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A Tale of Two Cities: Differences in Wine-Drinking Habits in Nice and London

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I am truly thankful to my advisor Dr. Holly Hurlburt, my French host family, my actual family, Jess Gold of the London-based Big Green Machine, Southern Illinois University, and Washington University, and all survey participants, without whom this wonderful experience would have been impossible.

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A TALE OF TWO CITIES: DIFFERENCES IN WINE-DRINKING HABITS IN NICE AND
LONDON

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Abstract

The French Paradox is the theory that, despite consumption of classically-condoned fatty foods, the French remain in excellent health in comparison with citizens of other nations. This notion has been the subject of worldwide media fascination with publication of a plethora of journal articles and novels. A growing body of evidence supports a role for moderate consumption of wine in conferring health benefits. The role of wine in health may be especially prevalent in the French Riviera, a region whose regime is dominated by the French-Mediterranean Diet. I sought to determine the role of wine in the French Paradox by surveying residents of the French Riviera (n=102) on their wine-drinking habits and attitudes, and comparing these responses to those of surveyed residents of Greater London, UK (n=104), an area with a higher burden of obesity-related disease. Results reveal that residents of the French Riviera consume wine in smaller portions in comparison with Londoners (two-tailed t-test, $t_{197} = 5.79$, $P < 0.0001$, often for conviviality at special shared meals. Londoners, on the other hand, are more likely to consume wine in larger portions, more frequently alone and for relaxation purposes than their French counterparts. Identification and awareness of these differences provides a snapshot of these regions' distinct oenophilic profiles. Further research is needed to determine whether these French habits directly confer health benefits. However, this initial knowledge could encourage international adoption of these seemingly-healthy French wine-drinking tendencies, which could potentially play a role in reducing obesity and its global disease burden.

Keywords: French Paradox, French Riviera, Greater London, wine habits and attitudes, global obesity burden.

Introduction

“We go through life with such a day-to-day routine, and we don’t really stop and experience and breathe and just appreciate what’s there. And I think that’s one thing wine has enabled me to do – You stop, and you take it, and you look at it, and you smell it, and you live life through your senses; and for that quick 25 seconds it’s nothing else that matters other than that liquid (Wise 2013).” - Ian Cauble, Master Sommelier candidate.

It was the best of times, it was the thirstiest of times. It was Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Blanc, aged, dry, sweet, full-bodied, smooth, crisp, rich, metallic, woody, fruity notes. It was a single taste of wine that has endless sensory components. Wine can be shared with loved ones, sipped slowly over a perfectly paired fresh platter. On the other hand, it can be abused for its alcoholic content, guzzled down with little perception for pure inebriation. Could differences in consuming this beverage lead to long-term health consequences?

France is a nation home to a rich history of wine appreciation. France is also a paradoxical nation, whose inhabitants characteristically enjoy a diet rich in foods traditionally condoned as “fattening”, such as Brie cheeses, foie gras, and buttery brioche. Yet the French have lower than expected rates of cardiovascular disease, as well as related metabolic conditions, such as the globally devastating case of obesity (Burr 1995). This surprising sentiment is known as the French Paradox, and it has been the subject of recent popular culture fascination in both America and the United Kingdom. For example, Mireile Guiliano’s *French Women Don’t Get Fat* was a New York Time’s number one bestseller and Peter Mayle’s French culture account titled *A Year in Provence* is a British bestseller that was used as a script for a successful television spinoff (Guiliano 2007; Mayle 1991). The area of the French Riviera in particular is an

especially healthy region of France, home to a French-influenced Mediterranean Diet, a regime that is hailed by nutritionists as ideal in preventing cardiovascular morbidity and in promoting longevity (Justin Yang 2004).

While the French have a relatively low obesity burden of about 10%, the United Kingdom is the “fat man of Europe”, boasting an adult population that is 25% obese and 62% overweight (Spencer 2004; Roberts 2014; Britain: 'The Fat Man of Europe' 2013). London and its suburbs, collectively known as Greater London, personify this statistic, as over half of its residents are overweight or obese. Moreover, it is estimated that 82,000 British residents suffer heart attacks yearly (Coronary Heart Disease Statistics 2012).

Wine consumption has differed historically in France and in the UK and may therefore play a role in the difference in these health statistics. While France has been internationally famous for its Bordeaux wines that set the bar for tasting competitions, Britain has been internationally mocked for its lack of skill in wine production. As one critic states, “I imagine hell like this - Italian punctuality, German humour and English wine” (Castella 2013). Yet moderate and regular appreciation of wine that typifies French consumption has been stated by the World Health Organization to lower the risk of cardiovascular disease (“French Paradox: Une Spécificité Française” 2010). From a chemical standpoint, ethanol in wine produces a relaxing effect, transiently lowering blood pressure (Belleville 2002). Furthermore, polyphenol Resveratrol in wine may prevent obesity by several mechanisms, including lowering LDL cholesterol, sensitizing the body to insulin, and producing anti-inflammatory/anti-oxidant effects (L Aguirre 2014; JeanBlanc 2010). However, studies show that other forms of alcohol are not associated with similar decreases in cardiovascular disease, and isolated Resveratrol is not enough to affect cardiovascular disease or markers of inflammation (Perdue 1992; Roberts 2014;

Richard Semba 2014). Therefore, the culture surrounding wine consumption may play a greater role in conferring health benefits rather than the mere fact of its consumption.

For example, when wine is consumed with meals, it prolongs the event, leading to increased opportunity for secretion of satiety hormones GLP-1 and Peptide YY, which could ultimately lead to decreased calorie consumption (A Kokkinos 2010; M Shah 2013). Moreover, when it is consumed with family or friends, psychosocial benefits are conferred (J Martin-Biggers 2014). Additionally, cultural contempt of binge drinking and promotion of moderation could prevent the former unhealthy habit and encourage the latter (Morris 1998). In comparing the French Riviera and Greater London in particular, differences in wine habits and consumption may be a key to the French paradox, influencing the superior health of the French.

Curiosity, opportunity, and sheer luck led me, a small-town Southern Illinoisan French/Physiology double major university student of British descent, to begin my own personal investigation into the role of wine in the health of residents of these two areas. I split my past summer experiencing the simple luxuries of life in Nice, France and dancing with the unmistakably quick pace of diverse London, UK living. Between moments of adventure abroad, I distributed surveys (n~100/country), conducted interviews, and –my absolute favorite aspect – attended meals with residents of these cities to gain insight into their markedly different dietary and wine-drinking styles that may influence their personal health.

Part I. The French Riviera: *La Vie Typique*

There is anyways in France a different air of living. We take pleasure in cooking and eating. It's very important. Maybe, simply, that plays a role in our quality of life (Paquin, personal interview, 2014) – Dennis, a French medical Intern

My personal experience with attitude and typical consumption of wine in the French Riviera can be summarized by the recollection of a single meal. Jeanette and Jean-Claude Baudin are a typical French family nurturing their own of the national average of 2.08 children per family – the .08 being from the English-speaking study abroad students whom they periodically take in to flaunt their superior walks of French living(The World Factbook 2014). Jeanette, an



office manager, and Jean-Claude, a history professor, inhabit a cozy apartment, elevated by staircases that would undoubtedly have an adjacent elevator installed had the building been erected in London or the States. Yet the view of the bright blue Mediterranean Sea from one side of the dining room and of the mountainous, verdant landscape from the other make the climb well worth the expended effort.

Fig. 1. A view of the Mediterranean Sea from the coast of Nice, France.

I was lucky enough be invited to enjoy the magnificent view and dine with the Baudins on a Friday evening in late June. I arrived at their home promptly at 7 pm – an early hour for Niçoise standards – so that I could watch the family in full swing of meal preparations. As Jeanette instructed her son to whip egg whites for chocolate mousse while Jean-Claude chopped

courgettes, it soon became apparent that the Baudins typified every stereotype of French dietary and lifestyle habits: Regular exercise woven into daily activity, such as the stair climb and cooking from scratch. Absolutely NO snacking between the three regular, unhurried meals served each day and consumed in good company. Meals of generous portions of the purest, unprocessed ingredients: full fat creams, cheeses, and butters that one cannot help but savor in small yet utterly satisfying portions. Meals of precisely known origin (Plantier 2014; Roberts



2014; Guiliano 2007). The *boulangier*, the *boucher*, the *pâtissier*, and the local fruit vendor each knew Jeanette's usual order by heart. Memorization is, after all, inevitable when visits are determined by a daily need for fresh products: oven-fresh baguettes, tomatoes still sun-kissed from the vine, crisp greens, plump and juicy cherries.

Fig. 2. Fresh oranges growing in Nice, France.

As Jeanette stated on the subject of her regular desire for small purchases, “I buy small things, like tonight, I bought a bit of goat’s cheese for the tart... and I can buy special things, like a mango or a bit of rice, you see” (Jeanette Baudin, personal interview, 2014)¹. Each meal, I gathered, is a fresh gastronomic adventure, tasted in full vibrancy in between sips of water and, of course, wine to cleanse the palate during dinner meals.

1. See appendix for complete interviews.

Part I. The French Riviera: A Superior Gastronomy, *Bon Appetite!*

Ah, pleasure of taste, yes, yes... If you have pleasure when you eat, because of the taste, it's an indicator of happiness (Wagnon, personal interview, 2014). – Emilie, a French homemaker.

This act of taking pleasure in each meal seems to be the most religiously-heeded rule of all in France. After all, France's citizens live superiorly to citizens of other countries, down to the quality of their quiche crumbs, or so it seems that they are raised to believe and boast to their



foreign guests. As British author Peter Mayle states, “They consider their language to be the most elegant, their culture to be the most refined, their diplomacy to be the most diplomatic, their wines to be the most aristocratic, and their gastronomy to be the most subtle and interesting” (Mayle 2004). How could one not savor the mundane task of *manger* in such a superior nation?

Fig. 3. “Aristocratic” French wines sold in a wine boutique in Nice, France.

The Baudin family especially took it upon themselves to indulge in their daily meals. As Jean-Claude explained, placing cutlery in their designated spots on their simply-yet-elegantly spread table, “Eating is a moment to share... Fundamental. It's not just a pleasure, it's a way of life” (Jean-Claude Baudin, personal interview, 2014). To the Baudins and as well as the majority of the French, “eating is life-enriching exploit, not a chore, and certainly not a guilt-trip” (Mayle 2004). According to a study conducted by Penn State professor Paul Rozen, a whopping 73 percent of females and 77 percent of males in France report eating to be one of their most important pleasures. This percentage decreases significantly to a mere 42 percent for both sexes of the diet-driven nation of America (Rozen 2004). With a population of 12.8 million reported

dieters, the UK may be just as slimming-obsessed. Ironically, reported “dieters” in this nation are the least likely to be thin (Mayle 2004). Perhaps instead of wolfing down “all-natural and fresh” falafel wraps from Pret a Manger while filtering through spam emails on the tube ride home (guilty as charged – I fell victim to this trend one too many nights in London), Londoners could better invest their mealtime in family experiences exemplified by the Baudins.

“For us, we enjoy our less formal daily meals,” Jean-Claude explained, carrying a bowl of *Herbe de Provence*-dressed fresh spring mix to the table. “But also, there are special occasional family meals that can go on for three hours. And we talk and eat, and it can annoy the children greatly. But the meal is *fundamental*” (Jean-Claude Baudin, personal interview, 2014). The daily dinner-time meal, for residents of Nice, is the ultimate bonding experience. The Baudins certainly invest the time in this act of conviviality, *c’est evident*. Jean-Claude joyously remarked, opening the oven to a braised-to-perfection *tarte aux courgettes*, “It’s really a way to get to know people. As with you, we invited you for a meal because during a meal you have time to discuss lots of things...” (Jean-Claude Baudin, personal interview, 2014). I smiled, realizing that this meal-time interview would be drawn out longer than expected.

Part I. The French Riviera: *La Vie en Rosé*

It’s just our culture, our tradition. Voilà. (Paquin, personal interview, 2014) – Dennis

Precisely at the imprecise hour of 8:37 pm, Jean-Claude, Jeanette, their two children and I each took our seats at the Baudin’s small round dinner table, a setting of cozy elegance at its finest. The extravagantly simple four courses appeared before my hungry eyes, and vanished completely as we conversed between moments of savoring each bite. What topics dominated our conversations? No subject could be possibly met with paralleled enthusiasm to that of food, of

course. As author Mayle states on the subject, “I am no longer surprised, when eating with French friends, that a great part of the conversation around the table is not about politics, sport or sex, but about food. They are amused and somewhat mystified by the North American fascination with the French Paradox, which to them is no paradox at all; simply a matter of civilized eating habits” (Mayle 2004).

Voilà, a truly civilized ensemble was served: *Herbe de Provence*-dressed salad followed by *tarte aux corgettes* followed by fresh cherries and *fromage*, finally with a sweet finish at 10 pm (oh, how quickly the time passed!) of *mousse au chocolat*, each dish infused with our eager chatter, warm slices of baguette, and sips of chilled rosé.



Fig. 4. A typical French meal of quiche aux champignons and gratin aux corgettes. Photograph by Hillary Merrill.



