



# WINE

## The Essential Guide

WINE MERCHANTS  
& SHIPPERS EST. 1978

LWC

# WELCOME

to your guide to wine

This is your concise guide to all that's important in the world of wine. We know it can seem like a complicated subject, with lots of pretentious language and glass sniffing; that's why we're here to make it accessible and, hopefully, fun!

Over the next few pages, we hope you'll discover a bit more about wine and how to approach it in a positive and enthusiastic way.

## Some important things to remember about wine:

- ◇ A little bit of knowledge goes a very long way - you really don't need to know a lot.
- ◇ Selling decent wine to your customers is an incredibly easy task. All you need to do is suggest a wine. Nine times out of ten, they'll be grateful for your help. Try selecting five wines to suggest: two reds, two whites, and a rosé.

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# THE BASICS

## Wine in Numbers

- ◇ Over 50 wine-producing countries
- ◇ 1000s of regions producing wine
- ◇ UK imports over 1 billion bottles each year
- ◇ Wine is a growing category
- ◇ More wine is drunk now than beer, cider and spirits
- ◇ Wine is more profitable than beer

## What do Drinkers Expect of Wine?

- ◇ Good quality
- ◇ Good condition
- ◇ Served at the correct temperature
- ◇ A selection to choose from
- ◇ Professional service
- ◇ Knowledgeable service staff

## Understanding the Wine Drinker

Looking at your list, what do you think the following customers are most likely to drink?

- ◇ A group of 20-something women?
- ◇ An affluent couple?
- ◇ A young man trying to impress on a first date?
- ◇ A pair of female friends sharing a bottle?

## What is Wine?

- ◇ An alcoholic beverage made from the fermented juices of freshly gathered grapes
- ◇ Produced in the district of origin
- ◇ Made according to local tradition and practice

## What Affects the Taste of Wine?

- ◇ Grape variety
- ◇ Climate
- ◇ Soil
- ◇ Weather
- ◇ Viticulture (the way grapes are grown)
- ◇ Vinification (the way wine is made)

## Wine Styles

**Light:** The vast majority of wine is light wine. This simply means it's still, not sparkling, and 8-15% alcohol by volume (ABV - this indicates a drink's alcoholic strength). When people generally talk about wine, this is what they mean.

**Sweet:** The riper the grapes, the more sugar they have. Fermentation converts sugar into alcohol with the help of yeast. It's not unusual for trace amounts of sugar to remain after fermentation, and some wines are made in styles that purposefully leave some extra sugar behind.

