

ELEVEN DESSERT WINE STYLES EVERYONE SHOULD TASTE



People generally like a glass of dessert wine after a meal or even as an aperitif. However, it can be said that dessert wines are not usually the most valued by oenophiles in everyday life. So, they admit to liking it, but most are reluctant to buy a bottle for their own pleasure.

The difficulty for many would be the degree of sweetness or even the highest alcohol in some styles, such as Port, which would prevent people from enjoying a full bottle on their own without tasting or over-drinking themselves. However, dessert wine lovers know that this kind of excuse is not true, as great dessert wines are never tiring.

In great dessert wines the sweetness is usually beautifully balanced by acidity and even when there is a higher alcohol content it is also balanced and makes tasting always pleasurable.

On the other hand, when thinking of a good sweet wine, one should not only be led by the idea of weight and intensity and that alone make any drink rather monotonous, but of subtlety, depth and something whose most assertive description is usually ethereal.

Here is a short list of 10 dessert wine styles that every wine maker should try and the harvests do not necessarily have to be the same as the suggested labels. Cheers!

Tokaji Aszú

Tokaj-Hegyalja is a region of northeastern Hungary surrounded by the Carpathian Mountains on the banks of the Tisza and Bodrog rivers. In the region one of the most celebrated sweet wines of the planet is produced and considered like the king of the wines. According to

legend in 1650, the Ottoman Empire was advancing on Hungarian lands and cleric Máté Sepsi Laczkó in charge of viticulture in the region determined that the harvest be postponed.

The delayed harvest allowed the grapes to be attacked by the fungus *Botrytis cinerea* which causes noble rot and dehydrates the fruit and increases the concentration of natural sugar.

The taste and quality of Aszú depends mainly on the number of buckets filled with 25 kg dry berries each bucket, which are added to a 136-liter barrel of dry base wine.

Oremus Tokaji Aszú 5 Puttonyos 2006



The emblem on the bottle is a mark of the French crown given in 1710 by King Louis XIV, also known as King Sun, to his favorite wine. The wine is very elegant, shows vibrant acidity and balances all its strength and sweetness. The wine is clear and sophisticated and has an alcohol content of 12.5%.

Ice-wines

The wine is made from frozen grapes and is only produced in very cold regions that have specific characteristics suitable for freezing before the grapes rot on the vine. Thus, the grape sugars do not freeze and only water, which makes the must concentrated.

The Romans are believed to have harvested frozen grapes, but there are no reports of the wine. The first documents talking about Ice-wines, or rather Eiswein, are from the early nineteenth century in Germany.

However, there are reports of very few ice-wines vintages in that century. In addition to the Germans, Austrians also often produce ice wine, but it is in Canada where the first ice-wines made in 1978 is where the production really stands out, especially in the Niagara province region.

The most well-frozen grapes are Riesling and Vidal. Natural Ice-wines require a severe temperature and by law at least -8°C in Canada and -7°C in Germany.

Temperatures need to occur sometime after the grapes ripen, which means that the grapes can stay on the vine for several months after the normal harvest and if the freezing is not fast enough the grapes can rot and if it is too severe no must can be extracted.

Nubdorfer Bischofskreuz Riesling Eiswein 2012



Rare sweet white wine made exclusively from frozen Riesling grapes and the meticulous process results in a nectar that shows a balance between acidity of 8.3 g/l and sweetness with 212 g/l of sugar and found only in the great sweet wines.

The wine is complex in the nose, with aromas of apples and oranges in jam followed by notes of lemongrass and peach. The wine is vibrant and dense, has a long and persistent finish, with citrus, mineral and honey notes and has an 8.5% alcohol content.

Banyuls

Banyuls wine is often called the French Port is a fortified wine from the region of Banyuls-sur-Mer a commune in southwestern France, near the Pyrenees and on the border with Spain usually goes unnoticed by many oenophiles. However, those who know the wine say that there is no better harmonization for chocolate and especially bitter, surpassing the Ports for this type of harmonization.

Banyuls wine is made from at least 50% Grenache grapes and one of the typical Roussillon grapes and is a wine made in the region since the 13th century thanks to Arnaud de Villeneuve, known for discovering the mutage process that is a method. similar to that used in Port Wines where fermentation is interrupted by the addition of alcohol to the wort while a high sugar content is present. Thus, the wine was nicknamed vin doux naturel.

Wines are often stored in large oak barrels or bottles called bonbonnes, which expose the wine to sunlight, allowing it to mature and is a technique for heating and oxidizing wine.

M. Chapoutier Banyuls 2014



M. Chapoutier, Languedoc-Roussillon is a sweet fortified red wine composed of 90% Grenache grapes and the remainder of other authorized varieties and partially aged in oak barrels between 16 and 20 months.

The wine has aromas of red and black fruits in jam accompanied by floral notes, dried fruits and sweet spices, which are confirmed in the mouth. The wine is unctuous and full bodied, has a good balance between acidity and sweetness, delicious texture and full and persistent finish, with hints of vanilla, cocoa and coconut and has an alcohol content of 17%.