Fig. 5. Mousse au chocolat. Photograph by Hillary Merrill.

As I would have expected, the rosé complimented the meal perfectly from its crisp, fruity notes to its sweet, lightly-tangy aftertaste. Jeanette explained her careful attention to the wine varietal, swirling the liquid as she grasped the neck of the glass, stating, “You have white wine with fish. And red wine is recommended with cheese... If I have guests, I pay attention to what type of wine I serve” (Jeanette Baudin, personal interview, 2014).

Completely unexpected before my time in the French Riviera was the frequency of consumption that was typical to residents of the region. I truly expected to find in this country that is home to about 16,000 domestic varieties of wine that “a glass a day keeps the doctor away” (Le Point). However, consumption averaged out to a mere 2.5 glasses per week, according to my surveys of residents of the area (Figure 6). The Baudins explained that their consumption is by no means quotidian. Rather, it is reserved for special meals with good company: 65 percent of wine drinkers in the French Riviera consume wine at social functions and 64 percent at home with family meals (Figure 7). A simple glass is the pinnacle conversation piece and primary accessory to well-prepared dinners.

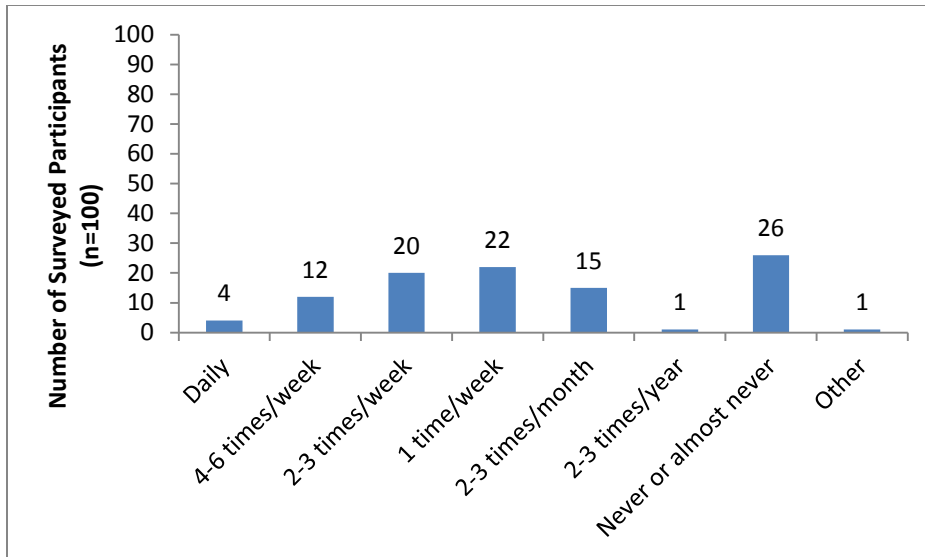


Fig. 6. Frequency of wine consumed reported by residents of the French Riviera.

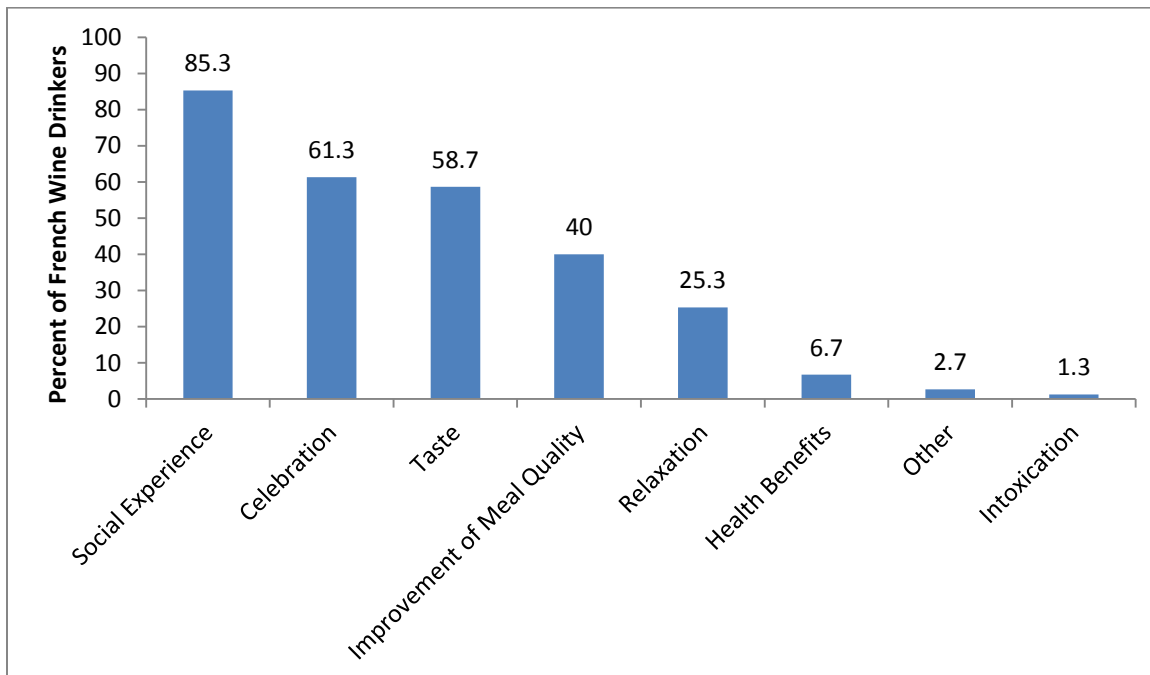


Fig. 7. Primary motivations for wine consumption reported by French Riviera wine drinkers. Participants were allowed to select multiple responses.

French Riviera inhabitants thus conform to a rich global history of sharing festive beverages. From the ancient Georgian practice of *megobarebi*, or sharing a cup, to the Navajo practice of beginning festivities by pouring a bottle to Mother Earth to the notion from Zaire that drunkenness represents an egoistic lack of sharing, sharing is at the heart of alcohol consumption

(Morris 1998). Perhaps the most telling statistic of this unparalleled social importance of sharing is that a complete 85 percent of wine drinkers in the French Riviera rate social experience among their primary reasons for consumption (Figure 7). Therefore, conviviality truly does dominate wine culture in this area that boasts a rich tradition of its cultivation and enjoyment.

Part II. Greater London: British Food Culture (or lack thereof)

Britons don't know how to pour wine ("you always fill to the brim; you must be very thirsty").

We don't appreciate their aromatic teas, as opposed to the "tannic muck" we drink.

We don't know how to cook vegetables ("boiled broccoli?!").

We drink red wine with mussels (this from Benoît in Calais; since when, we may well ask, has Calais set standards of decorum?).

Our distaste for foie gras is "entirely hypocritical for a nation which has just slaughtered all its badgers".

We snack too often and, because of our fondness for fruit jellies, can never be taken seriously food-wise, anyway" (Peregrine 2014).

While "conviviality" and "moderation" may be appropriate words to describe wine culture in the French Riviera, "relaxation" and "inebriation" may summarize the culture that I witnessed in work-hard-play-hard city of London. Everything about life in London moves at a quick pace, from the underground tube system to the step of the all-important business-clad workers scurrying through Euston Square to the service in the plethora of specialty restaurants of any ethnicity imaginable that serve generous portions of legitimate cuisine. Although the packaged biscuits, rancid kippers, and take-out fish and chips that entail true "British" food culture make it quite lacking from a global perspective, London's diverse and energetic residents

makes up for this fault with their hunger for worldly gastronomic excellence. Contrary to the nearly pure French population of multiple generations that I interacted with in Nice, in London, the city was bustling with energetic twenty-something's of all from all walks of the planet. Of the hundred London residents that I surveyed, while using the same surveying strategies, only 57 percent were British, and of these Brits, many appeared to have roots of varied descent (Figure 8, 9). Among the remaining 43 percent, Polish, Australian, Greek, Danish, Taiwanese, Pakistani, Columbian, Indian, and South African genes fell into the mix, to name just a few.

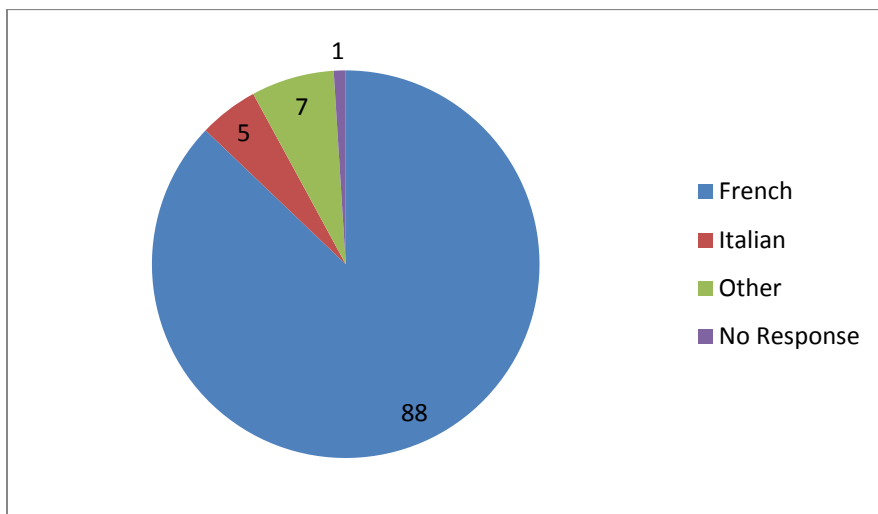


Fig. 8 Reported nationality of surveyed French Riviera residents.

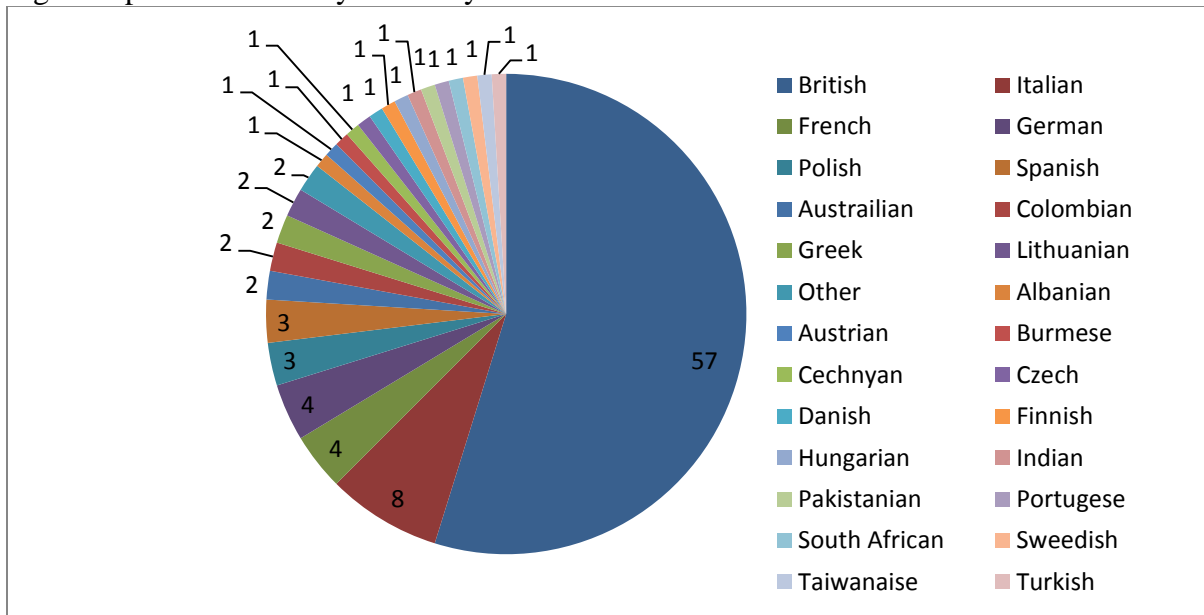


Fig. 9. Reported nationality of surveyed Londoners.

As with my view of French wine culture, my perception of British wine culture can be summarized by the recounting of a dinner. In homage to the diversity of modern London ancestry, it is appropriate that this meal was served by an Austrian Londoner rather than a



purebred Brit. Alina Bohm is an early-thirty-something journal editor who lives with her French boyfriend, Francois, and her three-year-old son, Tobias, in a two-story narrow Notting Hill apartment. She invited Lakshmi, a young co-worker of Indian descent, and me over to wine, dine, and indulge in girl talk on my first Thursday evening in the city.

Fig. 10. Food stands selling novelties of all ethnicities can be found at Camden Lock Market.

I arrived to Alina's home a bit un-promptly at 6:11 pm after being led by Google maps one tube stop too far. Lakshmi turned up about 5 minutes later, blaming her tardiness on current construction on the Piccadilly line. Nonetheless, we were greeted with eager smiles from Tobias, squealing, "*Hallo Mädchen!*" Alina, attempting to quiet Tobias for an early bedtime routine, told Lakshmi and me to make ourselves at home at her cozy kitchen table, dressed with a spread of melon and, of course, a bottle of chilled New Zealand chardonnay.

