

RED WINES



Red wines bring with them a very important natural substance for longevity that tannins, polyphenols that are found in numerous types of plants and in the case of grapes in their stems and seeds causing a sensation of dryness in the mouth.

Regarding the structure of red wines, a set of characteristics are responsible for placing within a scale that starts in light and ends in full bodied and the classification is directly related to the combination of red wines with food.

Red wines are great for accompanying dishes from the simplest and lightest to the most exquisite and fatty, and especially when it comes to red meat.

The red wines are made with red grapes of the species *Vitis Vinifera* and draw attention for the bright and intense ruby or violaceous red color obtained from natural pigments found in the skin of the grapes. For extraction of the pigments the grape juice or must be in contact with the peel during the fermentation process of the drink and the contact time is what determines how intense the color of the wine will be.

Red wines are generally fermented until the yeasts consume all the natural sugar in the grapes, producing a dry wine of considerable alcohol content that can later be matured in oak barrels, balancing their tannins and acidity, gaining body, new aromas and flavors.

Red Grapes

Countless red grapes and all of the *Vitis Vinifera* species can be used in the production of fine and quality red wines and it is estimated that over 10,000 red and white *Vitis Vinifera* varieties are spread all over the world.

The most popular among professionals and oenophiles around the world may be Barbera, Cabernet Sauvignon, Carménère, Malbec, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Sangiovese Syrah or Shiraz, Tannat and Tempranillo among dozens.



Types of Red Wine

The body of the wines or their perceived weight, volume and structure in the taste is the result of a combination of natural elements present in the grapes and added to the numerous techniques of winemaking.

Tannin concentration, alcohol elevation, acidity levels, maturation in barrels, among other factors, contribute to the final structure of the drink.

Knowing the wines according to the body can guide the purchase of the one that pleases and that will best match certain dishes.

Red wines are subdivided into three basic types according to their body:

- Light-bodied red wines - Colder regions tend to make light-bodied red wines that are generally less tannic, more acidic and less alcoholic, often with intense aromas of red fruits and are great for accompany light dishes with a certain level of acidity.

- Medium-bodied red wines - Medium-bodied red wines are midway between the light and full-bodied wines, with less tannic loading and moderate acidity. Primary aromas also tend to be red fruits and combine well with medium-sized dishes and sauces.

- Full-bodied red wines - Warmer climates tend to produce full-bodied red wines that perfectly match greasy and intense dishes. Full-bodied red wines are of great structure in the palate and completely fill the mouth and often have primary aromas of black fruits and high levels of tannins and alcohol.

Famous Red Wines

- Bordeaux - The most prestigious wine region in France and one of the few in the world that produce numerous red wines of exceptional quality. In the region are the famous Châteaux Haut-Brion, Lafite Rothschild, Latour, Margaux, Pétrus and others who make great wines not only in quality but also in price.

- Chianti - Famous red wine produced in different areas of the Tuscan region in Italy and mostly used the Sangiovese grape. Chianti Classic is marked by the presence of Gallo Nero or Black Rooster on the bottle.

- Brunello di Montalcino - One of Italy's most famous red wines that like Chianti is made with the Sangiovese grape called Brunello in the Montalcino region, a commune of Tuscany. One of the characteristics of Brunellos is their aging potential and with some enduring from 30 to 50 years in bottle.

Red Wine Harmonization

The acidity and alcohol of reds are elements that greatly influence the combination with food, but it is the tannins that can often be aggressive, requiring interaction with another food to simply calm down. Care must be taken that tannins are not the great villains of harmonization, as too much salt in some foods leaves a feeling of bitterness and astringency.



For red meat the thinner and more delicate the flesh less red wine should be. For greasy cuts such as ribs best harmonize with full bodied tannic red wines such as Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon or Tannat.

Red wine tannins will make a good interaction with the protein and fat present in the meat allowing the perfect combination.



For white meat one must imagine the structure of the meat and how it was cooked in addition to the sauce used. The simpler the meat and gravy set the simpler and lighter the wine should be.

For fish and seafood, the tannins of red wines when interacting with the iodine present in some fish metallize the taste of the drink and leave a feeling of bitterness and astringency. Thus, one should choose the lighter and more acidic reds such as Pinot Noir, Beaujolais or other Gamay

grapes and preferably without passing through oak barrels for being fresh and fruity wines.