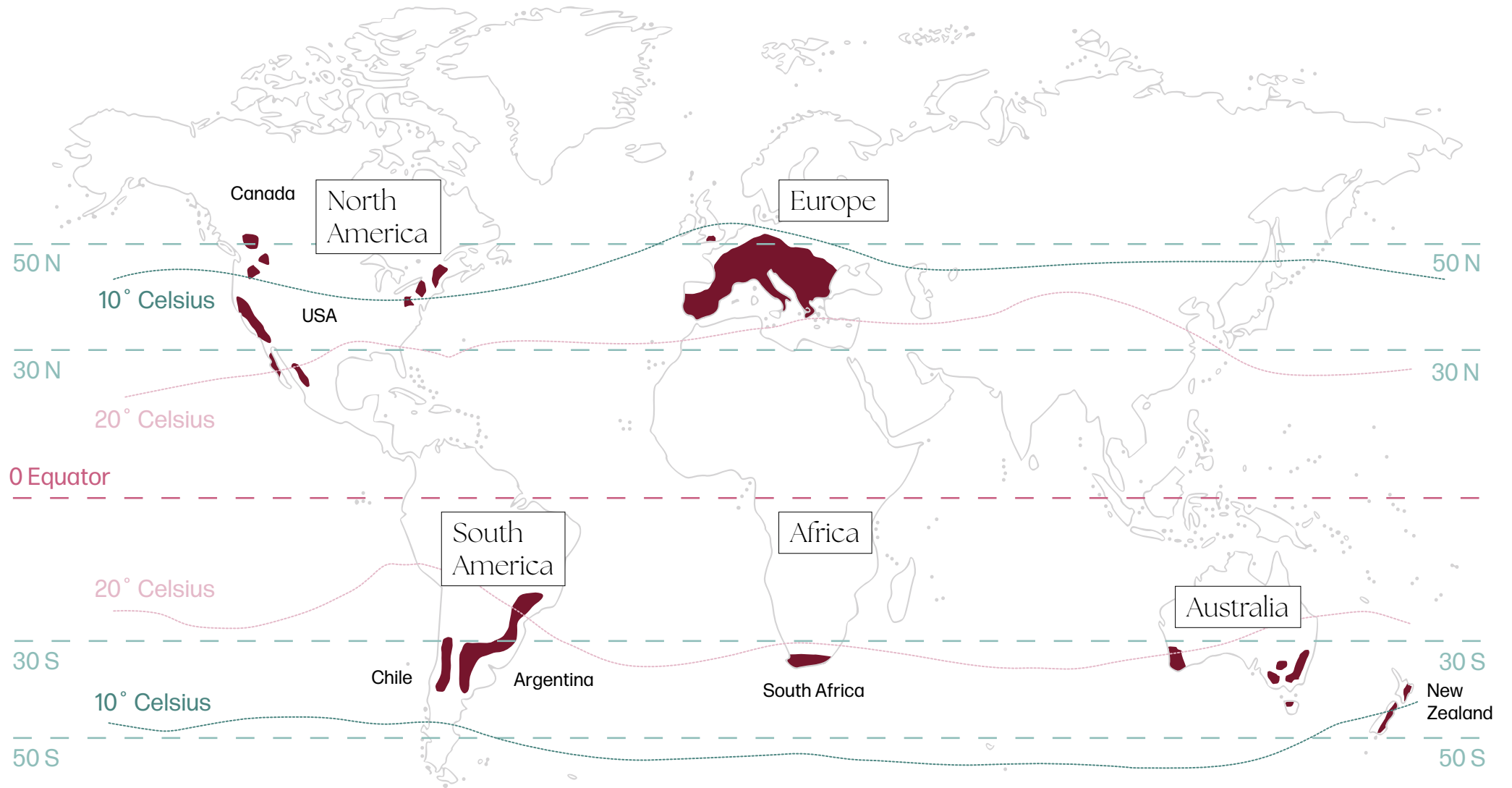
**Sparkling:** The most famous sparkling wine is Champagne, from the eponymous French region, but sparkling wine is made the world over. During fermentation, carbon dioxide is produced, and when trapped in the wine, causes it to bubble.

There are two main methods of adding fizz:

- ◇ **Traditional method**, used by Champagne, Cava and English sparkling wine
- ◇ **Tank method**, used by Prosecco

Find more information about these processes on page 13.