Part II. Greater London: British Binge Culture

We drink bottles, not glasses! – Anonymous survey response

Although it may be difficult for Londoners to believe, UK wineries do exist – over 400 in England and Wales combined, to be exact ("More Than Half of Brits Have Never Tried British Wine" 2011)! Yet British supermarket Tesco stocks only 3 types of British wines, and in British supermarket Waitrose, sales of British wines accounted for only 0.6 percent of all wine sales in

2012 (Castella 2013). Furthermore, according to British newspaper *The Telegraph*, 54 percent of British residents have never tasted wine produced on their own soil ("More Than Half of Brits



Have Never Tried British Wine" 2011). As Alina stated on the matter of her country's lack of *terroir* as she poured me a generous glass, "Since the UK doesn't really have good wines, usually, I buy French wines with Francois, or I buy Spanish wines as well... Or I go by confidence at the least" (Bohm, personal interview, 2014).

Fig. 11. Wines of all nationalities sold at a British wine outlet.

This trend away from British wine production has been long its making, dating back to the sixteenth century, when King Henry VIII put an end to monasteries that enabled wine industries to flourish in the Middle Ages ("A Novel Kind of Fizz: English Wine" 2006). Thus began a long history punctuated by incidents involving beer and hard liquor: beer's widespread consumption when water was unsafe to drink during cholera epidemics, a culture of "sailor's rum", the upbringing of London's gin production, and war heroes such as Winston Churchill enjoyed daily glass of hock with breakfast... (Nevin 2014).

Consumption of hard liquor and copious amounts of beer cannot help but to set the stage for a culture of inebriation, which is only accentuated by the fact that Londoners drink to relax from the high stress of their daily lives. According to my surveys, a total of 25 percent of Londoners rate relaxation among their primary motivations for drinking, compared with a mere 5 percent of residents of Nice (Figures 7, 12). In London, alcohol is used to mark the transition from work to play, which leads to a higher rate of alcohol-related problems than in France, where wine is treated as an engaging, sophisticated product consumed in moderate amounts (Morris

1998). Andrew, a British winery tour guide (see, they do exist!) echoes this sentiment, stating, “Particularly in the city of London, everyone works at such a fast, tight pace over very short periods of time and then they kind of binge after that. Everyone goes out every day, all day, in the evenings, no matter what day of the week it is and they get straight back to work the next morning as if nothing’s happened, which isn’t very healthy, really” (Williams, personal interview, 2014).

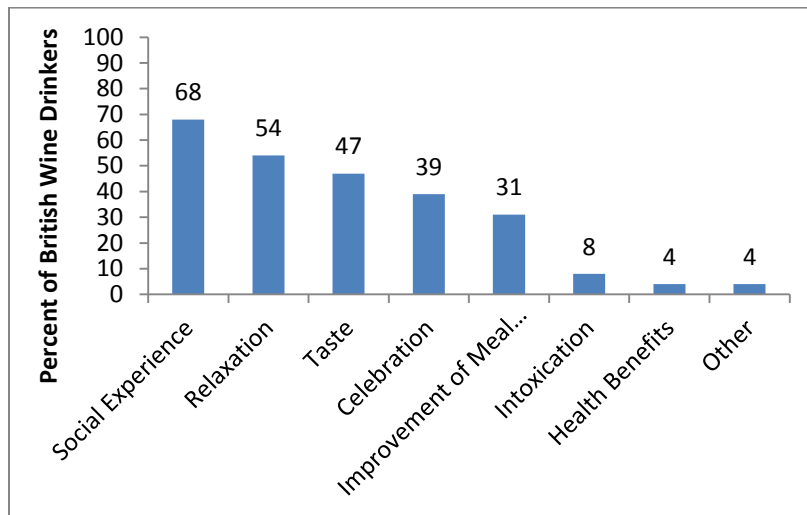
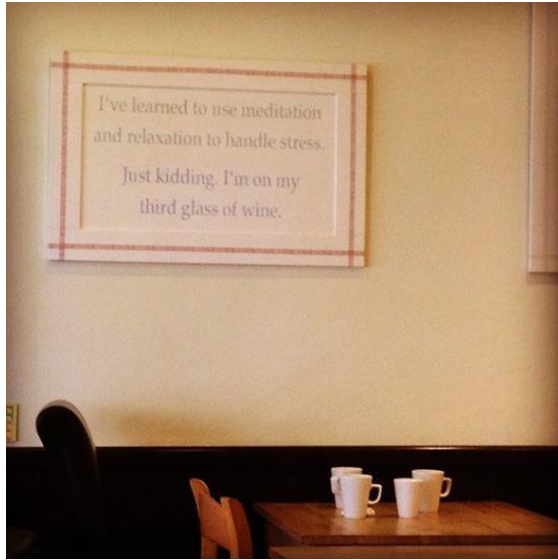


Fig. 12. Primary motivations for drinking wine reported by British wine drinkers. Participants were allowed to select multiple responses.

It follows that in Britain, alcohol consumption is associated with belligerent behavior. For example, drunkenness is often used and occasionally accepted as an excuse for reckless behavior in British courts (Morris 1998). Even drinking clubs frequented by clever Oxford and Cambridge students have a reputation for “defenestering servants, debugging nerds, throwing bread rolls, and hurling things”, especially as closing time nears (Nevin 2014).

Nonetheless, with British media fascination in part to blame, such as *Oz and James’s Big Wine Adventure* and Bridget Jones’s chardonnay habit, Brits are beginning to sophisticate their tastes toward wine (Moore 2013). Yet due to their historic tendencies toward inebriation, they are consuming this cosmopolitan beverage in beer-like quantities (Morris 1998). While

frequency of consumption is nearly the same, my surveys reveal that Londoner's drink wine in significantly greater portions per sitting in comparison with residents of Nice – an average of 2.5 glasses per sitting compared to 1.5 glasses per sitting, respectively (Figure 6, 14, 15, 16, 17).



This statistic does not even account for the size of glass, which from experience, is undoubtedly larger in London than in Nice. As Alina returned to the kitchen to serve the first course of Swiss chard dressed lightly in lemon tzatziki sauce, I noted a distinct feeling of relaxation that could only have been accounted for by the chardonnay. And my glass was still half-full!

Fig. 13. A sign displayed in a British coffee shop reads, “I’ve learned to use meditation and relaxation to handle stress. Just kidding, I’m on my third glass of wine.”

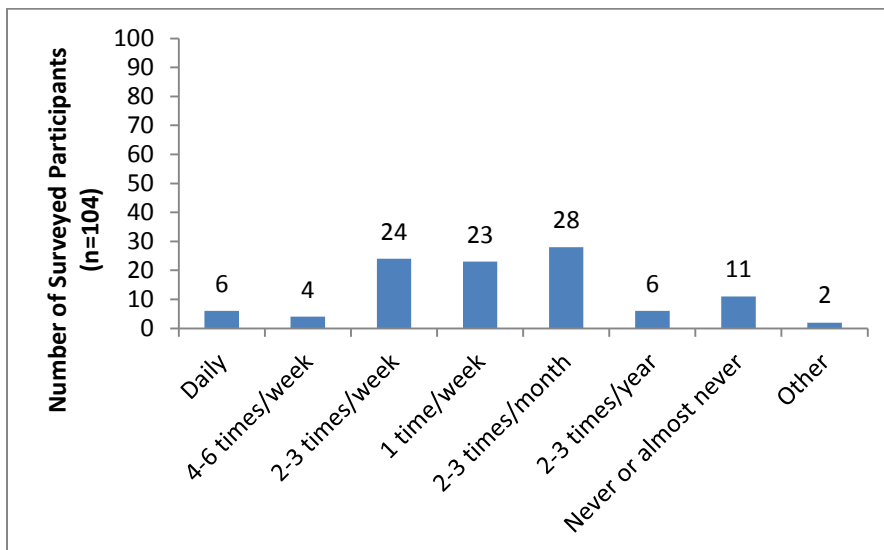


Fig. 14. Frequency of consumption of wine reported by London residents.

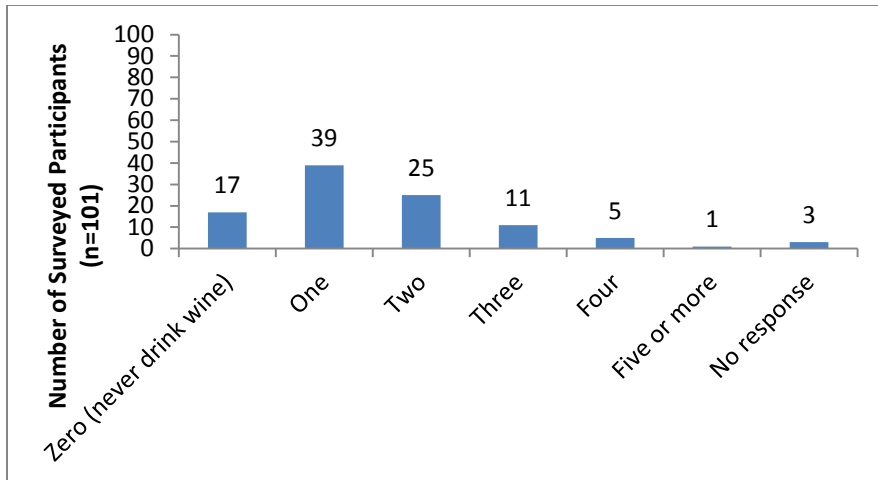


Fig. 15. Number of glasses of wine consumed per sitting reported by French Riviera residents.

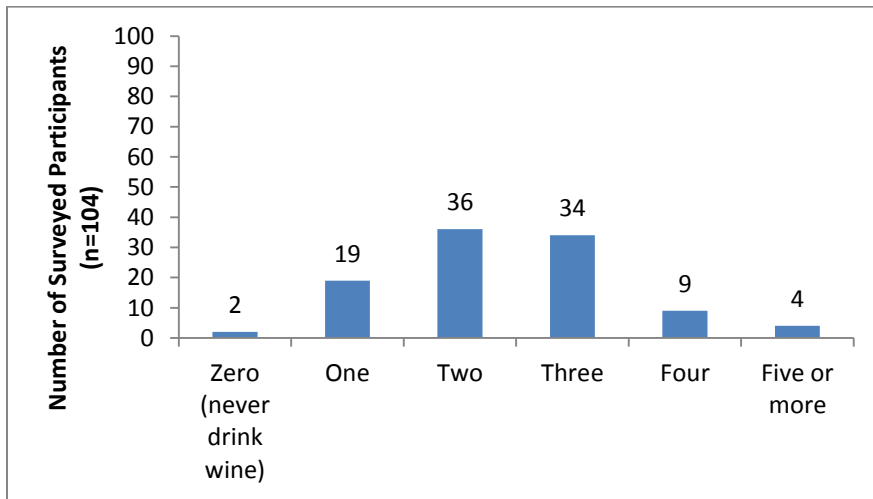


Fig. 16. Number of glasses of wine consumed per sitting reported by London residents.

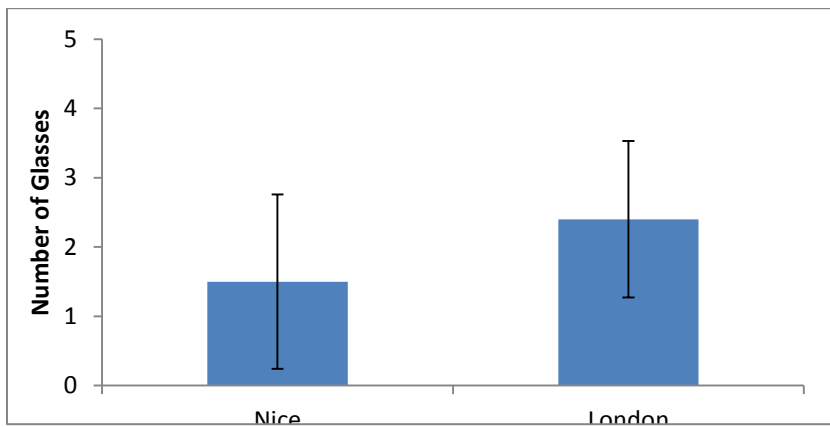


Fig. 17. Participants in Nice reported consuming close to an average of 1.5 glasses per sitting, while London participants reported consuming an average of 2.4 glasses (Results significant for two-tailed t-test, $t_{197} = -5.79$, $P=2.6E-8$).

Part II. Greater London: The Spring of Hope

The more you know about wine, the less it becomes a drink to get you drunk and more a drink of social and topical interest, and that's the most important thing when it comes to health (Williams, personal interview, 2014). - Andrew, tour guide at a British winery

Following the crisp salad and final appearances by Tobias, who hoped to join in on the party rather than heed to bedtime rules, Alina pulled from the oven a warm polenta pizza delicately topped with sautéed portabella mushroom slices, sundried tomato, artichoke hearts, and Asiago cheese – a delicious Austrian-cooked-Italian-influenced dish to follow the Middle



Eastern salad and compliment the New Zealand wine that truly was of excellent quality. It's a fact that Londoner's nose for wine is becoming sharper as the beverage is growing in popularity. British supermarket Waitrose reported a 16 percent increase in its most popular variety, Chardonnay, in the year of 2013 alone (Moore 2013).

Fig. 18. Mini polenta pizzas.

