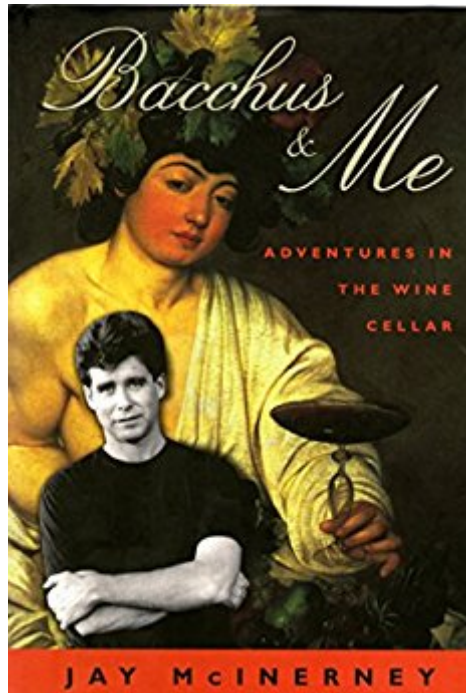




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# Bacchus & Me: Adventures In The Wine Cellar



## Synopsis

With acerbic wit, irreverent tone, and bountiful hilarious anecdotes, Jay McInerney writes the first wine book that makes sense to all those dazed by the prevailing, dull technical wine writing. McInerney generously reveals all he's learned on his worldwide journey to understand wine in chapters on reds, whites, dessert wines, champagne, aperitifs, and more. McInerney holds forth in forty-nine essays - with agile humor; an astonishing amount of hard fact, and an ample dose of personal taste - on: how to make your way around a German wine label; what to drink with Thanksgiving turkey; the truth about Zinfandels; why Burgundy is so hard to predict; Napa Valley's finest winemakers; the pleasure of flinty Chablis, the deep satisfaction of port, the glorious potential of Oregon's Pinot Noir; the respectability of Rosé; and the most colorful characters in the business. It is actually possible for a reader of *Bacchus & Me* to take what is learned to the bank, and immediately thereafter to wine shop or restaurant to indulge in the wine of his or her fantasy with the confidence of a sommelier. *Bacchus & Me* is for everyone interested in learning more about the wines of the world. For both those of broad means and of modest purse, there is intense vicarious pleasure to be found in McInerney's vinous adventures.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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 and 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 are just like books about gardening or

cooking. It's 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. It's 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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