Recioto della Valpolicella



Currently the great wine of Valpolicella is Amarone, but long before the first Amarones appeared in the early twentieth century the great wine of the region was Recioto della Valpolicella wine and supposedly the father of Amarone.

Recioto della Valpolicella wine is made from pacified grapes and the drying process is usually with grapes placed on reed racks on a special scaffold that supports them and lasts from 100 to 200 days after harvest.

The grapes used to make Recioto della Valpolicella wine come from the Corvina, Rondinella and Corvinone varieties, and only the most sparse, ripe grape vines are intended for wine production.

Grape must is only partially fermented to maintain a high degree of residual sugar and for Amarone fermentation is continued until the sugars are consumed.

The name Recioto della Valpolicella wine originates from *recie*, a word whose Latin meaning is cluster. However, one version says that at the time of the Roman Empire wine would have been called *Reticulum* and would have been appreciated by Emperor Augustus.

Recioto della Valpolicella Classico is a sweet red wine composed of Corvina, Corvinone, Rondinella, Molinara, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot grapes and other varieties that go through a long and careful natural process of dehydration, with subsequent ripening in oak.

The wine has complex aromas of red and black fruits in jam and floral, mineral and sweet spice notes.

The wine is structured and unctuous, has great mouth volume, strong acidity, fine tannins and a long and full finish, with touches of nuts and dark chocolate and has an alcohol content between 11% and 12%.

Jerez Pedro Ximénez



Jerez types range from extremely dry to intensely sweet. Jerez Pedro Ximénez wines are at the top of the sweet types.

Jerez wines are usually based on the Palomino grape, but Pedro Ximénez is also used. The theory of the variety's name is that a Spanish soldier named Pedro Ximenez, or a Catholic cardinal named Ximenès, would have brought the grape from Germany where it had arrived after coming from the Canary Islands to Malaga around the 17th century.

However, studies show that the grape probably originated in the Iberian Peninsula itself and to produce Jerez Pedro Ximénez after harvesting the grapes are exposed to the sun to dry out.

The concentration of sugars in wine is so high that the result is an almost black liquid with syrup texture.

On the other hand, the Pedro Ximénez grape produces other Jerez Pedro Ximénez and non-Jerez wines, but they have a similar style in the Montilla-Moriles region where most of its cultivation is in Spain.

Pedro Ximenez 20 Years Old

Pedro Ximenez 20 Years Old is a sweet fortified white wine made from Pedro Ximénez, aged V.O.S. certified. at least 20 years old in 600-liter barrels.

The wine impresses in its look and texture and looks more like a concentrated syrup. The aromas are complex and captivating from dried fig to special notes such as herbaceous and minerals. The wine on the palate is almost oily in both volume and concentration. Despite the extreme sweetness the wine is balanced, persistent and very long, with some freshness and minerality and has an alcohol content of 15.5%.

Auslese

The classification of wines from Germany is not very simple to understand, as it takes into account factors such as must weight. On the other hand, in order not to go into technical details and to appreciate an excellent sweet wine made with the Riesling variety one can opt for the Auslese classification.

The term means selection and would be superior to Spätlese which means late harvest. Thus, Auslese is a selection of specific curls usually attacked slightly by the noble rot. The classification would be below Beerenauslese which is berry selection and Trockenbeerenauslese which is dried berry selection, whose yields tend to be extremely limited.

Auslese wines, in turn, are a bit more common and Austria also has a similar classification, with similar requirements and excellent Ausleses. The best wines of this classification, both German and Austrian, tend to have a delicate sweetness combined with a sharp acidity that makes it light and almost ethereal, and Auslese can be found in dry versions, but they are becoming less common and tend to be added to the wine. term trocken.



**Heymann Löwenstein Winnigen Röttgen
Riesling Aulse 2007**

Heymann Löwenstein Winingen Röttgen Riesling Aulese 2005 is a sweet, low-yielding white wine made exclusively from Riesling grapes from ancient vineyards and located on pure schist soil in the Lower Mosel.

The wine has complex aromas of citrus fruits, mineral, floral notes and hints of honey. On the palate, it is unctuous, fruity and perfectly balanced between sugar and acidity. At the end it is very long and complex and has an alcohol content of 8%.

Sauternes

When commenting on Sauternes de Sauternes wines, one cannot fail to mention the Château d'Yquem, as it is the great reference of the Bordeaux region in France and the dream of consuming thousands of oenophiles.

However, in the region there is not only D'Yquem, but a great diversity of producers who create unparalleled sweet white wines.

The wines are made with the Sémillon, Muscadelle and Sauvignon Blanc varieties and the local climate favors the emergence of *Botrytis cinerea* fungus or the noble rot as occurs in Tokaji when the grapes are at the end of the ripening period. Although frequent, there are years when the fungus has not developed and producers tend to make dry white wines, but with a generic Bordeaux denomination. On the other hand, when conditions are favorable, Sauternes wines are unforgettable with their reflexes. golden, its subtle sweetness, its tasty acidity and giving it a unique balance and for this reason the main wine of the region would have been called bottled light.