Besides the all-important Chardonnay, fizzy wines of all grape varietals are also growing in popularity in the UK. This trend is logical for lovers of locally grown products because Kent and West Sussex sit a mere 90 miles north of the world's original fizz-producer, Champagne (Castella 2013). The British government is taking note of this potential for economic gain as well as the possible gains that could be acquired from experimenting with other varietals of the trending beverage. Recently, a "Wine-Policy Unit" has been established within the country's Agricultural Department to sponsor the flourishing industry ("A Novel Kind of Fizz: English

Wine" 2006). Even the Queen herself is taking stakes in this popular venture as she recently promised to sell wine from the vines of Windsor Great Park (Castella 2013).

This increase in economic investment and popularity of the beverage can only improve the current binge culture that exists in London. As tour guide Andrew states, "I see people are becoming more and more educated about wine and all kinds of alcoholic beverages... The more people become educated about the drink, the less they see (drinking) as a habitual thing that they need to do every day to live, and it becomes much more of an engaging product, which I think it probably already is in France but not so much in the UK" (Williams, personal interview, 2014).

Already, British wine culture is improving. Rather than producing mass quantities of cheap wine for easy intoxication, British winemakers have been engineering quality wine that can compete on an international scale. This year alone Britain took four gold medals at the International Wine Challenge (Castella 2013)! As she nibbled on the remaining crust of her main course, Lakshmi explained that she is trying to invest in higher quality wines like these and avoid the temptation to drink in excess, stating, "I don't really drink during the week. I've been trying to make a conscious effort. But the weekends, I guess maybe if I go out with my friends, if it's someone's birthday, yeah really for a specific reason" (Sarai, personal interview, 2014).

Alina, concurring with Lakshmi, stood at the stove, putting final touches on her dessert, whose rich, sugary scent began to envelop the air like a fresh Austrian snowfall. "When (Francois and I) go having a glass every night, I don't like that. It's not something to just have with dinner. So if I just make icky leftovers, I don't want a glass" (Bohm, personal interview, 2014). She turned to the table, presenting us with a plate of three plump marillenknoedels, sugar-braised Austrian pastry hearts made from a sacred, long-held family recipe. In short, these were the most mouth-watering doughy desserts that I had ever encountered. Alina, scooping one onto

each of our eager plates, stated, “But because I cook every evening, and usually I make nice things, then there’s a chance to drink” (Bohm, personal interview, 2014).



Topping up each of our glasses with the sweet remains of the bottle, she giggled, “Oh God, do I sound like an alcoholic?” (Bohm, personal interview, 2014) On that savory note, we burst out in a round of laughter and clinked our delicious glasses in a final “cheers”.

Fig.19. A sample of Alina’s marillenknodels.

Conclusion: A Tale of Two Cities

Would you like a drink, madame? (Vanier, personal interview, 2014) – Frederick, French owner of a wine market in London

My past summer’s journey to the two cities of Nice and London was an eye-opening experience that enabled investigation into the all-important subject of wine’s role in the French Paradox, or the idea that the French are immune to overweight despite dietary decadence. In Nice, a beautiful French Mediterranean city, I encountered inhabitants such as the Baudins who know the value of sipping wine in the presence of loved ones at the all-important occasion of family meals, crafted only from the freshest of pure ingredients. On the other hand, London is a fast-paced UK city where young, energetic inhabitants of varied heritage, such as Alina and Lakshmi, thrive. Here, I witnessed a much more pronounced culture for binge-drinking, which is likely a result of a need to find an outlet for relaxation within the city’s high-stress work environment. As I found in my surveys and personal experience, London residents in general

drink significantly more glasses of wine per sitting than residents of Nice, and they are more likely to drink for relaxation purposes.

With these statistics and descriptions in mind, is it safe to say that wine plays a role in the French Paradox, at least within the context of these two cities? Quite possibly. Binge drinking is prevented in the “family meal” setting in which wine is typically consumed in Nice, and somewhat promoted in London. This nasty habit can indeed lead to excess inches on the waistline and cardiovascular strain. Thus, residents of Nice may have found the ideal amount of wine to consume to keep them in good psychological health without compromising their cardiovascular health.

The positive psychological and social implications of wine-drinking that I observed in Nice can be built upon by scholars and investigated in further depth to solidify the theory that wine, in moderation, contributes to health. How would results compare in cultures of temperance, such as certain traditionally religious American small towns? Is the health of residents of such areas compromised because they are unable to engage in such a socially and intellectually stimulating drink? Does such temperance simply foster rebellion in the form of binge drinking in private? These are all questions that deserve thorough examination.

Even without further data, it is evident that wine can in fact be consumed in a healthy manner, as demonstrated by the Baudin family in Nice. For them, wine is a compliment to fresh cuisine and an integral conversation point in the all-important shared meal. To that, I will raise a glass, for it is a far, far better thing that I do for my health, than I have ever done.

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Part I: French Riviera

A. Béatrice Larue, my host mother

Location: Our home on the hill of Nice, France; after a Sunday dinner

1. How many meals do you consume each day?
3
2. How many snacks do you consume each day?
None.
3. How many days do you cook each week?
Each day. I am traditional.
4. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?
2 times each month, if we go out.
5. How many days do you shop for food each week?
I shop each day, but I buy just a few things. Why? Because I like fresh products.
6. What factors are important in shopping for food?
Good products fresh, of quality are very important. When my children were younger, my budget primarily went to shopping for food.
7. How do you consume most meals?
Before, we ate in the kitchen with my children, but now that we are just two, we eat in front of the television. But with you, no, because it's not as good. But it seems that it's not good to watch the television while eating because you don't watch what you are eating. It's better to talk with family while eating. But, Louis (her husband, an ophthalmologist), all day, he works with others, and at night, he likes tranquility. You understand?
8. What is your favorite food?
For a good meal, meat. (Laughs). A good bisthèque with vegetables. And for breakfast, my favorite meal, I eat tea, and toast with butter and jam.
9. How often do you consume your favorite foods?
I love a good bisthèque, but I eat it only about two times each month because I think that everyone should be like you (vegetarian). Because before, we ate meat.
10. How important is indulging to health and well-being?
Yes, for me it is very important. It for that reason that we in France buy products nearly each day at markets. And if you want, I can take you to the Bio market on Saturday! You will see things that evoke all senses.
11. What foods do you associate with childhood and/or family?
Good cakes, chocolate cakes, but also purées with ham.
12. Have you heard of the French Paradox?

Yes, in television programs and in newspapers. In the media.

13. What is your opinion?

I agree!

14. How many days do you exercise each week?

For me, I had a foot operation, but if not, each day. But not like you! Not 10 kilometers! But yes, I “*bouge*”.

15. What is your typical mode of transportation?

Car because it’s necessary now. I used it for many years to drive my children to school. But when I was young, I walked or rode my bike.

16. At what age did you first consume wine?

It wasn’t really wine, it was for my birthday, and it was champagne. And it was late for me. At 20 years. I did not drink before then.

17. How often do you consume wine?

Only when I am with friends. If not, I do not drink alcohol. You saw, yesterday when we went to a restaurant, I had a bit of beer. Otherwise, hardly ever. But, when there are lots of people, I like to drink nice wine. For celebrations.

18. What are your primary considerations purchasing wine?

When I am with good friends, it is important to serve a good wine. Often, I also look at the price. And often in France, we drink wine while we eat. You know, white wine is to drink while eating fish, and red wine should be served with meat and plates with pasta. For me, I like all types of wine, but in moderation. Two glasses maximum. If not... (holds her head and makes a face).

19. And do you prefer wine from France?

Yes, from Burgoyne. There is wine from Bordeaux that is good, but wine from Burgoyne is the best.

B. Delphine, Emilie, and Fernand Wagnon, two sets of host parents

Location: The lounge of Emilie’s apartment, centrally located in Nice, France.

1. How many meals do you consume each day?

Emilie: 2

Delphine: 2

Fernand (Delphine’s husband, Emilie’s brother): 2

2. How many snacks do you consume each day?

Emilie: 0

Delphine: One if you counts snacks as being sugary items.

Emilie: Okay, me too, one.

Fernand: One during the night.

3. How many days do you cook each week?

Emilie: Me, I cook 5 days out of 7.

Delphine: Me, I cook each day. And my husband never cooks, I cook for him.

4. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?

Delphine: Okay, let me explain. For 40 years, we worked outside of our home and we ate a restaurant each day during the daytime. Now, since we live far from any the center of Nice, we eat out two times per month, maybe.

Emilie: Me, I would say 2 times per month.

5. How many days to you shop for food each week?

Delphine: 2 times per week.

Fernand: Maybe twice a week.

Emilie: 1 times per week.

6. What factors are important in shopping for food?

Delphine: The quality, the price.

Fernand: The popularity.

Delphine: Maybe the popularity.

Emilie: The quality and the price.

Fernand: And I try to buy French products.

Emilie: Yes, French products. Thus, popularity, quality, price... uh, the freshness also. No, and I look at the origin of the product for meat and vegetables. The popularity, the quality, the price and then with certain products it is very important to consider the ingredients.

7. How do you consume most meals?

Emilie: I understand your question very well. In the United States, it's each person for himself. That surprises me greatly that for the young, it's each for his own there. It's true, no? No, if I am alone, I eat alone. If not, I wait, always. I wait to eat with my children or with my family. I adapt my hours to make time to dine with others. And you too, Delphine, right?

Delphine: Yes, but for breakfast, I eat alone because Fernand doesn't eat breakfast.

8. What is your favorite food?

Emilie: Oh there are many, Lacey.

Fernand: Me, I love the *tournedos rossini*.

Emilie: It's a fillet of beef cooked medium with a slice of *foie gras*.

Delphine: But I assure you, it's his favorite dish, but he doesn't eat it every day.

Emilie: For me, it's *scampi flambé* cognac. No, whiskey. *Scampi flambé* whiskey cooked by my sister-in-law.

Delphine: Me, I'm not sure what to say... But I love barbeque. We have a friend who owns a restaurant who cooks a great barbeque. Oh, what deliciousness! In France, we really have meat that is of great quality, really superior.

9. How often do you consume your favorite foods?

Fernand: My favorite quotidian dish is pasta. Delphine cooks that for me often.

Delphine: I cook pasta often for him, and vegetable, lots of *aubergines*. But also, he is diabetic, and he must have insulin with each meal. Alors, I cook pasta, potatoes, and rice often, but he prefers pasta.

Emilie: Me, I really do love scampi and also *coquilles de Saint-Jaques* (scallops). That, I love, and I would say I eat that every other month.

Delphine: I love good quality meat, and I would say I eat that 2-3 times per week.

Emilie: And *scampi*, I eat once a month. Why so rarely? It is a really nice dish and I only want to eat it if I am sharing it with others.

Delphine: Yes, if I am eating alone, I eat only salad for dinner.

Emilie: Yes, simple things alone, and save the good dishes for conviviality. One time per month for my favorite dish.

10. How important is indulging to health and well-being?

Delphine: It's very important.

Emilie: But yes, it's important!

Delphine: On a scale to ten, I would say it's an eight, easily.

Emilie: Ah, pleasure of taste, yes, yes, I would say it's a nine for me, yes. Because if you have pleasure when you eat, because of the taste, it's an indicator of happiness. Me, I would say nine out of ten.

11. What foods do you associate with childhood and/or family?

Delphine: Pastas.

Emilie: Me as well, there were lots of pastas. And you too, Fernand?

Fernand: Yes, pastas.

12. What kinds of exercise do you do?

Delphine: It's less and less.

Emilie: For me, two times per week I bike, and I great distances. I walk every day, long distances.

13. What is your typical mode of transport?

Delphine: For me, it's a car. Because we live high on the hill in Nice, and it's necessary to have a car to go to the center.

Emilie: For me, it's public transportation. The tram and the bus.

14. Why do you like drinking wine?

Emilie: Because it's good.

Delphine: No, because it's good, but for conviviality.

Fernand: Yes, for conviviality.

Emilie: Yes, conviviality, I never drink alone, but also, it's important for enhancing a good dish.

Fernand: Yes, for example, with fish, we drink white wine. And rosé is for salad. And red wine, there are a few types of reds that I really enjoy, and also I like sangrias.

20. What is your typical mode of transport?

Delphine: For us, it's the quality. Because we can't drink wine every day so when we do, it is of good quality.

Fernand: And for me, I like to know the origin. I buy from someone who bottles it himself because it has a better taste. There are lots of cooperatives that sell wine in bulk, but, like that, it's not the same.

Emilie: Yes, it's important to know the maker, it's important not to buy wine that is trafficked. And I would say, I love rosé. And it's important also to buy organic wine. For me, I tasted organic rosé and it's excellent. But there are organic wines that I've tasted that are infected. Infected! I have a friend, Véronique, who eats only organic. She buys organic wine and she has a glass with every meal. I've tasted hers and it's infected. When I say I buy organic wine, I buy it from the farm, not from the store. And it's true, it's good.

