



Glass Shape, Color Can Influence How Much Wine You Pour: *Study*

“[People] tend to focus more on the vertical than the horizontal measures [of a wine glass.] That’s why people tend to drink less when they drink from a narrow glass, because they think they’re drinking more.”

—Laura Smarandescu, Assistant Professor at Iowa State

Need to make your moderate alcohol consumption a little more, well, moderate? Then maybe you should take into account the shape or color of your wine glass.

In a small new study, researchers from Iowa State and Cornell universities found that people tend to unintentionally pour more wine into their glasses if the glasses are wider. They also tend to over-pour when they’re holding the glasses in their hands, and when the glassware doesn’t match the color of the wine.

“People have trouble assessing volumes,” study researcher Laura Smarandescu, an assistant professor of marketing at Iowa State, explained in a statement. “They tend to focus more on the vertical than the horizontal measures. That’s why people tend to drink less when they drink from a narrow glass, because they think they’re drinking more.”

The study, published in the journal *Substance Use and Misuse*, included 73 study participants who drank at least a glass of wine each week. All the study participants were instructed to pour themselves a glass of wine at different stations the researchers had set up.

Researchers manipulated various environmental factors to see how they affected the amount of alcohol poured into the glasses. For instance, researchers purposely set up a station with a small place setting and a station with a large place setting, to see if anticipation of a meal affected the amount of alcohol poured into the glass. Researchers also had participants pour the wine into a glass on a table, or into a glass they were themselves holding. They also had participants pour wine into large, standard or wide glasses, as well as red wine into a clear glass or white wine into a clear glass.

Indeed, certain cues led to more wine being poured into the glasses. A wider glass was linked with 11.9 percent more wine being poured, holding the glass was linked with 12.2 percent more wine being poured, and high color contrast between wine and glass (red wine in a clear glass) was linked with 9.2 percent more wine being poured.

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, a standard drink is considered 5 fluid ounces of table wine, 3 to 4 ounces of fortified wine (like port or sherry), 12 fluid ounces of regular beer or 8 to 9 fluid ounces of malt liquor.

Moderate drinking for women means having no more than one alcoholic beverage a day for women, and no more than two for men, according to government guidelines. Moderate drinking has been linked with some health benefits, but keep in mind that excessive alcohol consumption can lead to a number of ills, including chronic liver disease, alcohol abuse or dependence, injuries and even cancer.

