

BLUE ZONES POWER 9

WINE @ FIVE

LO BEVO VINO

Italians say, “lo bevo vino” or “I drink wine.” And they just might be onto something. Studies show that people who have a healthy relationship with alcohol, enjoying a daily glass of wine, beer, or spirits, may reap some health benefits from doing so. Healthy centenarians in Sardinia, Italy, drink a glass of red wine with each meal, and when they gather with friends. People in Okinawa, Japan (another Blue Zones® area), have a daily glass of sake with friends. **Residents living in the original Blue Zones areas share common principles called Power 9®—and Wine @ Five is one of these lifestyle behaviors that has helped them live longer, healthier, happier lives.**



A DRINK A DAY MEANS HEALTHY FLAVONOIDS

Red wine isn't the only source of healthy antioxidants called flavonoids. You can also find flavonoids in brightly colored fruits and veggies, and in dark chocolate. Studies show that a diet high in healthy flavonoids may be linked to a reduced risk of some cancers and heart disease.

Studies point to the health benefits that a daily drink of beer, wine, or spirits may offer. Blue Zones researchers believe the key to experiencing these benefits lies in consistency and moderation. Enjoying a daily alcoholic beverage has been associated with lower rates of heart disease, as well as a reduction in stress and chronic inflammation. On the other hand, alcohol use has also been shown to increase risk of breast cancer in women.

Red, Red Wine

Red wine in particular seems to offer heart-healthy benefits. The antioxidants it contains may help prevent heart disease by increasing levels of “good” cholesterol and protecting the arteries. Cannonau grapes grown in Sardinia, Italy, produce more red pigment to protect themselves from the sun's intense ultraviolet rays. As a result, Cannonau wine has higher concentrations of polyphenols, a powerful antioxidant. When possible, sip a glass of Cannonau wine. But keep in mind that when you have more than the recommended daily serving, alcohol can have a negative effect on the liver, brain, and other organs. In other words, it's not ok to save up all week and then drink 10 glasses of wine on Saturday night. Consistency and moderation are key.

Test Your Knowledge

Which alcoholic beverage offers healthy antioxidants?

- a. Sake b. A Shot of tequila
c. Red wine d. White wine
e. None of the above

The correct answer is: **c.** Red wine contains the most health-boosting antioxidants, which have been linked to lower risk for some cancers and heart disease.

Q & A: Ask the Expert

Q: What is considered one alcoholic drink?

A: Alcoholic beverages contain different percentages of alcohol. According to the National Institutes of Health, one standard drink is:

- 5 ounces of wine
- 12 ounces of beer or wine cooler
- 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled liquor

Moderate drinking is defined as up to one drink per day for adult women who aren't pregnant, and up to two drinks per day for adult men.

TOP 5 WAYS TO ENJOY THE GRAPES OF LIFE

Blue Zones researchers found that the healthiest centenarians typically enjoy one alcoholic beverage per day. Not only does a daily drink confer some heart-health benefits, but it also offers people a chance to wind down and reconnect with friends and family after a busy day.

- 1 Easy does it.** You only need a serving or two per day to enjoy alcohol's health benefits. Overdoing it cancels out any benefits, so be sure to drink in moderation.
- 2 Buy a high-quality red wine.** Red wine produced from Cannonau grapes grown in Sardinia, Italy, has two to three times the amount of flavonoids found in other red wines. If you can't find Cannonau wine, look for another high-quality, dark red wine, so you can enjoy its artery-scrubbing health benefits.
- 3 Beer and spirits offer health benefits, too.** Although red wine contains the most disease-fighting antioxidants, studies show that beer and spirits consumed in moderation (one to two servings) are also associated with lower rates of heart disease, and a reduction in stress and the damaging effects of chronic inflammation.
- 4 Savor a glass of wine with dinner.** Drinking a glass of well-chosen wine with dinner can bring out the flavors of your food, while creating a special event. You may be even more likely to slow down and savor the blend of flavors.
- 5 Enjoy a "Happy Hour".** Set aside time each day to unwind with a glass of wine, beer, or the beverage of your choice, some nuts to snack on, and good friends. It doesn't have to be a large block of time. Sometimes, just an hour or so is enough time to slow down and connect with loved ones.

Learn more about Power 9® Principles
at bluezonesproject.com