



Wine tasting is a unique experience which has its very own qualities : it's eye-opening, social and enjoyable.

To experience wine properly, you have to be well-prepared, meet certain practical conditions and really understand what you're going to be part of ! Tasting a wine, an alcoholic drink, is in no way an insignificant, run-of-the-mill thing that just anyone can do.

The aim of this charter is to provide any wine enthusiast with the tools they need to enjoy the tasting experience in the best conditions. It details the practical aspects and challenges of wine tasting. The tasters should enjoy the experience yet also be fully aware of what is involved.

This charter is based on expert discussion and feedback co-written by **Hussam Al Mallak**, Alcohol Specialist Doctor and President of the Board of Education for Hérault Health, and **Bruno Le Breton**, oenologist wine producer of Domaines de la Jasse & Montlobre.

RESPONSIBLE WINE TASTING CHARTER



Wine tasting and education

Young people are taught about the many situations they may experience as adults. However, despite all the warnings about wine and alcohol, education on the subject is poor. This charter is designed as an introduction to wine tasting to teach young adults about responsible drinking.

Young adults often have a relationship with alcohol based on excess. Drinking too many alcopops (spirits premixed with soft drinks) too quickly can cause serious health problems and brain damage. This document enables us to present them with an alternative relationship with products from the vineyard and their virtues related to the world of wine.

First of all, the product must suit their tastes. Grapefruit rosé, wine with added sugar, alcohol-free wine, sparkling wine etc. all come from the vineyard and, for young generations,

drinking them is an enjoyable experience that isn't just about the product itself. As a matter of fact, we have noticed that a young adult who has the opportunity to share these drinks, in a nice wine glass at the right temperature, is part of an empowering process. Promoting responsible drinking also means getting involved in places where these adults go and giving them the chance to experience the philosophy of wine tasting and share the fun in a community.

Minors' relationship with alcohol is still a major issue as we know that many of them experience its dangers before reaching adulthood. Parents are responsible for teaching them and conveying these messages so we believe it's highly beneficial to discuss the subject as a family. This charter can help start the conversation.

The tasting experience

Wine tasting is about sharing experiences and emotions. A specific vocabulary should therefore be used to express them so it's easier to rely on someone who knows about wine or who knows the terminology.

The best times for wine tasting are before lunch or dinner when our tastebuds and senses are stimulated. The appetite is whetted and the mouth waters at the slightest olfactory stimulus.

Wine tasting is also about the atmosphere. There mustn't be any strong smells or anything that affects the senses in the setting. Adhering to these conditions ensures the experience is social and enjoyable.

How to taste wine

Professionals tend to spit wine out once they've tasted it. They have a mouthful after smelling it and examining its colour. Tasters suck in air to enhance the aromas identified by retro-nasal breathing. Tasters also concentrate on how it feels in the mouth and note the alcohol's acidity, sweetness, bitterness and warmth.

This sensory technique based on sight, smell and taste observation enables tasters to appreciate the many joys of wine without having to absorb it into the system. All that's required is a small spittoon nearby...

Bread or plain savoury cakes can be served during the tasting session along with a glass of water to rinse the mouth.

The taster's main tool is the glass. It should be taken care of:

- A glass stored upright on its base to avoid smells from the shelf
- A nice, clean and transparent glass washed solely with clear water to remove any odours from soap residue
- A glass suitable for wine tasting, held at the stem so as not to warm up the wine.

Drink aware

Like anything enjoyable, there are health precautions involved in wine tasting. Otherwise, it's no longer wine tasting but instead drinking and satisfying addictive needs!

Moderate drinking is defined as :

- Up to 2 glasses per day for women
- Up to 3 glasses per day for men
- Maximum of 4 glass for any occasion
- At least 1-2 days of total abstinence per week

A 10cl glass with an alcohol content of 12% corresponds to 1 glass of wine.

Wine tasting is an enjoyable experience, it shouldn't be a daily routine.

RESPONSIBLE WINE TASTING CHARTER

Wine and health

The alcohol in wine is still the most controversial issue. When drunk in the aforementioned conditions, wine can be beneficial. Being drunk disappears as soon as other motivations appear such as a need to be uninhibited, fill a hole or weakness.

Nevertheless, wine tasting and drinking should be avoided in certain cases : pregnant women, when ill or on medication, and in specific situations : at work, before driving, mental fragility etc. We should highlight that some components in wine are unsuitable for people with allergies and food intolerances : sulphites, traces of fining agents such as casein and egg whites.

Experts continue to debate the issue of wine and health ; individual molecules have undeniable health benefits but they lose any good qualities when we no longer drink aware.

So we would prefer to hold onto the benefits of wine which first and foremost relate to enjoyment, self-improvement, sharing and community which lend themselves to responsible wine tasting. These aspects boost our wellbeing and benefit mind and body. These very virtues have enabled the vineyard to stay strong and see wine through the centuries to set a benchmark for our civilisation.



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