# Wine-Producing Regions of the World





# GRAPE VARIETALS

White Grape	Phonetics	Where it Grows	Characteristics
<b>Chardonnay</b>	<i>Shar</i> -do-nay	California, Chile, Australia, France (Burgundy, Champagne & South) and more	From warmer climates - ripe melon, fresh pineapple, tropical fruits. From cooler climates - steely apple, citrus, crisp. Can be matured in oak to give it toasty vanilla flavours.
<b>Chenin Blanc</b>	<i>Shen</i> -in <i>Blonc</i>	France (Loire), South Africa, California and more	Crisp, citrusy, apple; sometimes more tropical fruit & honey. Can be dry, medium or sweet.
<b>Riesling</b>	<i>Reece</i> -ling	Germany, USA, France, New Zealand, South Africa and more	Apricot, nectarine, peach, apple, pear, pineapple, lime, lemon, honey, petrol, ginger, citrus blossom. Aged flavours - diesel, petrol, lanolin. Dry, medium or sweet.
<b>Pinot Gris / Pinot Grigio</b>	<i>Pee</i> -no <i>Gree</i> -joe	Italy, France, USA and more	Pinot Gris - Aromatic & spicy. Pinot Grigio - Crisp, neutral & light.
<b>Sauvignon Blanc</b>	<i>Soh</i> -vin-yon <i>Blonc</i>	California, Chile, France, New Zealand, South Africa and more	Lime, green apple, asian pear, kiwi, passion fruit, guava, white peach, nectarine, green bell pepper, gooseberry, basil, jalapeño, grass, tarragon, lovage, celery, lemongrass, chalk. Oak flavours - vanilla, pie crust, dill, coconut, butter, nutmeg, cream.
<b>Viognier</b>	<i>Vee</i> -oh-nyay	France (Rhône), Chile, Australia, California, South Africa and more	Aromatic, floral, peach and apricot. Thick mouthfeel with good depth of flavour.
<b>Picpoul Blanc</b>	<i>Pick</i> -pool <i>Blonc</i>	France (Languedoc)	Crystal clear with green highlights, but can be more golden from older vines. Soft, delicate nose with pleasant hints of acacia and hawthorn blossom. Delicate and fresh in the mouth, it has an excellent acid/structure balance.

Red Grape	Phonetics	Where it Grows	Characteristics
<b>Cabernet Sauvignon</b>	<i>Kab</i> -er-nay <i>Soh</i> -vin-yon	France (Bordeaux & South), USA, Chile, Australia and more	Herbaceous when not fully ripe, with capsicum and grassy undertones. As it ripens, it tends toward blackcurrant; when very concentrated, cassis; you can often detect mint or eucalyptus. Oak lends secondary characters of vanilla, cedar, sandalwood, tobacco, coffee, musk and spicy notes.
<b>Merlot</b>	<i>Mer</i> -low	France (Bordeaux & South), USA, Chile, Australia and more	Cool climate - more structured with a higher presence of tannins and earthy flavours like tobacco and tar. Warm climate - more fruit-forward (cherry, raspberry), less tannin. Judicious oak-treatment of up to 24 months gives Merlot more structure.
<b>Pinot Noir</b>	<i>Pee</i> -no <i>Nwar</i>	France (Burgundy & Champagne), USA, Australia, New Zealand, Chile	Young Pinot Noir can smell almost sweet, with freshly crushed raspberries, cherries and redcurrants. When mature, the best wines develop a sensuous, silky mouthfeel with the fruit flavours deepening and gamey forest-floor nuances emerging.
<b>Syrah (Shiraz)</b>	<i>See</i> -rah ( <i>Shi</i> -raz)	France (Rhône & South), Australia, USA, Chile, South Africa and more	Blackberry, blueberry and boysenberry (tart to jammy). Olive, pepper, clove, vanilla, mint, liquorice, chocolate, allspice, rosemary, cured meat, bacon fat, tobacco, herbs and smoke.
<b>Zinfandel (Primitivo)</b>	<i>Zin</i> -fan- <i>dell</i> ( <i>Prim</i> -i- <i>tee</i> -voh)	California, Italy	Jammy, blueberry, black pepper, cherry, plum, boysenberry, cranberry and liquorice. Often explodes with candied fruitiness followed by spice and a tobacco-like smoky finish.
<b>Malbec</b>	<i>Mal</i> -beck	France (Bordeau & Cahors), Argentina	Argentina - blackberry, plum and black cherry. Milk chocolate, cocoa powder, violet, leather (depending on oak ageing) and a sweet tobacco finish. France - from the Cahors region; leathery with tart currant, black plum and savoury bitterness, often described as green at the start; higher acidity with lower alcohol; tends to be aged longer.
<b>Tempranillo</b>	<i>Tem</i> -pra- <i>nee</i> -yoh	Spain (various aliases), Portugal (various aliases), Australia, North America	Medium- to full-bodied, with red-fruit characteristics (cherry, plum, tomato), dried fig, cedar, leather, tobacco, vanilla, dill and clove.

