

Title:

A Breath Of Fresh Air, Why You Should Decant

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Summary:

This year Christmas came early for me when my fiancée gave me my Christmas presents early. As I sat opening my many attractively wrapped packages, the one that excited me and intrigued me the most was an attractive glass wine decanter. Even though I am an avid drinker of red wine, it has never occurred to me in all my years that I should ever use one. Usually I would just set an open bottle of red wine on the counter for a little while before finally drinking it. However, af...

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Article Body:

This year Christmas came early for me when my fiancée gave me my Christmas presents early. As I sat opening my many attractively wrapped packages, the one that excited me and intrigued me the most was an attractive glass wine decanter. Even though I am an avid drinker of red wine, it has never occurred to me in all my years that I should ever use one. Usually I would just set an open bottle of red wine on the counter for a little while before finally drinking it. However, after having used a wine decanter for the first time, I have decided that I will never go back to the old ways again!

A decanter is a vessel, usually made out of glass or lead crystal which is used to separate sediment from another vessel of liquid, for example red wine. In this process, the sediment is left in a small amount of liquid in the original vessel, and the "clear" liquid remains in the decanter. Decanting red wine, however, serves another purpose along with separation of the wine from the sediment and that is to oxygenate the wine.

Aeration or oxygenation is the process of adding oxygen to a liquid. Why do this? Well it's really quite simple and logical when you think about it. Wine has been sealed in a vacuumed bottle for years therefore oxygenating wine takes the edge off and enhances the aromas and bouquet. As we have learned in previous articles, aroma and bouquets are very important aspects to wine and without them at their full potential a bottle will just not taste as well as it should.

Decanting an old bottle of wine is quite simple if you keep in mind two steps. Firstly, it is important to stand the bottle of wine up for several hours to allow the sediment to settle to the bottom of the bottle. Why several hours? While larger sediment will settle to the bottle quite quickly, finer sediment will take much longer. In a well lit room or using a lamp or candle, slowly begin to pour the wine into the decanter. Once you have roughly one third left in the bottle begin to look at the neck of the bottle for the sediment. Place the candle or lamp near the neck of the bottle and once you begin to see sediment in the neck of the bottle, stop pouring. The wine in your decanter should now be sediment free!

Some people say that it is not necessary to decant your everyday bottle of red wine. While this might be true, I have found that there is no harm done in decanting anyway. There might not be as much sediment in the bottle to separate or any at all, but the aeration will still do wonders for the flavour and aromas. The best way to decant a young bottle of wine is to splash it into the decanter so that as much of the wine comes in contact with oxygen as possible. Let the decanter sit for a moment to rest before serving.

So next time you think you will want some red wine with dinner, remember that while decanting is easy, it necessary to begin the decanting process several hours before to ensure you achieve the best aromas from the wine for consumption with your meal.