21. And finally, to you have ideas as to why the French are in better health than the rest of the world?

Emilie: Me, already I would say that in your country, you can eat at any hour. That's the main problem. There are too many temptations in your country to eat at any hour. *Alors*, in our country, I eat at noon and at dinner. *Voilà*. There are too many temptations in your country to eat anytime. I think that in America, no one cooks much. Thus, it is difficult to know the origin of ingredients. And next, I don't know. Maybe the world of sport. We are very active in France. But I am also surprised because in America, you have gyms that are open all day, all night at any hour. Here, that doesn't exist.

Delphine: Yes, but I have the impression that your generation in America is beginning to change tendencies. You are starting to eat healthier and to do more sports each year.

Alors, I went to Canada a few years ago with my mother, and my mother was horrified to people in the road all day eating.

Emilie: All day, you see people with food in their hands in the road! But I would say in America there is a notion of plentitude that doesn't exist here. In America, you go to a restaurant and have free refills of anything you want. You can drink water, but the temptation is too great for soda. It's serving the customer what he wants. There is abundance of everything. It's that notion of pleasure, but it's too much. And another thing, the size. The small here are smalls. The smalls in America are mediums. There is a difference in quantity. But I am in agreement with Delphine. I think your generation is beginning to change. It's rather your parents and your grandparents who are to blame.

C. Jeanette and Jean-Claude Baudin, a set of host parents

Location: At their apartment, centrally-located just off Place Giabaldi in Nice, France. Preparing a lovely dinner of salad with homemade dressing, French bread, *tarte aux courgettes*, and *mousse au chocolat*, served with water and rosé.

1. How many meals do you consume each day?

Jeanette: 3

Jean-Claude: 3

2. How many snacks do you consume each day?

Jeanette: Oh, it can happen occasionally.

Jean-Claude: If we return home tired...

Jeanette: If we drink a tea... If it's cold out, I'll have a biscuit with tea, and for me, that's not a meal.

3. How many days do you cook each week?

Jeanette: Me, every day.

Jean-Claude: It's her who cooks. Me, maybe every other day.

4. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?

Jeanette: Weekly? It's not each week. It's occasionally. For example, last week I had appointments to meet others at restaurants three times, and I ate at each of these restaurants. But other times, I go two or three weeks without ever eating at restaurants. Thus, it's not obligatory to eat at a restaurant monthly. It's irregular. *Voilà*.

Jean-Claude: Me, I eat at the canteen at work 4 times per weeks.

Jeanette: Yes, but that's not a restaurant.

Jean-Claude: No, it's not a restaurant. But for me, I cook at home and eat in most nights.

Jeanette: We don't cook things that are exceptional, but it's this.

5. How many days to you shop for food each week?

Jeanette: *Alors*, in fact, we buy lots of groceries in a supermarket, like milk or bottled water, *voilà*, heavy things, like wine and fruit juices. But me, when I return home from work 2-3 times per week, I buy small things, like tonight, I bought a bit of goat's cheese for the tart... and I can buy special things, like a mango or a bit of rice, you see, I complete this in specialty stores. And you?

Jean-Claude: Me, I buy vegetables frequently.

Jeanette: Bread, every day.

Jean-Claude: Vegetables, 2-3 times per week. Because if one buys vegetables for the entire week... It happens, but not frequently.

Jeanette: There are lots of stores close to here, you can choose frequently to buy things.

6. What factors are important in shopping for food?

Jean-Claude: For fresh vegetables, it is important to buy organically.

Jeanette: Me, I buy lots of things organically. Not all, all, all, but, for example, if I have the choice between a ratatouille normal or organic, I take the organic, it's sure. If I have a choice, I take detergent that is organic. Eggs, always organic. But if I have to invite persons over in great quantity... For example, we have friends with six children. They are eight. *Alors*, it's very expensive if one buys organic in quantity. For example, the other day, I bought fish, and I paid 60 euros for cold fish. Because I bought organic fish of good quality. *Voilà*. I don't buy things like that every day. It's for special occasions. But if not, if it's for us, I take, if I have the choice, the maximum amount of organic products. After, I refuse to buy soda for my son. Exceptionally, I will buy it if for guests. Same with chips. Those are things that I avoid buying. *Voilà*. And I don't buy much yogurt because it's Jean-Claude who makes yogurt with organic milk. Buy with Rabelin (their host son), I want him to taste special things so I bought a bit of special yogurt. If I buy yogurt, I buy plain, white yogurt. After, for vegetables, fruits, and meat... freshness is important. Also, I look at the ticket. If there is lots of fat, I don't buy it. Looking at tickets takes lots of time.

Jean-Claude: Yes because the words are all small.

Jeanette: After, I buy things that practical. For example, I will buy tuna because it's a good ingredient in diverse salads. I make lots of salads. And also tarts and quiches. But I don't like to cook with lots of meat. We don't need much of it. Have I responded enough?

7. How do you consume most meals?

Jeanette: Me, at lunch I eat at work with colleagues. Jean-Claude, he eats at the canteen. *Voilà*, not alone. After, at home, we eat, the four of us together. If not, sometimes on Sunday nights, if we have eaten a great meal for lunch or if we have had guests over and we are not very hungry, we eat each for himself, sometimes just a bit of porridge. Or a taste of cheese. We eat together every night except for Sunday nights, usually.

Jean-Claude: For us, it is true, I have heard the statistic that eating a meal is a moment to share. And I know people who don't have this case. For example, there are adolescents today who, if you let them do what they want, they eat in front of the computer. If you let

them do what they want completely, they will eat in front of the computer and they miss a moment to share.

8. What is your favorite dish?

Jeanette: Oh, what a question! Favorite dish? *Alors*, that demands a moment of reflection. I love spinach lasagna.

Jean-Claude: Me, I love quiche.

Jeanette: And *tartes aux legumes*, things like that.

Jean-Claude: After, a typical French dish is chili con carni.

Jeanette: Yes, but we don't eat that frequently. Yes, I think for me a *tarte aux legumes* with salad.

9. How often do you consume your favorite foods?

Jeanette: *Alors*, not every day. Because we don't eat the same thing every day. For example, in winter, we eat lots of soups. Jean-Claude doesn't very much like soup. It's not his favorite dish. But it's good to eat it.

Jean-Claude: Our consumption of certain special things is less frequent, like our consumption of wine.

Jeanette: Or ratatouille.

Jean-Claude: Or coca.

Jeanette. Or certain teas. Yes, the coca is a type of ratatouille. You cook it until bronzed and you put a small something in the interior. It's very good.

10. How important is indulging to health and well-being?

Jean-Claude: Fundamental. It's not just a pleasure; it's a way of life. For us, we enjoy our less formal daily meals. But also, there are special occasional family meals that can go on for three hours. And we talk and eat, and it can annoy the children greatly. But the meal is fundamental. It's really a way to get to know people. As with you, we invited you for a meal because during a meal you have time to discuss lots of things....

Jeanette: Me, I would say it's important, but the quality of food is the thing that is the most important.

11. What is your habit of consuming wine?

Jeanette: *Alors*, we, we don't consume wine unless we have guests. Me, personally, I don't like red wine. I like only white wine and rosé. That is to say, in French culture, I am not a specialist in wine. It's true. I like white wine and rosé because they are fruity. But the real wine, it's red wine. I am not a specialist. Me, I drink white wine with my meal if it goes with the meal. For example, you have white wine with fish. And red wine is recommended with cheese. But me, I don't like it. But if I have guests, I pay attention to what type of wine I serve. I have a friend, for example, who had me over. There were eight of us, and red wine went with the meal. But Caroline and I, we drank white wine (laughs) because we can't support red wine. *Voilà*. If I were invited to a ceremony, I

would take a bit of red wine to be polite. But thus, *voilà*. If I have guests and I serve red wine with the meal, I send them home with the wine because I wouldn't finish it. During the week, we wouldn't finish it.

12. Have you heard of the French Paradox?

Jean-Claude: Yes, but it's true it's not something that I think of frequently.

13. In what context?

Jeanette: In certain reports, in special TV shows. Surveys, things like that.

22. Why are the French in good health?

Jeanette: Today, it is sure that in comparison with other countries, like America, the French diet plays a grand role. Because *voilà*. We know Americans who eat well because they are well educated. But with the culture in America, it is more difficult to eat well. I have a friend whose son went to an American school and for three years, he ate chicken nuggets at the cafeteria. She wanted to send him with applesauce, but *voilà*, it wasn't authorized. After, I know adults who pay attention, who eat well. And I know people who are fascinated with America. They want to go and drink coke, coke, coke. *Voilà*. It's very abundant. It's impressionable. It's difficult to fight against that. But I'm not convinced because frankly, in France, there are people who don't eat as well. There are people who eat in front of the television, et cetera. But that's why you're doing these surveys. You will see.

D. Danielle Dominique, a dietician at L'Hopital Pasteur

Location: Hopital Pasteur, Diabetes Service in Nice, France

1. How many meals do you consume each day?

Alors, 3 meals.

2. How many snacks do you consume each day?

I snack only rarely. If there is an occasion when someone gives me bit of cake or something like that, *voilà*. If not, myself, I never snack.

3. How many days do you cook each week?

Every day. Even if it is not a grand dish, I cook something fresh. I avoid eating outside of home. No, I cook every day even if it just simple meals. After, the weekends, I have more time and I can cook something a bit more elaborate, but I cook each day.

4. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?

It's not each week, it's rare. One time per month, maybe.

5. How many days to you shop for food each week?

Ah, I think two times each week.

6. What factors are important in shopping for food?

Me, I have a food vendor just below my home. Thus, it is important to have fresh products from there. After, for it is important for example to have vegetables of which we know the origin. I cannot buy strawberries in January, knowing that they were shipped in a boat from far from here. I buy foods in season, and of a known origin.

7. How do you consume most meals?
Alors, for lunch, I eat with my colleagues at work. And at night, I eat with my husband, it's just us.
8. What is your favorite food?
Alors, my favorite dish... I have several. Couscous. After, that depends on the period, but my favorite dish, me, I think there are many.
9. How often do you consume your favorite foods?
Oh, it's not regular, that, it depends on the period, but maybe every other month, sometimes more often.
10. How important is indulging to health and well-being?
It is indispensable. In fact, one knows that the fact of eating things that give pleasure gives us certain hormones that give us pleasure. And it is indispensable. For people who consume a diet that is very restrictive, in fact, it doesn't provide the same essential pleasures and it is not good.
11. What foods do you associate with childhood and/or family?
Alors, sugary products, I think. After, there is *crème caramel* that my grandmother made for me. And there were strawberries that my grandmother grew in her garden and served with sugar. All products fresh, we buy certain things, but we are not in the same family even so.
12. Have you heard of the French Paradox?
No, I don't have this notion that one can think that we can eat anything without becoming sick. We have the same problems with overweight that you have in America. I don't think so. We arrive with these foods that lead to an increase in type two diabetes and obesity. Why? Because these persons cook less and less, and they eat things like fast food and quick food that they buy in commerce or pre-prepared meals. In fact, the act of cooking is super. After, in America, it is truly a question of food with sugar. Me, I think at 12 years, if you eat well you avoid problems. It depends on each person because I think that fast food is not very expensive. If one lives in a family on a limited budget, it can be much easier to buy fast food. In France, if we eat at McDonalds, it is a bit more expensive. After, there are products that are not so expensive in France. After, it depends on the states because in Atlanta the rates of obesity are high. But I have a Mexican friend in America who eats very well. No, I think that it is a question of means.
13. What advice do you give to most patients?
Alors, it is to eat a balanced diet. Eat healthful with a good balance. Do sports, sleep well, eat well. Eating is the base of our health. If we guard that base, we will be in a state of good health. And very often, it changes with diabetics because they have a diet that is more restrictive.
14. What is your opinion on wine?
Me, I don't like wine at all. It's a question of taste. But red wine in moderation can be healthy. It has certain anti-oxidants. My grandmother had a glass of wine each day at noon and each night, it was good for her health. The studies show that yes, if we drink in that fashion, it's okay.

E. Lilianne Edin, a French medical student

Location: L'Hopital Pasteur, Diabetes Service in Nice, France

1. How many meals do you consume each day?

I would say 3

2. How many snacks do you consume each day?
Yes, fruits during the middle of the afternoon.
3. How many days do you cook each week?
Myself? Every day, but at night. For lunch, I eat here, at the fac.
4. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?
I would say about 2 times during the month.
5. How many days to you shop for food each week?
I buy three times during the week. Around every other day.
6. What factors are important in shopping for food?
Quality... The season. If it is in season, I will buy it. And after, my tastes. Then, I don't know what else.
7. How do you consume most meals?
For lunch, with lots of friends. At night, with my family and my boyfriend.
8. What is your favorite food?
All kinds of fish.
9. How often do you consume your favorite foods?
In general, 2 times per week. That's at minimum, in fact. About 2-3 times per week.
10. How important is indulging to health and well-being?
I think that, yes, it's important. The things that one eats... Frankly, the foods that I find to taste good are also good for health. For me, the two go together.
11. What foods do you associate with childhood and/or family?
Tarts from patisseries, in fact. Tarts with fruits, bought by my mother.
12. Have you heard of the French Paradox?
Yes, but I don't know exactly what it is. It must be explained, *voilà*.
13. It's the idea that...
Yes, I've heard of that, but I didn't know it by that name.
14. How many days do you exercise each week?
2 times per week. It's not sufficient, but I don't have time to do more.
15. What is your typical mode of transportation?
Car and walking. Both, car and walking.
16. At what age did you consume your first glass of wine?
Age 20, I would say around that age.
17. How regularly do you consume wine?
Alors, in restaurants, I will drink it often. But that's only about 2 times per month.