The various cheeses combine with different styles of reds. So, soft white cheeses like Brie, Camembert, Coulommiers and semi soft cheeses like Edam, Taleggio, Gouda are interesting with Pinot Noir, Beaujolais Nouveau and other Gamay grapes.

Hard cheeses such as Pecorino, Emmental and Gruyère can be combined with red wines from Tempranillo, Zinfandel or Merlot grapes.



For pizzas containing cheese and tomato sauce ask for high acidity reds that may be light or medium such as Chianti, Barbera or Sangiovese and those with chicken ask for medium acidity and moderate tannins.

Pepperoni pizzas can be interesting with richer reds like a Cabernet Sauvignon.



For the pasta it depends on the sauce and the simpler and acidic ones are better with light or medium red wines, with considerable acidity and moderate tannins. Bolognese lasagna or meatball pasta are great with Barbera and Merlot reds or Italian Sangiovese Chianti wines.

Wine Service and Ideal Temperature

When you have different styles of wine to serve, it is important to always offer the right order of service so that the characteristics of the previous wine never outweigh the next.

The simplest sequence would be sparkling and sparkling > white > rosé > red > fortified or dessert.

On the other hand, if different styles of reds are available, the following sequence is advisable: light > medium > full-bodied.

In addition to the order of service to enjoy all that red wines have to offer it is very important to serve at the correct temperature.



Red wines can be served at temperatures ranging from 15° to 18° C, but to be more specific one can divide the temperature according to the types of red wines. Thus, 15° to 16° C for young light or medium red wines, 16° to 17° C for aged light or medium red wines and 17° to 18° C for full-bodied red wines.

When suitable glasses are recommended to use glasses that are larger than white wines for two basic reasons, red wine needs more space and surface to breathe and release all its aromas and allow the slight evaporation of alcohol.

The larger glass is also ideal for swirling the drink into the glass. Thus, two types of glasses are recommended for serving red wines, the Bordeaux and Bourgogne.



The larger and narrower Bordeaux glass is recommended for medium and full-bodied reds, high tannins such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Tannat, Merlot, among other grapes, and the closer edge prevents aromas from dispersing.

The larger bulge of Bourgogne glass allows greater contact of the drink with the air, facilitating the release of the aromas of more delicate wines such as Beaujolais, Pinot Noir, Gamay and others. The cup is designed for the drink to greatly exploit our sense of smell.

Save Time

The vast majority of red wines are made to be consumed young between the 3rd and 5th year of production to make the most of their characteristics. However, large red wines from Bordeaux, Brunello di Montalcino, Rioja among others can easily survive for 10, 30, 50 or more years and depend on the concentration, acidity, tannins and how they were vinified among other factors.

Duration After Open

The day after the bottle is opened it is inevitable that any wine will lose its original characteristics due to contact with air, but it is still possible to enjoy for a few days as long as you take the necessary precautions.

The leftover red wine can be refrigerated for up to three days, but it depends on the style. A red wine the more tannins and acidity the longer it tends to last.

When keeping the wine open in the refrigerator, the following precautions should be taken to preserve what is left of the drink, such as keeping the bottle closed, with its own stopper or special lids, in order to reduce the contact between oxygen and the wine and to prevent the present smells. in the refrigerator impregnate in the drink.

Ideally store in places without large vibrations and when storing in the refrigerator is better not to put in the door, because the daily movement will always keep it agitated and deteriorate faster. Always keep upright, as leaving the bottle flat will make a larger surface of the drink come in direct contact with the air inside the bottle.

Red Wine Expectation

Fine and quality red wines, especially the younger ones, are clear, bright and without suspended particles. Blurred, opaque red wines with some solid component may indicate a defect in the drink and except those that do not go through the filtering process, bringing some particles that should be removed through the process of decanting the drink.

The vast majority of reds produced in the world should be consumed within the 3rd or 5th year of production, because after this period most of them begin to reduce their aromas, freshness and acidity becoming alcoholic and uninteresting wines. Thus, ensure that red wine is still in its full state of consumption before purchasing.