Château D'Yquem 2005

Château D'Yquem is a sweet white wine made up of 80% Sauvignon Blanc and 20% Sémillon grapes, struck by noble rot, with fermentation and aging of 42 months in new French oak barrels. The wine impresses with its exuberance and aromatic complexity.

The wine has citrus aroms in jam accompanied by floral notes, quince, sweet spices and beeswax, as well as classic touches

of *Botrytis cinerea*. The wine has a rich, greasy and creamy mouth, with a great balance between acidity, sweetness and fruit. The wine has a long, full and deep finish and with mineral touches. Wine is a teenager beginning to show all its virtues and has an alcohol content of 12.5%.

Moscato d'Asti

When tasting Moscato d'Asti wine, it is difficult not to appreciate the delicate aromas, the slight sweetness and the delicious acidity of this Piedmontese sparkling wine style.

Moscato d'Asti wines are made from Moscato Bianco, grown in areas around the city of Asti, as well as in the neighboring provinces of Alessandria and Cuneo in the Piedmont region of Italy.

The grapes are harvested and the must is cooled in stainless steel tanks at low temperatures and close to freezing. After a period, the wine is fermented in closed tanks to store carbon dioxide.

Fermentation is interrupted by cooling until the desired sweetness level is reached. The wine does not undergo a second fermentation and is kept in the tank until bottled.

It is believed that the first Moscato d'Asti were produced around 1870. The producers made this crimping style for their own consumption, since with low alcohol the wine could be drunk at lunch without disturbing the rest of the workday.



Prunotto Moscato D'Asti 2018

Prunotto Moscato D'Asti 2018 is a sweet white wine made exclusively from Moscato Bianco di Canelli without having to pass through wood. The wine is very typical, shows floral and fresh herbal notes involving the aromas of ripe citrus and white fruits. The wine is light and refreshing, has a good balance between acidity and sweetness and a captivating and pleasant finish with hints of lemon and honey and has an alcohol content of 5%.

Muscat of Setubal



If the Douro is known for Port Wine, certainly the most famous Portuguese wine in the world, one cannot forget that in Portugal there is another dessert wine with rich history the Moscatel de Setúbal.

The reputation of wine goes back to the days of Dom Dinis, king of Portugal in the 12th and 14th centuries. Later, Don Manuel would also have been a connoisseur. Like Port wine, wine would have been appreciated at the English court in the fourteenth century with orders from King Richard II.

Sometime later the French court of Louis XIV, King Sol, would also enjoy the Muscat of Setubal. The wines can only go to the market from 2 years of age and for the Superior category the minimum is five years and beyond the requirements mentioned the wine must have quality approved by a taster committee.

There are also indications 10 years, 20 years, 30 years and Over 40 years with the wines that originated the blend having at least this age.

Domingo Soares Franco Moscatel Roxo 20 years old

Domingo Soares Franco Moscatel Roxo 20 years old is a sweet fortified white wine made exclusively from Moscatel Roxo and is a meditation wine that shows the perfect balance between acidity and sweetness. The wine is citric and intense, has great volume and long, almost endless finish, with touches of honey, dates, iodine and nuts and has an alcohol content of 18%.

Tawny Port Wine

Port Wines are certainly the dessert wines best known to oenophiles and although all are fortified there is not just one style of Port Wine as there are the Ruby name given due to the reddish color and the brownish Tawny which are made with blends of cask or cask aged

wines. The wines have aromas that usually exalt dried fruits and the taste is very rich. Some are selected for longer aging on wooden kites.

The most celebrated Ports are Tawny wines with an age indication of 10 years, 20 years, 30 years and 40 years and the numbers indicate the average age of the wines and the harvest that are from a single vintage.

Gradual exposure to oxygen concentrates and intensifies aromas and flavors, resulting in more complex tones such as honey, spices, hazelnuts and vanilla.



Taylor's 40 Years Old Tawny Port

Taylor's 40 Years Old Tawny Port has more pronounced notes of dried fruit and figs and a very pleasant medicinal and herbaceous touch. The wine has a vibrant acidity, very balanced, full of volume, drawing attention for the texture gained in concentration, precision and elegance, with complex finish resembling molasses, citrus and almonds and has an alcohol content of 20%.

Awatere River by Louis Vavasour Late Harvest Gewurztraminer 2014



A sweet Marlborough gewurztraminer, showing plenty of botrytis influence, that would make a luxurious match for foie gras. It has a deep golden colour and an exotic nose of tropical fruits, Turkish delight, apricots and glaze ginger. The palate is very sweet and luscious, while counterpointing acidity is perfectly balanced, carrying the flavours through a dry, high-toned finish.

This example of late-harvest gewürztraminer is delightful with the musky, ginger and luscious lychee layers. It's very bright, vibrant, slightly buttery and has lovely concentration, purity and texture.