18. Do you drink other alcoholic beverages?
A glass of beer sometimes with friends at night. Sometimes that happens. I usually don't drink wine if I go out with friends because I don't like it much for the taste.
19. Why do you drink wine when you do drink it?
Sharing, conviviality. If I am with my family, for meals with family, just a small glass. Also for celebration. If I am at a restaurant also, it goes well with nice meals. *Voilà*.
20. What are your principal considerations in buying wine?
Already, the type. Me, I like reds. I must say reds. After, I look at the type of grape also. After, I look at the price. I don't buy the cheapest, but I also don't buy the most expensive.

F. Dennis Paquin, a French medical intern

Location: L'Hopital Pasteur, Diabetes Service in Nice, France

1. How many meals do you consume each day?
3
2. How many snacks do you consume each day?
No, no snacks.
3. How many days do you cook each week?
One.
4. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?
One.
5. How many days do you shop for food each week?
3
6. What factors are important in shopping for food?
Quality and price.
7. How do you consume most meals?
I live alone, thus I eat alone. I eat at the professional restaurant here for lunch.
8. What is your favorite food?
What should I say... What a question. I really like oysters.
9. How often do you consume your favorite foods?
4 times per year.
10. How important is indulging to health and well-being?
Very important because it's a fundamental pleasure.
11. What foods do you associate with childhood and/or family?
A question... I used to like regional cuisine, I used to like *escargot*. And mushrooms. And *beignets aux courgettes*. Voila. And cakes of potatoes. That is, cakes of potatoes from the patisserie.

12. Have you heard of the French Paradox?

Yes, on television. In the context of our spirit of wine.

13. Do you agree with what you have heard?

Um, I don't know if it's true, if it's scientifically proven. There is anyways in France a different air of living. We take pleasure in cooking and eating. It's very important. Maybe, simply, that plays a role in our quality of life. Now it must be proven. And I'm not sure of that... That, for example, with wine... I'm not sure if wine is for health better than other alcohols. Maybe, simply, it's a bizarre statistic. It's just our culture, our tradition. *Voilà*. But that is changing for the young. The young are cooking less and less. The young learn the fashion of cooking, but after lots of young can't cook. And with wine, the young drink much less wine than their grandparents.

14. How many days do you exercise each week?

1 time.

15. What is your typical mode of transportation?

In Nice? Car.

16. What are your principal considerations in buying wine?

Alors, in restaurants, I will drink it often. But that's only about 2 times per month. Mm. The origin of the wine. The price. And yes, I think that the wines that are not expensive are not good. Thus, one must buy a wine that is a bit more expensive to be sure that it is good.

G. Blaise Hanania, a French medical student

Location: At the Promenade du Paillon in Nice, France after indulging in Nutella brownies at Emilie's Cookies and Coffee Shop on a Wednesday afternoon.

1. How many meals do you consume each day?

(Speaking in French, articulating for the recorder with an attempted American accent) How do I reply to that? I like protein shakes.

2. How many days do you cook each week?

Me? Zero.

3. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?

One time.

4. How many days to you shop for food each week?

Me? Or my parents? Me, zero.

5. What factors are important in shopping for food?

Protein, omega-3, oats.

6. How do you consume most meals?

All alone.

7. What is your favorite food?

Alors, (laughs) protein shakes. (In English) I need it

8. How important is indulging to health and well-being?
On a scale from zero to ten, six. One must pay attention to the taste, it's necessary. It's easy to eat things that taste better. (Pointing at notes that I am writing) Is that in French or in English?
9. What foods do you associate with childhood and/or family?
With my family or with my childhood? With my family... The best. Foo-loo-ta-may-a! (Repeats, laughing. I think this is an Arabic pronunciation of falafel?). No, after, me, I don't give much time but for sandwiches. I didn't eat much special.
10. What is your opinion of the French Paradox?
It's clear, it's evident. We are in better health than the Americans. The Americans... the proportion of obesity is the worst in the world. In France, it's the food, the sport activities, the well-being. The Americans would do better here.
11. How many days do you exercise each week?
Every day.
12. What is your typical mode of transportation?
Car. (Laughs) Horses, ponies.
13. Why do you not like wine?
The taste. And it's not necessary for diminishing cardiovascular risks. One can do other things. Take activity. A good level can diminish (risks).
14. Do you think that the previous generation drank more wine than the current generation drinks?
Now, they drink more vodka and whiskey. And younger and younger.
15. Do you think that the younger generation in France is less healthy?
It's complicated. One must understand several factors. There are several factors. The medicine is better and the spirit of life is increased. The current generation is in better health, but with food and alcohol the generation now is in worse health. But if not, we now have medicine, we have primary prevention... TV shows that tell us to be active and eat fruits and vegetables.
16. Do you have other comments?
Sports activities. Sports activities. Nutritional equilibrium. And then, reduce obesity because it costs the most expensive for social security. The obesity, the diabetes, the hypertension, the cardiac risks. The obesity is the evil of the world. The bac. The bac, you know what that is? The exam for French high schoolers. The minister, he had proposed to increase notes for those obese who lose weight. But that was done away with because it's not ethical, it's not just.
17. Really? But I don't know if it's unjust? It might be the responsibility of students to manage their health.
Yes, but, you know, I don't know if you know, type 2 diabetes, it can occur during pregnancy. Caused by the mother. And the child, he is overweight. And there is almost nothing he can do to become better. But that is the fault of the mother for eating anything during pregnancy. Thus, it's not... it's complex. It's complicated, obesity.
18. Other comments?
(Laughs) *Viva le chocolat!* No, I'm kidding, I'm kidding.

19. Okay, I'll quote you on that.
(Laughing, reaching for the recorder) No, I'll erase it!

H. Aurélie Hart, a restaurant co-owner and wife of a sommelier

Location: Her trendy restaurant in Cannes, France before the dinner rush.

1. How many meals do you consume each day?
1
2. How many snacks do you consume each day?
Never.
3. How many days do you cook each week?
Every day. I cook every day, and I eat around 6 pm.
4. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?
Every day. Every morning
5. How many days to you shop for food each week?
Before having a restaurant, 3 times per week.
6. What factors are important in shopping for food?
Fresh products. Never processed products. Never products with conservatives. Fresh products. Lots of salads, quinoa, bulgur. Lots of cereals.
7. How do you consume most meals?
With my husband.
8. What is your favorite food?
I have lots. Favorite food... It's not really a dish, but I love seafood. (Affectionately lists types of posh fish). With a good glass of white wine.
9. How often do you consume your favorite foods?
I would say 4 times per year
10. How important is indulging to health and well-being?
One must have a balanced diet. With fresh products of good quality. The most organic. I pay lots of attention to meat. Never meat from supermarkets. One must take time to pay attention.
11. What foods do you associate with childhood and/or family?
Uhh... sausage. You are familiar? Sausage and cheese. And cakes made at my home.
12. Have you heard of the French Paradox?
No.
13. (Explains FP) What is your opinion?

I have never been to your country. But I have the impression that in America, everyone eats things with lots of fat, lots of processed cheese, lots of coke. I'm very sorry, but it's not a good example, the cuisine American. But maybe I am wrong because I have never been there.

14. How many days do you exercise each week?
With my career, that is sufficient. I am very active at my job. I worked for ten years on the beach, and it is very demanding.
15. What is your typical mode of transport?
Foot.
16. Why do you like drinking wine?
I love it. I love the taste. It's really a part of the culture. It's not bad for health if you drink one glass per day. In moderation. And in my family, we have a winery. It's just next to Aix-de-Provence. My cousin has one and my uncle. My cousin makes red wine, and my uncle, rosé. It's really something familial, wine, in our family. Because if we have a family dinner, there is always wine for sharing.
17. And at what age did you consume your first glass of wine?
Me, maybe 13 years, but I think that it was in secret (laughs).
18. What are your considerations in buying wine?
Me, I rarely buy wine. That is my husband's role, and I have confidence in his opinions.
19. Other comments?
I think that we have a good genre of life. We drink lots of water, we eat healthy, we don't eat too much meat, we eat lots of fish, we pay attention. No, we have a good genre of life.

I. Franck Victoria, a fruit vendor

Location: A local food stand in Nice, France on a quiet day around noon before giving me a complimentary fresh, juicy nectarine.

1. How many meals do you consume each day?
2
2. How many snacks do you consume each day?
None. Well, sometimes, but hardly ever.
3. How many days do you cook each week?
It's not evident, but I would say 5 days.
4. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?
4 or 5 days.
5. How many days to you shop for food each week?
It's my wife who does that, but once a week.
6. What factors are important in shopping for food?
We look for organic products. Quality is important.

7. How do you consume most meals?
With family.
8. What is your favorite food?
A good question. There are lots. Meat.
9. How often do you consume your favorite foods?
Two or three times each month.
10. How important is indulging to health and well-being?
It is very important, yes.
11. What foods do you associate with childhood and/or family?
Vegetables. They were okay, but not my favorite dish.
12. Have you heard of the French Paradox?
Me, no.
13. What is your opinion?
It's true that we eat things with fat, but it is different.
14. How many days do you exercise each week?
Zero.
15. What is your typical mode of transportation?
Car and my fruit truck.
16. Why do you like drinking wine?
For me, I drink with my family, not very often. I would say one or two times each month.
17. What are your primary considerations purchasing wine?
The year and the origin.

J. Chantal Aris, a chocolate shop worker

Location: At a cute chocolate shop in Cannes, France, around noon as she served hungry customers.

1. How many meals do you consume each day?
3
2. How many snacks do you consume each day?
Yes, sometimes, yes, but not every day. I would say two times per week before lunch.
3. How many days do you cook each week?
Me, zero. It's not me who cooks.
4. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?
At least one time per week.

5. How many days to you shop for food each week?
One time per week. Two times per week. Three. To buy a great load or small things? Maybe two times per week.
6. What factors are important in shopping for food?
I would say the quality and the price are important.
7. How do you consume most meals?
With my colleagues, and with my boyfriend and my family.
8. What is your favorite food?
I have lots. Favorite food? Oh, I don't have one favorite food. I love barbeque.
9. Do you like the things that you sell here?
Yes, I love sugar. I love patisseries.
10. And why do you work here?
Because I love eating. I love eating and I love quality foods.
11. How often do you consume your favorite foods?
1 time per week.
12. How important is indulging to health and well-being?
On a scale of one to ten, nine because I love eating. But if I'm thinking about health, it's not so important, but for well-being. Because for health, one must have a balanced diet.
13. What foods do you associate with childhood and/or family?
Roasted chicken, chocolate cakes made by my mother, fries made by mother also...
14. Have you heard of the French Paradox?
No.
15. How many days do you exercise each week?
Alors, never, I don't have the time.
16. What is your typical mode of transport?
Car.
17. Why do you like drinking wine?
Me, I love drinking wine because of it's a taste, I don't know, it's agreeable to share. For the taste and because it's a part of the French culture.
18. Do you consume wine frequently?
No, one time per week. The weekend, with friends or with family.
19. What are your considerations in buying wine?
The taste. Me, I prefer a good taste to something disgusting. So I'll pay 10 – 15 euros (Decent wine can be purchased for 4 euros in Nice). I don't look at the price of wine, in fact.

K. Marc and Maurice Vadnais, market vendors

Location: At a vegetable stand in a market at Cannes, France, as workers tore down after the Sunday rush.

1. What is your opinion of the French Paradox?

Marc: (Telling his friend) The French Paradox, that's the idea that here we eat cheese, we eat chocolate, we drink wine, but we are in good health.

Maurice: Ah! I think that that's because there are several cultural traditions that we have. The States is a country that has 250 years and...

Marc: Yes, here we eat less grease...

Maurice: Ah yes, here there is less of a temptation to eat greasy foods.

Marc: Fast food...

Maurice: Ah yes, and here we have a rate of 12 percent obesity, in the states it is 60 percent obesity. (A bit of an exaggeration). But that is starting to change. We have bad mouths, and the junk food here is not good. It's too bad because in America there are too many pasteurized cheeses. It's true, it's worse... Yes, it's caused by junk food. Here, we have baguettes, cheeses, and pastries, but that is rather culture. For you it's only fast food.

Marc: But it's society also. In French society, we rest tranquil, taking time to eat. In America everyone eats too fast. Here, in South of France, we take time to eat.

Maurice: And we, in France, we don't have Monsanto (laughs). GMOs, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. (In English) We are lucky. But they try to come... (Too much effort to speak English. Back to French). In Europe, they arrive and they try to plant in our territory. That is since George Bush, when he was prime minister in America, it's him who made the delegation to authorize GMOs to the rest of the world. Before he was president, one never saw that.

