

How to Taste Wine

How to Taste Wines

So, your boss has invited you to a wine tasting party and you're scared stiff, eh? Seems that the only wine you ever drink comes in disposable containers from your grocer's beer cooler and you have no idea how to act with "real" wine drinkers. Relax, this article will have you looking like a pro in no time at all.

Step 1 Enjoy the View

Pick up the glass, hold it up eye-level and far enough away from your face so that it doesn't look like you're trying to suck it up with your eyelids. Act like you're studying the color. Wines come in a variety of beautiful hues and a good wine taster takes a moment to appreciate them.

By the way, if it's a chilled wine then pick the glass up by the stem. This avoids transferring heat from your hands to the wine. If it's a wine that's served at room temperature then pick the glass up by its bowl and cradle it in the cupped palm of your hand.

Step 2 Enjoy the Bouquet (that means smell the wine)

Give the wine glass a bit of a swirl by rotating your wrist. Practice this at home so you don't end up sloshing the wine all over your clothes and moving your wrist like a washing machine agitator. The trick here is moving your wrist slightly to the left and the right (or the right and the left) while keeping your arm still. Look at the wine while you are doing this. After a few moments the movement will bring the wine's aroma to the top of the glass.

Move your glass to your nose and not your nose to your glass. Position your nose slightly over the edge of the glass and take a deep sniff. Pause a few moments and do it again. Make some appropriate "mmmm, delightful and fruity" comment if you want. Of course, if it isn't fruity then use some other word. "Robust" is always a good one. Move the glass away from your nose when you are through.

If you have a bad cold and a runny nose, stay home!

Step 3 Taste the Wine

Now it's time to do what you really came for! But don't get carried away. This is not the time to call a toast and slug down a shot of wine. No, you are here to TASTE the wine not suck it down like a drunken college student.

Take a small sip, close your mouth (important) and roll the wine around on your tongue for a few seconds. Then exhale slowly through your nose as you swallow the wine. You really should practice this at home as well because having wine shoot out your nose, all over your host's fine white linen, is a good way to get uninvited from future parties!

Good news! You can take a second sip! This time you should swish the wine around in the mouth (mouth closed please) but not with the same vigor that you use with a bottle of mouthwash. Just a gentle swish will do. Swallow gently. You're through with that glass and can move on to the next while you murmur words like "delightful".

You will usually find plates of sherbet or cheese in between each wine course. These are known as "palette cleansers" and are to be used to clean the taste of the last wine out of your mouth before you move on to the next glass. Nibble. Don't chow down!

There you go! That's all there is to it. Now you just need to find something to wear that doesn't have a picture of a rock group on the front and tour dates on the back and you're ready to party!