# MAKING WINE

## White Wine

To make white wines, the grapes are picked, crushed and pressed quickly to extract the juice and retain freshness with minimal grape skin contact. The juice is then fermented in vats for 2-4 weeks. Vats are most commonly made of steel or wood. Fermentation is simply added yeasts feeding on the sugars in the grapes and turning them into alcohol.

## Red Wine

The crushed grapes are allowed to mix with the skins during fermentation to allow the juice to soak up the natural colour from the skins. This process is called maceration. As well as colour, the juice soaks up **tannins** from the skin. (That's what makes the roof of your mouth feel dry when you taste red wines.) The longer the juice soaks up the tannins and colour, the more full bodied the wine will be. Pressing occurs after fermentation.

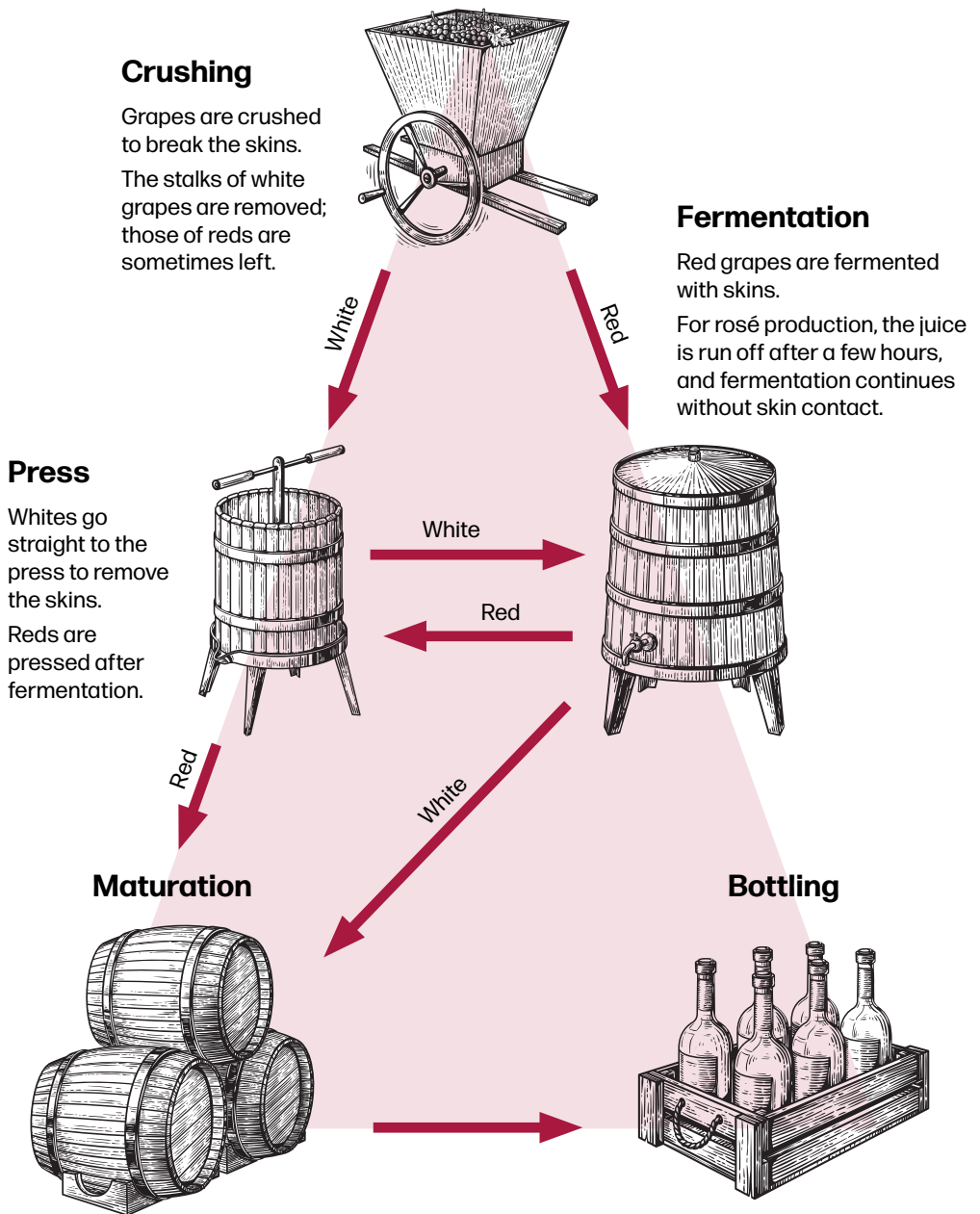
## Rosé Wine

Made the same way as red wine, but not allowing skin contact for as long, to produce a pink rather than a red colour. Rosé wines are not a blend of red and white, as is often thought.

## Maturation

Once made, some wine can then be matured before bottling. This is usually done in oak barrels which add flavour to the final wine. Different types of oak barrels impart different flavours. The two most common types of oak barrels used for winemaking are the American Oak barrel and the French Oak barrel. However, Hungarian and Slovenian barrels also have a following with certain winemakers. American Oak barrels are cheaper, have a wider grain and lower wood tannins as compared to French Oak. Oak flavour can also be added by adding oak chips to the vat.

# THE WINEMAKING PROCESS



# PROSECCO

Prosecco is made from **Glera** grapes in north-east Italy where the climate is temperate, with cold, wet winters and hot, dry summers. The two delimited regions are Prosecco DOC, covering a wide area of the Veneto and Friuli, and the higher-quality DOCG, located between the two Venetian towns, Conegliano and Valdobbiadene.



