, then swirl it round to maximise the aroma and flavour before you sip.

CELLAR NOTES

2005 Peter Lehmann Barossa Semillon, £6.15 Smooth, attractively dry, lemony, spicy white; 11.5% abv (Asda).

2007 Vouvray, Champteloup Vieux Vauvert, £6.49 Medium-dry with honeyed apple fruit and zingy acidity; 11% abv (Waitrose).

2007 Côtes de Gascogne, Rosé, Domaine Millet, £6.95 Light, soft, raspberry-scented rosé; 11.5% abv (Yapp Bros, 01747 860423).