2. You don't like George Bush?

Maurice: No! It's not the question, he's just a business man like the others. It could be him or another, it's the same. Because Monsanto is a really large. (In English) *Big*. And they said, (In English) "George, George, we are big company, and we spend 2 milliard dollars for this project. Okay George, George, we can go now. Let's go!" (In French) Because Monsanto is a very big company, *very strong*, and it could be George or Jack, it's all the same, that's all. (Laughing) But you must not use my small thing about Monsanto!

Marc: (Laughing) But she is American, she will profit from that anyways.

3. But do you like Obama?

Marc: Yes

Maurice: Yes, the economy hasn't moved much, but he is a man who reflects, who doesn't have an air too imposing.

Marc: Not imposing, he's not imposing.

Part II: Greater London

A. Alina Bohm, a young city dweller and family friend

Location: Her London flat as she served Lakshmi and I a lovely meal of polenta pizza, melon, and grapefruit salad served with white wine, and a traditional Austrian apricot-filled pastry for dessert. Andrea is a young mother of Tobias and girlfriend of French Canadian Francois. She works for a British journal in central London.

1. How many meals do you consume each day?
Um 2, but I graze in between.
2. How many snacks do you consume each day?
I guess I have two big meals, and then when I get home, I usually have a bit with Tobias because we usually eat at ten and I don't hold off that long. (Looks at Lakshmi) And then maybe I snack on fruit at work. I have to be truthful with that because you know what I'm saying!
3. How many days do you cook each week?
Seven.
4. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?
Um, I don't know, maybe once every two months or so. It depends, around holidays I do it more often, and if people are here to help me with childcare.
5. How many days do you shop for food each week?
Just once usually.
6. What factors are important in shopping for food?
Usually I try to buy organic and seasonal. And I try to buy things that aren't wrapped too much, but that's really hard in the UK in supermarkets. And I try to buy as close to home as possible. I know that's not always the most environmentally friendly. Like tomatoes grown in the UK might not always be as environmentally friendly as tomatoes grown in the UK, but it's hard.
7. How do you consume most meals?
Half. Half lunch at work, but the evening meals always together with the family.
8. What is your favorite food?
Favorite food? That's hard. Favorite food as in dish? Meal? Um... it's a dish from Austria that my dad makes and it's called (something unpronounceable), and it's a sweet thing. Because in Austria, we eat sweet things for our main meals. You can eat it as a dessert, but lots of people eat it for a main meal. It's like a yeast dough with lots of apple stewed at the bottom. It's very nice, but it's really hard to make. It's the thing I request when I go home.
9. So how often do you get to eat that?
Once a year at best.
10. How important is indulging to health and well-being?
I think it's quite important. So personally, I don't like just eating something so that my hunger's gone. I like enjoying it. Eating is an integral part of our life, and it shouldn't be done just to relieve hunger. So what I was talking about before, you know those bread and games things, where we get together with friends, we cook a lot, big meals, and that's what I like the most. I

like having people over and cooking for dinner or eating dinner as a group of people rather than just getting on with it.

11. What foods do you associate with childhood and/or family?
That dessert. And very simple foods because my mom didn't have a lot of money. A lot of vegetarian dishes because she didn't have a lot of money. But it's those desserts. I love those.
12. How many days do you exercise each week?
Oh God, it's getting embarrassing now. Well, I try to climb the stairs at Russel Square. It's about 115 steps, 15 stories, so that's part of my exercise. And then once a week I try to go to yoga. But that hasn't been happening lately because of childcare. My boyfriend doesn't get home until about nine or ten. And usually on the weekends I try to go for a long walk.
13. What is your typical mode of transportation?
Bus and tube.
14. Okay so now onto your wine consuming habits.
Oh, God (Laughs).
15. So how often do you consume wine?
I very often have a glass with dinner. Maybe not every day, but several times a week. And that's pretty much it.
16. So why do you like consuming wine?
I used to like it for dinner, having people over. But for the French, it's an integral part of their meals. And since Francois is French, it kind of comes with that. So when we go having a glass every night, I don't like that. It's not something to just have with dinner. So if I just make icky leftovers, I don't want a glass. But because I cook every evening, and usually I make nice things, then there's a chance to drink. Oh God, I sound like an alcoholic.
17. What do you consider when buying wine?
In Europe, I never buy US or Australian wines. I buy local wines. But then when I'm in the states or Canada, I buy roughly local wines. And since the UK doesn't really have good wines, usually, I buy French wines with Francois, or I buy Spanish wines as well. But then when I go to a restaurant, it depends on where I am. I go by confidence at the least.
18. And so you are with a French man. How does French wine-drinking compare to UK wine-drinking?
I think for them it's a lot more about enjoying and ritual and tradition than it is about drinking for the sake of it, which I sometimes get the impression that it's like that in England.
19. Have you heard of the French Paradox?
I think so, is that the theory that they eat so much but they're slim anyways?
20. Basically. (Explains theory). Do you have an opinion on that?
I mean I can't speak for all of the French, but of the ones I have seen, I think the French eat... They definitely eat a lot of fruits and vegetables just by the way they construct their meals. Like you start with a small snacks and starter, a little entrée, a little salad, and then the main dish, and then cheese and fruit, and then maybe you have a dessert, but fruit tends to be quite a big part of it, and vegetables and salad. But that's a proper meal for when you have guests over, and I think that's different. But I think they also eat, from what I've seen, less processed food. And they eat

in smaller portions. Because they eat in so many stages. So they might have a really greasy food, but they're actually not eating that much of that, I think. And also, they tend to go for high quality products. For example, I think that "Fat Free" doesn't make any sense. Like when you look at fat-free yogurt, they take the fat out, but they put sugar in, just to have some kind of a consistency, and I think you probably get a feeling of satisfaction at a different time. Fat satisfies you, it makes you feel fuller. If you take that out, you're just going to end up eating more. How you reach, I don't know the word in English, the feeling of having enough... There's different components to that, and I just think, the more natural, and the less processed you eat, and the more food is left in the state it came, evolution-wise, that makes sense to me so I think that probably takes a large part of it. I want to hear your research after this because this is interesting!

B. Lakshmi Sarai, a young city dweller and family friend

Location: At Alina's flat, as she busily put her son to bed. Lakshmi is a twenty-something-year-old Londoner of Indian descent who works for the same British journal.

1. How many meals do you consume each day?
3, I would say 3.
2. How many snacks do you consume each day?
Um... I don't know, maybe 2 or 3.
3. How many days do you cook each week?
Every day. I cook probably more basic things that I like after work. Probably stir fries, you know, curries, pasta dishes, just things like that.
4. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?
I used to once a week, but probably more like once every other week now.
5. How many days to you shop for food each week?
One day every week.
6. What factors are important in shopping for food?
Yeah, sure, definitely quality. I look for things that are fresh. Especially with meat, I would look to spend more to get a better quality, but then with other things like pasta or other things, I'm not so bothered.
7. How do you consume most meals?
Yeah, me and my boyfriend, we live together so we tend to eat together.
8. What is your favorite food?
Oh, such a tough one. Can it be a food type? Like a type of cuisine? Um, I really like Indian food. I really like daals, but basically anything.
9. How often do you consume your favorite foods?
Right now, not so much, but when I lived with my family, they're Indian, so more so than now.
10. How important is indulging to health and well-being?
I probably see my favorite foods as more of a treat. Like sweet things in particular would just be a treat.

11. What foods do you associate with childhood and/or family?
I guess Indian food, but my grandparents used to always cook us fish fingers, the English side, so I definitely associate that with family.
12. How often do you exercise?
Um probably 3 to 4 times per week. I just joined a gym so it's kind of weird getting used to it.
13. What is your typical mode of transport?
Probably the bus or the tube, and I bike as well.
14. How often do you drink wine and in what context?
It's more really the weekends, I don't really drink during the week. I've been trying to make a conscious effort. But the weekends, I guess maybe if I go out with my friends, if it's someone's birthday, yeah really for a specific reason.
15. Why do you like wine?
I wish I knew more about it. To be honest, I'm not a very discerning drinker of wine, but I like the taste, I like that you can share it with people as well.
16. What are your considerations in buying wine?
I probably would consider definitely price. Maybe more so now where it is from, but again, I don't have much knowledge of that. My mum's got me drinking Sancerre all the time. She came down, and like, she said it was nice.
17. So have you heard of the French Paradox?
I've never heard of it, no.
18. (Explains FP) What is your opinion?
I just wonder, like from your survey, if people in France would mark "Health Benefits" (for motivations in consuming wine) because I looked at it and health benefits? I would never think to be like oh, I drink it for that even though I have heard it may be good for health. But it is interesting because I know that probably the British diet isn't as great.
19. So do you have any idea why the French are healthier than the Brits?
I think anything I say would sound like I'm stereotyping, but I think here people don't like with their families anymore, and I just think the quality of life is different. I think maybe the French have better quality of life because their priorities are in different places.

C. Bernard Rivett, a French university student who lives in London

Location: At Green Park in London, England on a Saturday afternoon before showing me around Buckingham Palace and walking into an Eid Al-Fitr celebration. Interview translated from French.

1. How many meals do you consume each day?
I would say 2 or 3.
2. How many snacks do you consume each day?
1 or 2.
3. How many days do you cook each week?
Every day.

4. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?
Very rarely. Maybe 1 or 2 times each month.
5. How many days do you shop for food each week?
Almost every day.
6. What factors are important in shopping for food?
Quality. And with fruits and vegetables, I always look at the provenance. And the price.
7. How do you consume most meals?
It depends, really. Sometimes alone, sometimes with other people.
8. What is your favorite food?
That's difficult... (Long pause). I don't arrive after thinking... Um... Ratatouille.
9. How often do you consume your favorite foods?
Not very often with that. More often in the winter.
10. How important is indulging to health and well-being?
It's important. It's difficult to give a reason, but it's just impressionable.
11. What foods do you associate with childhood and/or family?
I don't think there is anything in particular that I associate with my childhood...
12. What are some differences between the French and UK diets?
I think that in France it is healthier than in England. In England, I have an impression that it is like America. I have never been there, but I think that we, like America, have burgers and greasy things. In France, it is a bit more refined, but that depends on the place and the person.
13. And you have been in England for how many years now?
It has been 2 years now.
14. Is your diet different now in comparison with your diet in France?
I think yes because now I have more of a tendency to eat burgers or things like that because we have them everywhere. Temptations are more present.
15. Have you heard of the FP?
I have heard of it, but I am not very familiar.
16. Do you think that diet is the reasoning behind the FP or are there other factors?
I think that the way of life and the culture are both different. But even in France we have the same problems as America and England.
17. Have you seen the influence of American diet in France?
Yes, more burgers and greasy foods. It's not a bit more in style.
18. Do you think that wine plays a role in French health?
I'm not really sure that wine is good for health, but personally, all that I've seen with wine are not positive effects.

19. How do wine consumption habits differ in France vs UK?

I think that there is much more consumption in France. It has the reputation of being the country of wine. Thus, at that level it's more important.

D. Victor Vielleux, a UK/French university student who lives in London

Location: At a park in Holborn in London, England on a Saturday evening before meeting with friends at a "French Meet-up". Interview translated from Franais.

1. How many meals do you consume each day?

I would say about 2.

2. How many snacks do you consume each day?

Me, I would say, in fact, me I would say 2 or 3.

3. How many days do you cook each week?

Me, I would say I cook, in fact, me, I would say 4-5 times per week.

4. How many days do you eat at restaurants each week?

I would say maybe between 1-2 times per week.

5. How many days to you shop for food each week?

I would say maybe 1 or 2 times per week.

6. What factors are important in shopping for food?

I would say that when I am at the store the quality is something important. But with vegetables I pay attention that the vegetables and fruits are fresh. Also, I like to cook with ingredients instead of buying things that are already prepared. *Ben*, I try to avoid preservatives.

7. How do you consume most meals?

I would say the most with my family, half in fact with my family. Me, I would say that half I eat alone, and the other half with friends. *Alors*, 50% alone, 50% with friends... Excuse me, 50% with my parents, 25% with friends, 25% alone maybe.

8. What is your favorite food?

Me, I would say, I love the most eating... What is it... Fries. If not, I eat a bit of meat, of steak. I eat pizza. I like a lot pizza, in fact. Pizza, yes. If not, what would I eat. If not, I love chocolate also.

9. How often do you consume your favorite foods?

Me, I would say that I do that 2 times per week.

10. How important is indulging to health and well-being?

Me, personally, I find it very important, but exercise is the thing that is most important.

11. How often do you exercise?

I would say 5-6 days each week.

12. What foods to you associate with childhood and family?

I would say that with childhood it's rather chocolate, and with family, bah, I would say rather meals at night, with that, boeuf au bourguignon. One eats that frequently in France. I would say seafood, but not me personally because me, I am allergic. It is a thing of the family.

13. How is the diet in France different from the UK diet?

I would say that in France it is better. It is much more... I find... I don't know. It is true that one eats better in France and the food is fresher and consequently it is better for health. I think that in England, one eats too many dishes that are already prepared.

14. How many times have you been to France?

I've been lots of times to France. Maybe 50 or 100. Maybe rather I would say 90, maybe more. No, maybe, yes, between 110 or 90. I've spent lots of time there.