Typically produced by the tank method, Proseccos have medium acidity with fresh aromas of green apple and melon. Though similarly sorted into Brut, Extra Dry and Dry styles, they are slightly higher in residual sugar than Champagne and are best consumed young and fresh. The UK is the largest consumer of Prosecco outside its native country; it has become a cultural staple for Brits. A recent change to official rules allowing the production of Prosecco DOC Rosé (a combination of Glera and Pinot Noir), together with Britain's love of fizz and an ever-growing trend towards anything pink, has provided a perfect platform for the much-longed-for Pink Prosecco.

# SPARKLING WINE PRODUCTION

## Classic Method

A.K.A. Méthode Champenoise, Méthode Traditionnelle, Méthode Cap Classique

**Examples:** Cava, Crémant, some Sekt, Franciacorta.

**Bottle Pressure:** 75–99 psi

## 1st Fermentation & Blending



## Tank Method

A.K.A. Charmat Method, Metodo Italiano, Cuvée Close, Autoclave

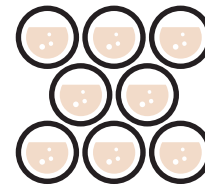
**Examples:** Prosecco, Lambrusco, Asti, Frizzante

**Bottle Pressure:** 30–60 psi

### 1. Bottling with Yeasts



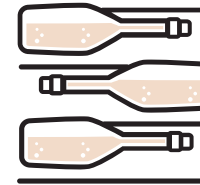
### 3. Ageing on Lees



### 5. Disgorgement



### 2. 2nd Fermentation



### 4. Riddling



### 6. Corking & Dosage



### 1. Pressure Tank



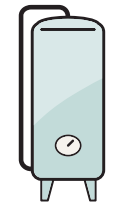
### 3. Cooling



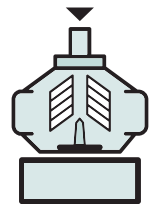
### 5. Dosage & Bottling



### 2. 2nd Fermentation

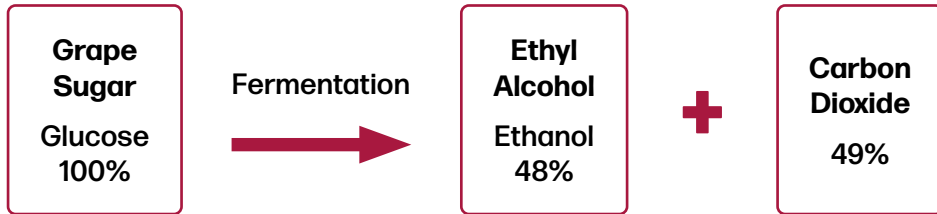


### 4. Filtration



# FERMENTATION

The grapes' sugar content is catalysed by added yeast, converting glucose into 48% ethanol, 49% carbon dioxide, and 3% many other compounds which contribute to the wine's flavour.



