

Introduction

A guest's dining experience is not complete without proper wine service. A server is not maximizing income opportunities without proper wine service skills. A meal is not truly complete without the accompaniment of wine. Proper wine service brands a restaurant and ensures repeat clientele and positive reputation. Guests will return often and recommend the place to their friends, thus causing the restaurant and the team members to prosper. Second, the sale of a glass or a bottle of wine adds to the guest's check thereby automatically increasing tips. Third, wine adds to the profit of the restaurant.

Purpose

The information in this manual is intended to provide team members with the foundation on which they can develop wine confidence through knowledge. This knowledge will not only benefit you as a food server, but will ultimately provide the team member with personal satisfaction as a consumer of wine.



Why does one bottle of wine cost twice as much as another same size bottle of the same type of wine?

The location, soil, drainage elevation, etc. where the grapes grow is probably the most important factor when producing quality grapes, which, with superior wine making skill produces great wine. Great vineyards are a limited resource and therefore great grapes typically have a greater cost. Other factors could be that the wine may have been aged for many years in small casks to develop complexity or additional character. Supply and demand plays an important role in the determination of the value of a wine.

Technically, wine can be made with any fruit (i.e. apples, cranberries, plums, etc) but if it just says "wine" on the label then it's made with grapes.

Wine grapes are different than table grapes: they are smaller, sweeter and have lots of seeds.

What is wine?

Wine is the pure, naturally fermented juice of ripe grapes or other fruits. In fermentation, yeast, which forms naturally on the grape and is most often added to the juice, converts the natural sugar of the juice into alcohol and carbon dioxide. Fermentation is stopped when the alcohol in the newly created wine reaches a level, typically above 12.5% by volume, mortal to the yeast. When all the natural grape sugar is converted to alcohol, a wine is described as dry, once again typically over 12.5% by volume. When a wine has residual or unfermented sugar still in solution it is described as sweet. The level of sweetness is determined by the percentage of residual sugar.

Wine making

Wine making is something that has been done from thousands of years. Making wine is not just an art but there is also a lot of science involved in the process. Smallest of mistakes in the process can have a major impact on the final product. Basically, wine is made in 5 different stepsreaches. While these five steps are compulsorily followed by the winemakers, they do add their variations to the process to add an exclusive touch to their wine.



Harvesting
Crushing
Fermentation
Clarification
Aging and Bottling

Harvesting

The first step in making wine is harvesting. It is the grapes which contain all the required esters, tannins and acids that make delicious wine. The moment at which the grapes are picked from the vineyard is what actually determines the sweetness, flavour and acidity of the wine. Along with the traditional tasting method, deciding when to harvest the grapes also requires a fair bit of science. It is very important to make sure that the sweetness and acidity of the grapes are in perfect balance while picking the grapes. And not to forget, weather also plays an important role in the harvesting process.

Harvesting can be done by hand or by machines. However, many of the winemakers prefer to do it by hand as machines are known to negatively affect the grapes and the vineyard.

Once grapes are picked, they are taken to winery and are then sorted in bunches. Under ripe and rotten grapes are removed.

Crushing

Once the grapes are sorted in bunches, now it is time to de-stem them and crush them. This crushing process used to be done by feet in the past. If you have ever gone on a wine tour, many of the wineries do allow you to crush them by feet as part of the tour. However, majority of the winemakers now do this crushing process mechanically. There are mechanical presses available which trod or stomp the grapes into 'must'.



Must is nothing but fresh grape juice which is the outcome of the crushing process and contains seeds, solids and skins of the grapes.

While winemakers prefer staying away from machines in the harvesting process as it affects the grapes negatively, in the crushing process, machines have made the process more sanitary and has also helped in increasing the quality and longevity of the grapes. If white wine is being made then the seeds, solids and skins are quickly separated from the grape juice to prevent the tannins and color from leaching in the wine. On the other hand, if red wine is being made, the seeds, solids and skins are allowed to stay in contact with the juice to allow the juice to get additional tannins, flavour and color.

Fermentation

Crushing and pressing is followed by the fermentation process. Must naturally starts fermenting within 6 to 12 hours when wild yeast is added to it. But many of winemakers add cultured yeast to the must to predict the final outcome and ensure consistency.



This fermentation process continues until all the sugar is transformed into alcohol, resulting in the production of dry wine.

