

Get to Know Wine with Paola Donzelli

WORKBOOK

Lesson 4



PAOLA'S WINE TASTING TIPS

BEFORE TASTING:

Pour a glass of wine and do a visual and olfactory analysis. In other words, take a few moments to look at the wine and to smell the wine!

TASTING:

Take a small sip and allow the wine to coat your tongue and the inside of your mouth. Notice the flavors and sensations.

Swirl the wine in your glass, then take a second small sip. This is often when you will notice even more flavors and sensations. This is because, as oxygen comes into contact with the wine it begins to "open" as it changes chemically.

With aged wines, in particular, it's important to be patient and to allow the wine to open and change in its own time.

This is really an incredible process and very interesting and fun to notice!



PAIRINGS: CONCORDANCE

Concordance refers to matching the complexities of a wine and a food.

If a wine is simple - like a young, fresh wine - it's generally best to pair it with a simple food. However, if a wine is more complex - like an aged wine - it's usually best to serve it with a more complex dish.



Here are some general examples with cheese:

- A simple white wine has concordance with a simple fresh cheese.
- A young red wine has concordance with a medium aged cheese.
- An aged red wine has concordance with a mature, aged cheese.

PAIRINGS: CONTRAST

In wines, some flavors and sensations are considered hard, while others are considered soft.

HARD FLAVORS:

- Salty
- Acidic
- Bitter

SOFT FLAVOR:

- Sweet

HARD SENSATIONS:

- Astringent (from tannins)

SOFT SENSATIONS:

- Pseudo heat (an effect from alcohol)
- Softness (an effect from alcohol and glycerin)



When choosing a wine to pair with food, first consider the main tastes and sensations of the food, then choose a wine with the opposite characteristics.

EXAMPLE:

- A wine with good acidity generally contrasts well with the fats in salami or mortadella.
- A wine with tannins, like an aged red, tends to contrast well with the savoriness of roasted or stewed beef.
- A sweet wine generally contrasts beautifully with the salt and mold of blue cheese or gorgonzola.

WINE SERVING TEMPERATURES

Serving wine at the correct temperature is important because it helps to bring out its bouquet and flavors. Below are some basic guidelines.

- Simple white wines: 50°F
- Structured white wines: 55°F
- Young red wines: 60°F
- Aged red wines: 65°F
- Sweet dessert wines: 60°F

Note: A regular refrigerator generally works fine for chilling white wines. However, if you live in a hot climate, a wine refrigerator can be helpful to maintain the correct temperature for red wines.



PAOLA'S WINE NOTES

The Wine

NAME: Tana del Diavolo

WINERY: MuroGrosso

VINTAGE: 2015

GRAPE VARIETY: Sangiovese, Merlot, Cabernet

ALCOHOL: 14%

QUALITY: DOLG

NOTES: This wine is aged 18 months in oak barrels

The Tasting

Date: _____

VISUAL ANALYSIS Intense ruby red, orange-red on the rim,
dense arches and tears (legs), very good structure

BOUQUET: Vanilla, mature fruit like plum marmalade,
tomato or pepper plant leaves

TASTE: Dry, warm (perceived from its alcohol), good
softness (from its alcohol), good tannins (tannins are
pleasant in the mouth)

PAIRING: _____

NOTES: In conclusion, it is a full-bodied wine (wine
structure) with a good intense aromatic intensity.

TASTE ANALYSIS NOTES