## Makeup of a Grape

Tannins come from the **skin** and **stalk** of the grape; **pips** contribute more bitter tannins. The skin determines the colour of the wine; it also provides flavourings, as does the fleshy **pulp**, which contains sugar, acid and water.

Yeast may naturally settle on the skin of a grape, and may cause a film of yeast called a **flor** to develop during the wine's fermentation. This is deliberately induced in the production of sherry.



# STORING WINE

## Unopened Bottles

Ideally, wine should be stored:

- ◇ On its side, unless sealed under a screw-cap closure, in which case the bottle can be stored upright. Horizontal storage ensures the cork does not dry out, which would cause it to shrink and allow air into the bottle.
- ◇ At a constant, cool temperature (13–16°C). It is especially important to avoid major temperature fluctuations.
- ◇ Away from bright light (to prevent premature ageing and fading of the label).
- ◇ Free from vibration.

Also, display stock should be rotated out to prevent it from spoiling.

## Opened Bottles

How long a wine will last after opening depends on the wine. Where possible, keep white and rosé wines refrigerated to preserve freshness. Bottles must be sealed.

If you are using the original cork or screw cap, do not keep the wine longer than three days.

Preservation systems exist that can extend shelf life after opening.





# WINE FAULTS

## Corked Wine

A corked wine has been spoiled by a cork contaminated with **trichloroanisole** (TCA), which can be detected at concentrations of just a few parts per trillion. This gives the wine a musty, dank, mouldy smell and an off taste.

This is the most common wine fault and can occur at a rate of one in twenty bottles opened (though less commonly in fine wines). This has led to the development of stoppers made from plastic, agglomerate cork and screw tops.

Cork floating in wine does not mean it is corked; it may be a sign of a dried-out cork, or could simply mean the bottle was opened poorly. Mould on top of the cork is nothing to worry about, either.

**Action required: change the bottle immediately.**

## Re-fermentation

If the wine re-ferments in the bottle, it will appear fizzy and cloudy. This fault has become quite rare due to modern techniques.

**Action required: change the bottle immediately.**

## Tartrate Crystals

**Tartaric acid** is a natural component of grapes, and therefore wine, which crystallises when wine becomes very cold, or with age. Tartrates are usually a sign of a quality wine that has not been over-treated during vinification.

**Action required: be careful when pouring.**

## Oxidation

Contact with air spoils wine and occurs when a wine has been open too long, has an ill-fitting cork, or is simply too old. It is easily noticed: the wine will have a sherry-like smell and will taste dull and lifeless. Red wines will turn a dull brown, and whites will turn tawny or brown.

**Action required: change the bottle immediately.**

## Sediment

As red wines mature in the bottle, they may develop sediment, which is the tannins and colour elements falling out of the liquid. This is quite natural; the bottle may need to be decanted before serving.

**Action required: be careful when pouring.**

# SERVING WINE

## Ideal Serve Temperatures

**White & rosé wine:** cool but not too cold (8-12°C).

**Sparkling wine, Champagne, dessert/sweet wines:** chilled (6-8°C).

**Red wine:** room temperature (17-18°C); lighter reds can be lightly chilled (12°C).

## Glassware

Ensure glasses are clean and dry.

Use a wine glass for still wine and a flute for sparkling wine.

## Opening Bottles with Corks

Remove the top of the foil capsule by cutting around the lip of the bottle with a waiter's knife.

Ensure the neck of the bottle is clean.

Turning the cork screw, not the bottle, drill into the cork. (Remember not to pierce the wine end of the cork.)