If sweet wine is to be made, winemakers halt the process in between to prevent entire sugar from converting. The total fermentation process can take about a week to a month and even more.

Clarification

After fermentation, it's time for clarification now. This is the process in which tannins, proteins and dead yeast is removed from the wine. For this, the wine is transferred into stainless steel tanks or oak barrels.



Filtration or fining process is used for clarification. For clarifying, substances are also added to result in the fining process. For instance, some winemakers add clay to the wine to which the unwanted particles will stick to and will take them to the bottom of the storage tank or barrel. In the filtration process, filters are used to catch the larger particles. After the clarification process, the wine is transferred into other tank and prepared for aging or bottling.

Aging and Bottling

The final stage of this process is aging and bottling the wine. The wine can be instantly bottled or the winemaker can give additional aging to the wine.

For aging, the wine is transferred to oak barrels, stainless steel tanks or bottles.

Many of the winemakers prefer using oak barrels for aging as it is known to add a rounder, smoother and more vanilla-like flavour to the wine.

Moreover, it also helps in increasing their oxygen exposure, allowing the tannins to get reduced and enabling the wine to reach to an optimal flavour.

For white wines, steel tanks are generally preferred.

Once the aging process finishes, the wine is then bottled with screw cap or cork.

Méthode Champenoise is the traditional method by which Champagne is produced. After primary fermentation and bottling, a second alcoholic fermentation occurs in the bottle. This second fermentation is induced by adding several grams of yeast *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* and rock sugar to the bottle - although each brand has its own secret recipe. According to the appellation d'origine contrôlée a minimum of 1.5 years is required to completely develop all the flavour. For years where the harvest is exceptional.

Wine Styles

There are three basic styles of wine

- Still Wine** When people think wine they are thinking about still wine, it is referred to as still wine due to the wine making process. During fermentation the yeasts consume the sugar and turn it into alcohol, a byproduct of this process is carbon dioxide. If the carbon dioxide is allowed to escape the wine is referred to as still.
- Sparkling Wine** Sparkling wine is wine that contains carbon dioxide, luckily Europe, Canada, Australia and the U.S. all agree on this designation. People often refer to sparkling wine as Champagne, in reality this is a region in France that produces the famous sparkling wine, to confuse everyone New World producers often put Champagne with a geographic qualifier on their labels or use "champagne method" to describe
- Dessert/ Fortified Wine** This category of wine is usually higher than 14% alcohol, an alcohol like grape brandy is usually added either during fermentation or after, and sometimes flavored with herbs, roots, peels, and spices. Other methods for making sweet wines would be using dried grapes, 'noble rot' or botrytized infected grapes (botrytis cinerea fungus makes grape skins thinner, encouraging water evaporation which concentrates the sugars and acidity) and using fully ripe frozen grapes, as in ice wine. The most popular examples are port, sherry, Madeira, Marsala, ice wine, and vermouth.

Types of wine

Each of four types of wine can be made in a variety of style according to color and taste



White Wine is fermented without the skins, which is removed right after crushing. White wines are often used as an apéritif before a meal, with dessert, or as a refreshing drink between meals.



Red Wine is fermented with the skins of the grapes, thus the natural pigment from the skin enters the wine and gives it the color. There are many types of red wine, which vary in taste and color.



Rose Wine is fermented with the skins for a short time and then the juice is drawn off to finish the fermentation alone. Rosés are some of the most versatile wines, thanks to their bright acidity and lack of tannins.



Sparkling Wines these wines contain carbon dioxide as a result of a second fermentation either in the bottle, Champagne most famously, or in large closed tanks, Asti, Prosecco, inexpensive brands.

TASTE Grape juice is naturally sweet. As the yeast feeds on the grape sugars during fermentation, the juice becomes less sweet. The yeast dies once the alcohol content reaches 15% or if all the sugars have been used up. Any sugar remaining in the wine when yeast dies will determine how sweet the wine is.

Dry Wine is simply a wine that has no residual sugar, meaning it isn't sweet. When grape juice converts to wine, alcohol is produced in the fermentation process because yeast eats the sugar present in the juice. In many wines, the winemaker stops the fermentation process before the yeast has time to eat all the sugar, leaving the wine a touch sweet. To make a dry wine, the winemaker will instead let the fermentation process finish completely, allowing the yeast to consume all the sugar present. No more sugar, so no sugary sweetness; the wine is therefore dry.

