

# DR red wine

SURGEON TURNED WINEMAKER RECOMMENDS A  
GLASS OR TWO A DAY

Renowned cardiovascular surgeon Thomas Fogarty has a prescription for his patients: Drink a couple of glasses of red wine every day. Fogarty, professor of surgery at Stanford University Medical School and the holder of more than 70 patents for surgical devices, also owns the Thomas Fogarty Winery and Vineyards in California's Santa Cruz Mountains. So it would be easy to dismiss his advice as being colored by a conflict of interest. ☞ "People say that to me all the time," says the 69-year-old physician. "I say, 'Yeah, but I'm also correct.'" He knows that some of his colleagues have been reluctant to recommend wine to their patients, but he says he's been doing it "since before I had a winery or even knew I was going to be developing one." ☞ Fogarty is by no means the only physician to own a winery. Even the Santa Cruz Mountains counts other doctors—David Bruce, a retired der-

matologist, and Wells Shoemaker of Salamandre Wine Cellars, a pediatrician—among its vintners. But Fogarty's expertise in medical matters of the heart lends weight to his views on the health benefits of wine. ☞ Although Fogarty spends much of his time with his research and development company—inventions include a minimally invasive technique for diagnosing breast cancer and the Fogarty balloon embolectomy catheter, used for removing blood clots and the forerunner to the catheter used for angioplasty—he still practices medicine, mostly cases that are difficult and involve emerging procedures that are less invasive. ☞ And he recommends wine—specifically, red wine. ☞ "Wine really isn't just an alcoholic beverage. It's a health food," he says. "There's a lot of evidence to document that. Overall, it does more good, by a significant amount, when taken in

STORY LAURIE DANIEL ☞ PHOTOS THAYER ALLYSON GOWDY

# 5 WAYS WINE IS GOOD FOR YOU

**IS WINE GOOD FOR YOU?** We took a closer look at Fogarty's suggestion that wine is "health food," enlisting the help of experts like Dr. Arthur Klatsky, senior consultant in cardiology at the Kaiser Permanente Medical Center in Oakland, Calif. They have some good news for wine consumers.

"We know that wine drinkers do better than people who drink liquor when it comes to preventing coronary heart disease," says Klatsky, who has led studies and written extensively about the relationship of alcohol consumption to cardiovascular conditions. In fact, many studies have concluded that moderate wine drinkers live longer than abstainers.

Whether it's the lifestyle that is generally associated with wine drinkers—wine with meals, in moderation—or the components of wine itself, this beverage is helpful for the heart.

According to Klatsky and other experts, wine helps prevent heart disease in these ways:

- 1 INCREASES HDL (GOOD CHOLESTEROL) AND DECREASES LDL (BAD CHOLESTEROL).
- 2 DECREASES THE STICKINESS OF BLOOD PLATELETS, WHICH FORM CLUMPS THAT LEAD TO BLOOD CLOTS.
- 3 HELPS DISSOLVE CLOTS THAT FORM WITHIN ARTERIES.
- 4 HAS BENEFICIAL EFFECTS ON GLUCOSE INSULIN LEVELS, WHICH MAY HELP TO REDUCE THE RISK OF DIABETES, A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO HEART ATTACKS.
- 5 HAS TANNINS, PHENOLS AND QUERCETIN—ANTIOXIDANTS THAT MAY HELP FIGHT FREE RADICALS THAT OFTEN LEAD TO CANCER AND HEART DISEASE.

Of course, any alcohol in excess is bad for your health. While other doctors may disagree with Fogarty's prescription, many concur that one or two glasses a day keep the doctor away.

—TAJJI MARIE

**SOURCES:** *Factors Influencing the Relation Between Alcohol and Mortality, With Focus on Wine*, M. Gronbek; *Here's to Your Health*, R. Curtis Ellison, M.D. *Wine Spectator*, October 1998; *Alcohol Consumption and Risk for Congestive Heart Failure in the Framingham Health Study*, C.R. Walsh et al.

moderation, than it does harm. Anything in excess is bad. That's certainly true of alcohol in any form. But if you took that away, you'd be taking away significant health benefits."

He ticks off some of the cardiovascular benefits: "It lowers blood pressure. It decreases the stickiness of the platelets, which is the same thing aspirin does. So it helps you prevent clotting, which is the thing that causes heart attacks and strokes. And it lowers the bad lipids, and it elevates the good lipids. And there's actual evidence now to document that."

**THE BENEFITS ARE PARTICULARLY DRAMATIC WITH RED WINE** because of

antioxidants contained in the skins of red grapes, Fogarty says. Some of his patients say they prefer white wine. "I say, 'Well, you have to take a lot more to get the same effect,' which is true. That's documented, because some of these elements aren't present in as high a concentration" in the skins of white grapes.

Fogarty acknowledges that some of his colleagues have been "somewhat intimidated into not taking a stand on the issue." But he thinks that "most of the debate is over" when it comes to the question of whether wine in moderation is healthy. "The basic premise that

wine does promote cardiovascular health, I don't think there are too many knowledgeable people who will deny that."

What defines moderation? Fogarty says that depends on the size of the patient. But to those who suggest that one 4-ounce glass a day is moderate consumption, Fogarty responds: "I think that's under-treatment."

It was a love of wine and of the outdoors—not wine's healthy aspects—that led Fogarty to buy the 325-acre property with panoramic views above Woodside where he would start his winery. When he joined the faculty at Stanford in 1969 he encountered colleagues who were interested in wine. "They'd have wine tastings, and I'd go," he says. "I didn't know anything about it, but I went. And one of the individuals happened to have a small winery (Nepenthe Cellars, now defunct). I started helping him when the crush came. And then I started making wine myself as a hobby."

Fogarty already owned some land in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and he'd been thinking about getting into winemaking as a serious undertaking. To do this he only had to look next door. By 1978 Fogarty had purchased an adjacent property and planted Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, adding Merlot later.

All of the Fogarty wines from mountain vineyards have a core of firm acidity, reflecting their cool-climate heritage. The 2000 Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir (\$23) has juicy cherry flavors accented by ever-changing notes of smoke, herbs and spice. The 2000 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$50) is medium-bodied, with lots of bright cherry and raspberry. In addition, the Gewurztraminer, made from Monterey County grapes, is a perennial award-winner. The 2002 version (\$15) seems a little fatter and riper than usual but has classic Gewurz spice.

Thomas Fogarty Winery is open for tasting Thursday through Sunday. 650.851.6777; [www.fogartywinery.com](http://www.fogartywinery.com).