Position and hold the hinged part so that it touches the rim of the bottle. Ensure the cork leaves the bottle gently, without a pop.

## Opening Sparkling Wine

Remove the foil and wire muzzle, ensuring you hold the cork in place by hand once the wire is removed.

Tilt the bottle to a 30° angle, making sure you are not pointing at anyone.

Gripping the cork in one hand, use the other to grip the base of the bottle and turn the bottle, not the cork.

Hold the cork steady, resisting its tendency to fly out.

Twist until the cork eases out slowly and the gas pressure is fully released. Hold on tight to the cork to ensure it releases slowly without a loud pop.





## Know Your Wine List

When upselling, it is vital to know your wine list. Learn the styles, grape varieties and price points. This will allow you to discuss the options effectively and efficiently with customers.

- ◇ Smile, relax and engage with the customer to give them a better experience of wine selection, making it fun and informative.
- ◇ Discuss what style the customer usually drinks.
- ◇ Show them two or three wines that fit that style.
- ◇ Suggest some of your own favourites – people often prefer to choose a personal recommendation over a written choice.
- ◇ Describe the wine in a few words.
- ◇ Link the food they have chosen with the wine.
- ◇ If a white wine was chosen for the starter, but the main course is better suited to red, then offer a choice of reds to suit the dish.
- ◇ Selling the wine fully to customers should be an intrinsic part of the service, and can provide the customer with a great food and wine match that elevates their experience into a special occasion.

# WINE UPSELLING

Upselling encourages the customer to choose something different and improve their experience. It is not about pushing them into choosing an expensive wine that they neither want nor would enjoy.

By offering two or three alternatives, you leave the customer open to choose, not cornered into choosing the most expensive option.

Each wine can be categorised by style, and this will help group the choices together when discussing with customers.

<b>White</b>	Bone dry, delicate, neutral	Dry and aromatic	Juicy, fruity and ripe.	Full-flavoured and nutty
<b>Rosé</b>	Light, dry, subtle	Fruity and juicy		
<b>Red</b>	Light	Juicy	Spicy	Oaked, intense