Medium Sweet/Dry Wine is a description used for both red and white wines that have a medium residual sugar content and low sugar to acid pH ratio. The semi-sweet/medium sweet classification may vary depending on the individual winemaker's style and region in which the wine was made. The slight sweetness of medium sweet wine balances out any high acidity or bitter taste and enhances the tannins present in the wine. The ratio of residual sugar in medium sweet wine content is within the range of 20-30 grams of sugar per liter or 1.5 to 4.9%.

Sweet Wine sugar concentrations are increased by harvesting late, freezing the grapes to concentrate the sugar, allowing or encouraging botrytis cinerea fungus to dehydrate the grapes or allowing the grapes to raisin either on the vine or on racks or straw mats. The fermentation stops naturally as the high concentration of sugar and rising concentration of ethanol retard the yeast activity. Similarly in fortified wines, such as port wine, brandy is added to arrest the ferment and adjust the alcohol content.

BODY is a tasting term that refers to the weight of a wine on the palate. It's mouthfeel in terms of heavy or light easier.

Light bodied wines are characterized by their lean, delicate nature. This is because this type of wine will usually have a light viscosity, or consistency. It's an easy drinking wine that pairs well with other light and lean foods. These wines are often at or below 12.5% alcohol by volume. Some examples of a light bodied wine include Riesling, Pinot Noir, and Sauvignon Blanc.

Medium bodied they typically have an alcohol content between 12.5% and 13.5%. Medium bodied wines encompass a broad spectrum of wines and viscosities and are designed to complement a variety of foods. Medium bodied options to look for Sangiovese, Barbera, Cabernet Franc, Some Chardonnay and Viognier.

Full bodied wine is heavier with bold tasting notes, complex flavors, and a powerful aroma. These wines are typically meant to be sipped over a prolonged period since they are so bold. They often have an alcohol content of over 13.5% by volume. More often than not, full bodied wines are reds like Malbec, Shiraz, and Merlot. Some whites, such as Chardonnay as well.

5 Main Characteristics of Wine



Body
Very Light
Light
Average
Medium Full
Full

Sweetness

Bone Dry
Dry
Off Dry
Sweet
Very Sweet

Acidity

Low
Medium Low
Average
Sour
Very Sour

Tannin

Low
Medium Low
Average
Astringent
Very Astringent

Alcohol

Low
Medium Low
Average
Medium High
High

Acidity

Often confused with a high concentration of alcohol, a wine's acidity is what gives it sharpness – high acidity wines are often tart and zesty, and may feel lighter-bodied as they come across as 'spritzy'. A 'well-balanced' wine is so called as it has acidity, sweetness and tannin in perfect harmony. How can you identify acidity? You'll feel a tingling sensation on the sides of your tongue, which may feel rough if you rub it along the roof of your mouth. Your mouth will also feel extra wet, and you might find yourself 'gleeking' – the term given to inadvertently spraying saliva while yawning

Tannin

A wine high in tannin is often mistakenly labelled as a dry wine, because tannin has a drying effect on the mouth. Frequently described as astringent, tannin is the presence of phenolic compounds that add bitterness to a wine – despite these characteristics, though, tannin adds balance and structure, and helps wine last longer. A lot of research suggests the tannin in red wine is good for your health, too. It's usually quickly apparent if a wine has high tannin levels, as it will make your tongue feel dry and can leave a lingering bitter feeling in your mouth. A high-tannin red is a great accompaniment to red meat, though – the tannins work to help break down meat proteins, thus exacerbating their flavour profile even further.

Alcohol

Alcohol levels will have the biggest impact on a wine's character, body and classification. While the average wine contains around 11%-13% alcohol by volume (ABV), it's not uncommon for wines to have as little as 5.5%, or as much as 20%. Everyone tastes alcohol differently. Bitter, sweet, spicy, oily, and sometimes all at once – a lot of our perception of alcohol is actually influenced by genetics. Higher alcohol wines tend to taste bolder and oilier, while lower-alcohol wines feel lighter. It's almost universally-agreed, however, that alcohol wields a warming sensation at the back of the mouths and throat.

Body

Body is the result of many factors, from variety and vintage to alcohol level and region, so it's something of a generalised term. To simplify matters, it can help to think of a wine's body like milk, with skimmed milk representing a light wine, and cream representing a full-bodied wine. As a rough rule of thumb, if a wine's taste lingers in your mouth for more than 30 seconds, it's almost certainly a full-bodied wine. This classification plays a major role in food pairing: light-bodied wines suit lighter dishes, while rich dishes such as steak call for a full-bodied wine with strong flavours that will hold up against the meat's bold aromas.