15. How is wine-drinking different in France vs UK?

I would say that one drinks more wine in France than in England. Apart from that, *ben*, one drinks more wine from France in France and in England, one drinks more wine from everywhere in the world. It's more international, the wine that one drinks in England. Also, I would say that in France one supports the wine more in family and in fact, adolescents drink more wine at the table than in England, with their parents in their lives. In France, one drinks wine rather in their lives.

16. How often do you drink wine?

I would say that depends. I would say that in the winter, I drink more in general, and I drink more wine also during this time.

17. What do you consider when buying wine?

Primarily, quality. And secondly, the type of wine.

18. Have you heard of the FP?

Yes, I researched it 2 weeks ago on Google when you told me about it.

19. Why do you think people are healthier in France than in other countries?

Um... Can you explain to me the French Paradox?

20. (Explains FP)

There are several reasons to explain that. I think that the climate in France... It is hotter in France and maybe that is partly responsible. Because all the countries that I know where people live long, they are countries that are warm. Maybe the fact that France is warmer than England explains that.

21. Why would the heat make a difference?

I think that there are maladies caused by the cold. There are more negative aspects in the cold than in the heat. And also, the other reason that explains maybe the paradox is that, I'm sure I've heard lots of times, I think that everyone knows the idea that, and there professionals who say that a glass of red wine daily prolongs life, it's good for health. And I think that the fact that one drinks so much wine in France, it could explain why one lives longer. I don't know if it is a physical effect or perhaps it is an emotional effect. People are more relaxed, less stressed when they drink wine. That could explain it. There is less stress on the cardiac system.

E. Kaleb Jude Green (my grandfather), an 80-year-old retired crane company worker with an interest in wine

Location: His conservatory parlor in Cuckfield, England at morning teatime.

1. Have you heard of the FP?
No.
2. (Explains theory) Any ideas for the reasoning?
Ah, possibly because they take longer over their meals. Here, it's on the table, twenty minutes, gone.
3. So why do you like drinking wine?
I enjoy drinking wine. It enhances the meal.
4. What do you consider when buying wine?
First of all, I only drink red. And then, the tastes, which you can learn from the vintage or the grape. Some I like, some I don't.
5. Where does most of the wine you buy come from?
Now, supermarkets. Originally from Italy, Spain, and occasionally Australia.
6. What do you think of the wine market in Britain?
It's very difficult, you see. If you buy a bottle for five pounds, these days the wine is actually costing 40 pence so you're not getting much but the government is getting a lot of tax. Over the last 5 years the price has steadily risen because of the tax and perhaps because of the misguided idea that if we put the price up, someone will drink this. But then we're not talking about 1 pound for some crazy lager. They've putten the price of everything up. You don't get much value for your money in this country. You don't get much wine for your money in this country.
7. If you don't consider the price, how is the quality of British wine?
British wine? I don't like drink British wine. (Laughs). Because it's generally white, and I don't drink white. And British wine tends to be overpriced.
8. How has wine played a role in UK history?
Up to 1970, it was only ever drank by the rich. After 1970 to 2000 it became much more available to people of all incomes. And after 2000, the price is going up and up and up. But it's sold at supermarkets and the supermarket price for any product... Like, whiskey, I like malt whiskeys. If you look at Talesgar, all the supermarkets sell them, they're all different prices, but every supermarket has got one at the bottom price. No supermarket ever has two at the knock-out price. They know what they're doing. They say, "It's my week to have the Talesgar, you can have it next week, and you can have it the next week." So you want two different bottles, you're gonna go in there and you're going to pay full price for second. But if you can be bothered to look on the internet, you can look at the prices and see you're gonna go that one for Waitrose, that one for Tesco, and that one for Sainsbury's. And it's marketing more than product. And same thing applies to the wines. You'll label one as a discount and you'll go, "That's nice." And you'll come back the next week and go, "That's double the price!" And you go to Sainsbury's, you buy a bottle, and you go "That's nice, I like it." And you go back the next week, and it's double the price! You certainly never get it the same price the next week. Never happens. When you realize that most of the wine comes over here in huge, great tankers, sloshing about, the idea of looking

after your wine when it's been slopped about from Australia, it's Ludacris, isn't it? And French wine is generally more expensive. Doesn't this interview go with you producing a bottle?

9. Sorry, I don't have any with me.

In my case, I haven't had any wine since January because of this drug situation. I'm not supposed to have it. I mean, I had it last night, but that was a sort of pink champagne, wasn't it? It was malt-brewed on the label, but I can't think it can be anything else than pink champagne or a fizzy rosé if you like it, but I wouldn't buy rosé anyways. I like good solid reds. You know, I used to buy them from wine clubs where they bombard you with offers. But they've changed in the last 3 or 4 years because you used to be able to buy wine from a big wine merchant, main order. You used to get a paper, it tells you what it says, and you say, "Okay, I'll buy a dozen reds", and you buy them. Now, what they are pushing you to do, you can only buy them at a dozen every month. And the first one's going to be, "Okay, there's your dozen, it's 54 pounds". And then the next month, it's 97 pounds. So I did join one, and I said, "I'm not paying 97 pounds for a dozen which you think are good and I haven't even had a look at them". But they're all like that now. All these big wine merchants are trying to get you sucked into, "take a dozen every month".

10. Alright, I think that's all the questions I have.

F. Jasper Angus Harrodson, a Sussex winery owner

Location: His small and artistic winery located in Sheffield Park of Sussex, just outside of London on a Wednesday morning while my grandfather browsed his lovely selection.

1. At what age did you consume your first glass of wine?

I was 14 years old. A long time ago.

2. How often do you consume wine now?

(Laughs) Well, I have to taste them so I would say daily.

3. How many glasses would you say you consume per sitting?

Oh, rarely more than two.

4. Do you consume any other alcoholic beverages?

Well, we also make beer so I have to taste that. But less frequently.

5. So what is your favorite type of wine?

Oh that's almost impossible. I suppose the best wines in the world are good burgundies, but they are too expensive so you don't drink them very often.

6. So why are you involved in the wine industry?

Because I discovered wine when I was a sixteen-year-old. I went into WH Smith to buy a book on motorcycle maintenance and I came out with a book on the good wines of France. And ever since then, it's been downhill. And then, when I was 21, I drove to Algeria, and at that time it was owned by the French and there were vineyards everywhere. And at that time, I worked for a vineyard in Algeria and that sort of... I became hooked, really.

7. So why is it that you love wine?

I think of all the silly things you can do in the world, it's probably the least silliest.

8. Why is that?
Because you're connected with the land. You're responsible. You respond to the seasons. You try and produce something that's the best you can. And it doesn't really kill anybody. It's better than making armor. Is this of use to you? (Laughs)
9. When you purchase wine to sell, what do you take into consideration?
Well there's a relationship between price and quality. It is no good having the best quality if no one can afford it. And alternatively, it is not any good having wine that is poor quality because no one will want to drink that anyways. It's a sort of halfway house, really. I think it would be nice to sell the best wines in the world, but how many people have that sort of money unless you're a Chinese billionaire. As far as I know, I'm not a Chinese billionaire.
10. So how has the wine industry changed since you've been involved in it?
I suppose it's the growth of the supermarkets. When I first bought my first bottle of wine, you could only buy from little wine merchants who had nothing displayed in their windows. You had to go and ask. They supplied the middle classes with cases of wine. And then sort of in the sixties, it gradually became... People had more money and they started traveling more so it sort of gradually became available in supermarkets and things. I mean, at one time it was Austrian Burgundy that you bought in the chemist as a treatment for your ailments.
11. What are some of the differences between wine consumption in France vs. Britain?
I think the French are much more parochial in a good sense that they buy their own wine and they buy from their own region. It's quite hard if you go to France to find Argentinian and Chilean stuff, whereas the English tend to experiment and there's wine monopolized from China and Thailand and wherever. The English, not having had an indigenous wine industry are more open to experiment.
12. Were you previously familiar with the concept of the French paradox?
Yes, I hadn't heard it put in those terms, but yes. The French do seem to eat a lot of things which aren't supposed to be good for you, and... They don't seem to eat between meals and they don't eat awful stuff like the British do. I think the British tend to live on donuts.
13. Do you think wine might play a role in the French paradox?
I think it's quite likely, yes. The only thing is, it seems now that you have every month a new survey that contradicts the previous survey so it's difficult to know. But I seem to be still upright after all these years.
14. What are your predictions for the future of the wine industry in Britain versus the future of the wine industry in France?
I don't know, um... I think the French are drinking a lot less wine than they used to, and I think the British are drinking more wine than they used to (laughs). I think they pretty well might be more interested in better quality in England than they used to be. I think they've become slightly more educated and would probably not always go for the cheapest bottle. So it might be that they've become slightly more sophisticated in their tastes. But what do I know?
15. Any other comments?
I still think the best wines in the world come from France, but there's an awful lot of other things too. I think the quality of wine in France is also improving. And whether or not it's climate change, they seem to make more wines with higher alcohol. I import from Bordeaux and whereas 20-30 12 percent was sort of average, and now it's 14-14.5, which, I think is sort of a backwards step. I don't need all that alcohol. Are you alright?

G. Andrew Williams, a tour guide of a British winery

Location: Bolney estate winery on a Tuesday afternoon before the 20-something-year-old trainee explains the varietals I have selected for my wine tasting with my grandfather.

1. What is your name and what is your involvement here?
My name is Andrew, and I'm just currently training to be a tour guide here.
2. How long have you been working here?
Only a few weeks, actually, but I've been in the English wine industry for a number of years now.
3. And what have you been doing other than this?
Retail work, selling wine.
4. In what context have you heard of the FP?
I've never heard of it before.
5. But you have noticed certain differences in drinking habits between the French and the British?
Um, not so the French, but I used to live in Spain... I'm not so educated, but I think there's just more of a binge culture in the UK.
6. Why would there be this binge culture?
Possibly because the three set meals of the day, you know, breakfast, lunch, dinner, are not such family events as they are in different areas of the continent. They're not necessarily sit-down meals as you would have in other areas of the continent. As I've discussed with you before, particularly in the city of London, everyone works at such a fast, tight pace over very short periods of time and then, you know, they kind of binge after that. Everyone goes out every day, all day, in the evenings, no matter what day of the week it is and they get straight back to work the next morning as if nothing's happened, which isn't very healthy, really. Whereas elsewhere in the continent, breakfast, lunch, and dinner seem like much more important parts of the day.
7. How often do you personally consume wine?
Very small quantities quite often, you know, 3-4 times during the week. But yeah, very small quantities.
8. What is your primary motivation for consuming wine?
I'm very interested in the subject. I think it's a fascinating drink. I want to become a winemaker.
9. How did that fascination begin?
I was traveling Argentina a few years ago, went to all the *vendangeurs* out there, then started working at Majestic Wine for a day job and kind of fell in love with the industry after that.
10. When you're buying wine, what kind of things do you take into consideration?
If it's something I haven't tried before, haven't heard of before, from a country I haven't heard of... Just something unusual. I think that you know there's so many types of wine out there in the world, and I'm only going to drink so many in my lifetime. Why not try and drink as many kinds as possible?
11. Do you have a personal favorite?

No, it depends on what the day is. (Laughs). If I could afford it, I'd drink champagne every day. But yeah, I think English wine is great too. It's new and exciting.

12. So what are your predictions for the future of the British wine industry?

Positive. I think it will continue to grow. I think the UK market is the biggest market in the world for wine, and we've got that right on our doorstep. Yeah, it's got a great reputation at the moment. As long as it's carefully managed. You know, we saw what happened to Australian chardonnay, it boomed and busted over a very short period of time. But New Zealand sauvignon blancs, you know, taken very careful measures not to grow too fast too quickly, and as long as UK industry does that, I think it will be very, very strong in about 10-20 years time.

13. Do you think it will ever be up to France standards?

Umm... Yeah, definitely. I think there's a possibility for that. France is experiencing a lot of very dramatic climatic changes at the moment, and that could affect nothing in my lifetime, but you know, maybe in 100 years or so.

14. Any other comments?

I think maybe the French are much more educated about... They're brought up with wine and they're much more educated about it. The more you know about wine, the less it becomes a drink to get you drunk and more a drink of social and topical interest, and that's the most important thing when it comes to health. The more people become educated about food and drink, the less they see it as a habitual thing that they need to do every day to live, and it becomes much more of an engaging product, which I think it probably already is in France but not so much in the UK. But that's changing. I see people are becoming more and more educated about wine and all kinds of alcoholic beverages, which is only going to help the health situation of the country at the moment.

H. Frederick and Didier Vanier, French Wine Merchants on Primrose Hill

Location: A trendy Primrose Hill wine outlet on a quiet weekday afternoon in London, England.

1. So what is the difference between wine-drinking in Britain vs France?

Frederick: Well, for me, as I have said, it's that people in London drink to get wasted, whereas people in France drink to appreciate the taste. That's how I feel. (To Didier) Do you have anything to add?

Didier: Also, yes, in France, people are drinking a lot, but we always sort of research of quality and research of good products to share, and not just to enjoy for themselves, and not just to be drunk, just to share. Of course, after a few bottles after a good meal, you are a bit pissed, but you are not dangerous in France. Would you like a drink, Madame?