# FOOD PAIRING

Wine Style	Examples	Salad	Fish	Sauce	Meat	Herbs	Spice	Cheese
<b>Bone dry, delicate, neutral wines</b>	Frascati, Muscadet, Pinot Grigio, Soave	Light undressed salad, e.g. green salad, feta salad	Clam chowder, halibut, herring, mussels, oysters, prawns, trout	Very light olive oil and fish-based sauces, e.g. marinara	Generally too light for most meats	Delicate seasoning of chives, dill, coriander, fennel, parsley	Generally spice overwhelms these wines	Very mild cheese, e.g. cream cheese, feta, mozzarella, ricotta
<b>Dry &amp; aromatic</b>	Sauvignon Blanc, Dry Chenin Blanc, Dry Riesling	Fish-based salad, shellfish and delicate white fish	Trout, scallops, seared shrimp	Fish-based sauces	Simple sauces on chicken, pork and veal	Chives, coriander, dill, ginger, lemongrass, lime, tarragon	Especially good with Thai dishes and some milder Indian meals	High-acidity cheese such as goat's cheese
<b>Juicy, fruit-driven, ripe wines</b>	Chenin Blanc, Semillon, Viognier	Caesar, egg, fish and carrots	Salmon, scallops	Fish-based sauces, light creamy sauces, hollandaise, pesto	Grilled, BBQ, baked, casserole white meats	Basil, coriander, fennel, light garlic, ginger, parsley, tarragon	Thai & light Indian dishes, e.g. Tandoori, Korma, Rogan Josh	Semi-Soft Cheese, E.g. Brie, Camembert; mature cheddar
<b>Full-flavoured, nutty whites</b>	Burgundy, Australian, Californian	Caesar, chicken, grilled peppers, onion tart	Crab, lobster, monkfish, swordfish, tuna, salmon, smoked fish	Butter- and cream-based sauces, e.g. carbonara, pesto	Roast chicken, duck ham, pork, turkey	Basil, chives, cloves, cinnamon, garlic, ginger, spring onion	Coconut-flavoured dishes, Indonesian and lighter Indian dishes	Mozzarella and Smoked Cheeses
<b>Light reds</b>	Beaujolais, Light VDP Reds, Light Chianti and Valpolicella	Grilled veg, olives, prosciutto, ratatouille, smoked meats	Cod, seared salmon, sea trout, tuna	Tomato-based sauces, e.g. arrabbiata, napolitano, lasagne	Light pork dishes, roast chicken and turkey	Basil, coriander, garlic, nutmeg	Italian and Spanish dishes with spicy sauces	Cheddar, Mozzarella, Parmesan and Port-Salut
<b>Juicy reds</b>	Pinot Noir, Merlot, Chianti, Grenache, Rioja	Roasted veg, smoked meats, wild mushrooms	Tuna, salmon	Bolognese, carbonara, cooked tomato sauce, lasagne	Chicken, duck, turkey, light beef or pheasant, smoked meats	Basil, chives, coriander, garlic, mint, nutmeg and thyme	Moderately hot Indian dishes, spicy Italian & Spanish sauces	Creamy blue cheeses, goat's cheese, mature cheddar
<b>Spicy reds</b>	Shiraz, Rhône Reds	Red meat salads	Generally too heavy for fish and seafood	Cream-based sauces, e.g. carbonara, lasagne, BBQ & pepper sauce	BBQ, grilled, roasted, casserole game	Black pepper, chives, cloves, coriander, garlic and nutmeg	Rich, creamy Indian curries, e.g. Korma, Balti; black pepper sauce	Cambozola and other creamy blue cheeses, e.g. Stilton
<b>Oaked, intense reds</b>	Bordeaux and New World Cab Sauv, Top Riojas	Red meat salads	Generally too heavy for fish and seafood	Cream- and cheese-based sauces, e.g. carbonara, parmesan	Heavier meats; BBQ, grilled, roasted, casserole game	Black pepper, chives, garlic, mint, nutmeg, rosemary and thyme	Be careful when pairing up intense wines with spicy foods	Chaume, Cheshire, Edam, Parmesan, Pont L'Eveque, Red Leicester
<b>Light, dry, subtle rosé wines</b>	Provence Rosé, Pinot Grigio Blush, Spanish Rosé	Most fish salads and vegetable tarts	White fish, prawns, scallops and mussels	Light sauces and tomato-based sauces	Meats, antipasti meats, chorizo, chicken, pork, sausages	Basil, chives, lemongrass, thyme, dill, parsley	Spicy Arrabbiata, Thai and Indonesian cuisine	Feta, goat's cheese and Mahon cheese
<b>Fruity, juicy, medium rosé wines</b>	White Zinfandel, White Grenache, Shiraz Rosé	Roasted veg, pasta salad, chicken salad	Tuna, salmon	Great with tomato-based sauces	BBQ meats, burgers and chops	Basil, nutmeg, garlic, pepper	Chinese food e.g. plum sauce, lemon chicken	Creamy Italian cheese, e.g. Ricotta and goat's cheese
<b>Traditional-method fizz</b>	Champagne, Prosecco, Cava, Sparkling Wine	Asparagus & prosciutto salad, strawberries	Poached salmon, sole, lobster, shrimps	Light, fish-based sauces	Antipasti	Saffron, ginger, coriander, garlic	Thai, Indian, highly spiced foods	Brie, goat's cheese, Gouda, Edam, Parmesan
<b>Other fizz (Tank Method, Charmat Method)</b>	Prosecco and inexpensive Fizz.	White asparagus, light salads, mini quiches and frittata	Sushi, baked fish, crab cakes, prawn cocktails, grilled salmon	Cream-based sauces	Parma and other air-dried ham	Garlic, rosemary, mustard greens	Thai/Indian curry	Parmesan, Gorgonzola, Camembert, Gruyere, Pecorino, Talegio





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