The five basic characteristics of wine

Sweetness

This refers to the level of residual sugar left in the wine after its creation. A sweet wine will have a higher level of residual sugar, while a dry wine will have had all of its sugars converted to alcohol during fermentation. Often, our very first perception of a wine will be its sweetness, and while everyone's sensitivity to it is different, you'll experience it first on the very tip of your tongue. A slight tingling sensation is a good indicator of sweetness. Sweet wines tend to have a higher viscosity, which means they'll cling to the glass for longer.

How to taste wine



Look

Check out the color, opacity, and viscosity (wine legs). You don't really need to spend more than 5 seconds on this step. A lot of clues about a wine are buried in its appearance, but unless you're tasting blind, most of the answers that those clues provide will be found on the bottle (i.e. the vintage, ABV and grape variety).



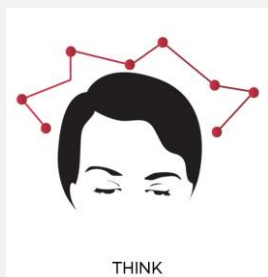
Smell

Think about the first smells that come to mind, no matter how far out, and write them down. It's OK to have a cheat sheet of wine descriptors, but don't rely too heavily on it. Again, use your own instincts. The common aroma wheel includes descriptors such as: fruity, woody, pungent, floral, spicy, nutty, and chemical.



Taste

After you've gotten some initial impressions of the wine, you're ready to taste it. Finally! Take another brief smell, then a small sip, and swirl it around in your mouth until it coats almost every part your tongue. This will also warm up and aerate the wine, and help release its flavors.



Think

Did the wine taste balanced or out of balance (i.e. too acidic, too alcoholic, too tannic)? Did you like the wine? Was this wine unique or unmemorable? Were there any characteristics that shined through and impressed you?

Swirl It!

The most often-skipped step in tasting a wine is the swirl. With the glass flat on a table, grab the bottom of the stem and swirl it vigorously—you want to increase the surface area of the wine and aerate it, which will release more of its aromas. Don't swirl it for more than five or six seconds though; it's not a cocktail. Get a sense of the wine's viscosity, or "legs." You can judge the legs by watching for the streaks of wine that crawl down the glass after you swirl it. Bigger wines, with more sugar and/or alcohol, will have more pronounced legs, but ultimately they don't tell you much about its taste or quality.



What Is Decanting?

The process of decanting simply means to slowly pour a wine from its bottle into another vessel. There are two main objectives for decanting wine. The first is to separate the wine from any sediment that may have formed in the bottle, and the second is to aerate the wine (introducing the wine to oxygen).

Sediment is the solid material that settles to the bottom of the bottle of wine. As wine ages, these particles of sediment naturally separate from the liquid. Sediment won't hurt you, but it can taste extremely bitter and harsh. Which is why, when you're pouring the wine into the decanter, you should do it slowly and steadily, while keeping the bottle below an angle of 45 degrees.

Aeration allows volatile aromas to escape and it allows the wine to breathe, enhancing the wine's aromatic characteristics and allowing the underlying fruit flavors to come forward. It also helps to soften those big tannins "drying sensation" you'll find in some red wines.

How To Tell If A Wine Is Corked

A corked wine is one that has been contaminated with cork taint, and this contamination gives off a very distinct smell and taste. Corked wine gives off a smell that is similar to a dank moldy basement, a wet newspaper or a wet dog. When you actually sip the wine, a typical corked wine taste will be flat and dull, exhibiting no fruit characteristics.

Why do different wines have different glasses?

When air and wine interact, two important processes occur: evaporation and oxidation. Allowing these processes to occur can improve the quality of wine by changing its chemistry.

Volatile compounds evaporate quickly in air, and often red wines can be prone to being both more alcoholic, and containing more volatile compounds. By using a larger surface area with your wine glass, these volatile compounds dissipate quickly, allowing the bouquet of your vino to come through quickly. Sulfites in wine also disperse when you give it time to breathe.

Secondly, oxidation — or oxygen exposure — is crucial to letting the flavour and nose of a wine shine through, particularly for a wine that has been stored in the cellar for some time. Chemical reactions are constantly taking place with these wines, which in turn create complex flavour profiles. These wines are often described as “closed” when the cork is first removed, and using a larger glass allows these compounds to disperse and the wine to “open-up.”

**Cabernet**

Moderates acidity by directing the wine to the center

**Burgundy**

Enhances acidity and intensity of full-bodied wine.

**Bordeaux**

Lets younger wines breathe, and the thin rim lets

**Zinfandel**

Tempers the alcohol while also enhancing the

**Pinot Noir**

Creates the perfect balance of highlighted

**Chardonnay**

Keeps young chardonnays tasting fresh, while

**White**

Goes with everything but is especially perfect

**Champagne**

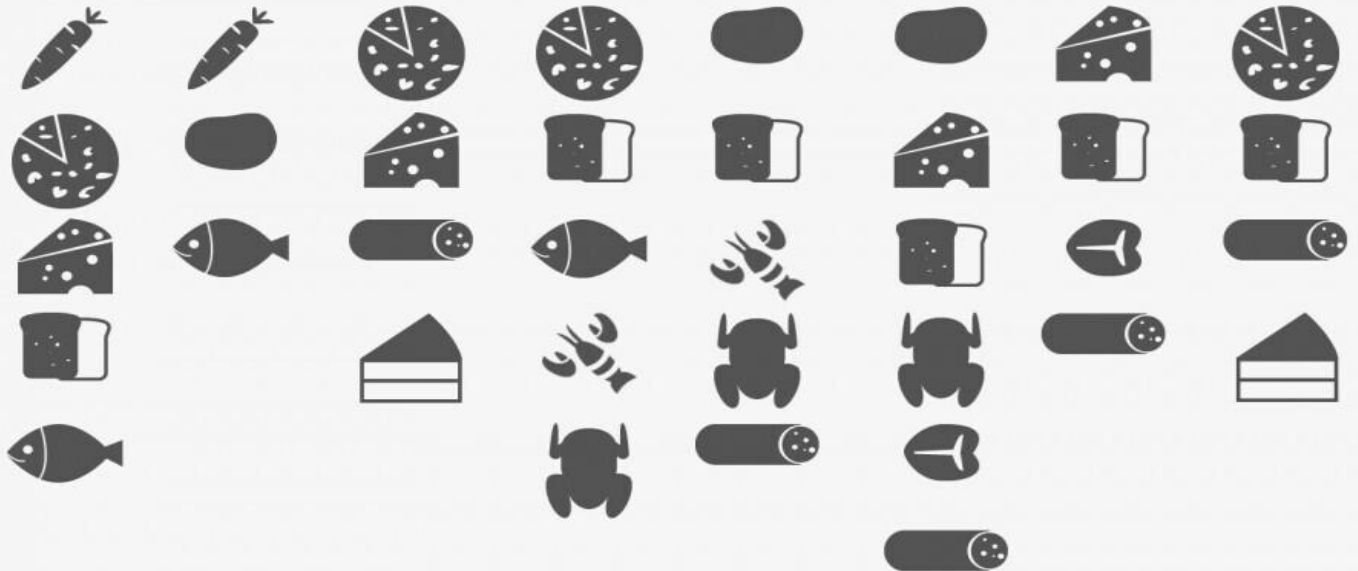
Enhances the bouquet of champagne. Plus,

YOUR GUIDE TO PAIRING WINE AND FOOD

SPARKLING	DRY WHITE	SWEET WHITE	RICH WHITE	LIGHT RED	MEDIUM RED	BOLD RED	DESSERT
Sparkling wine Champagne Prosecco Cava	White table wine Sauvignon Blanc Grüner Veltliner Pinot Grigio Albariño	Gewürztraminer Müller-Thurgau Malvasia Moscato Riesling	Chardonnay Roussanne Marsanne Viognier	St. Laurent Pinot Noir Zweigelt Gamay	Red Table Wine Tempranillo Sangiovese Zinfandel Grenache Merlot	Cabernet Sauvignon Monastrell Aglianico Malbec Syrah	Port Sherry Ice Wine Late Harvest



SPARKLING DRY WHITE SWEET WHITE RICH WHITE LIGHT RED MEDIUM RED BOLD RED DESSERT



KEY



FOODS THAT ARE HARD TO MATCH WITH WINE



ARTICHOKE



ASPARAGUS



BRUSSEL SPROUTS



CHOCOLATE



GREEN BEANS