

HOW TO TASTE WINE

Presented by
Presque Isle Wine Cellars
Kris Kane (Winemaker)
www.piwine.com

Overview

- Discuss why and how to taste wine
 - Look
 - Smell
 - Taste
- Go over a tasting wheel
- Look, Smell, Taste, and discuss a few wines

Tasting wine

- When it comes to tasting wine consider wine in three stages
 - Look at the wine
 - Smell the wine
 - Finally taste the wine
- After tasting it is nice to have a notebook to record your thoughts about the wine

How to Look

- Take lighting and background into consideration
- Begin by not pouring the glass to full
- Hold the glass at the base and tip away from you at a 45 degree angle
- Look down on it
- Now what are we looking for?

What we are looking for

- White wines color not as important but can tell us some things
 - First look to see if wine is clean and bright
 - Make sure there is no haze or cloudiness
 - Throws out red flag possible flaw (contamination)
 - Make sure there are no crystals (tartrates), which are harmless but not aesthetically pleasing
 - In a still wine make sure there are no bubbles which could be signs of a refermentation
 - Some young whites are purposely given a small amount of CO₂ for some more zip

Look Continued

- If deep gold yellow gives idea of possible sweet wine affected by botrytis where color and taste is concentrated (ice wines)
- If clear and pale, gives idea of young cool fermented white (German Rieslings)
- If sunny yellow sign of warmer climate white (Australian Chardonnay)
- If brownish tinges- things not looking good
 - Typical sign of oxidation (sherry like taste)

Look

- Red Wines - Color more important than in white wines (can tell us more)
- Color can give insight into
 - Age
 - Quality
 - Provenance
- Nice to have a white background to compare against
- Tilt glass at 45° and look at the rim

Look (Red Wine)

- Red wines gradually shed their color with age
Deep purple red → ruby → brick-red → over the hill tawny color
- The more mature the wine, the paler and browner it will be at the rim
- Color can also shed light into the amount of tannins and if it was oak aged

Swirl

- Swirling should be practiced
- Is a transition step between look and smell
- Swirling the wine
 - Done mainly to release the volatile compounds (smells/aromas)
 - Also done to look at the “legs”
 - Legs give us a sense of alcohol and residual sugar
 - The more viscous = more legs = more alcohol and more sugar

Smell

- After swirling put your nose down into the glass and sniff. (cleansing sniff)
- Swirl a second time and put your nose in further and take a deeper sniff.
- Now interpret and use your senses
- You are now smelling volatiles which might remind you of, black currents, peaches, licorice, vanilla, lemongrass, flowers, etc.....

Aroma Wheel

The Theory and Practice of Sensory Evaluation

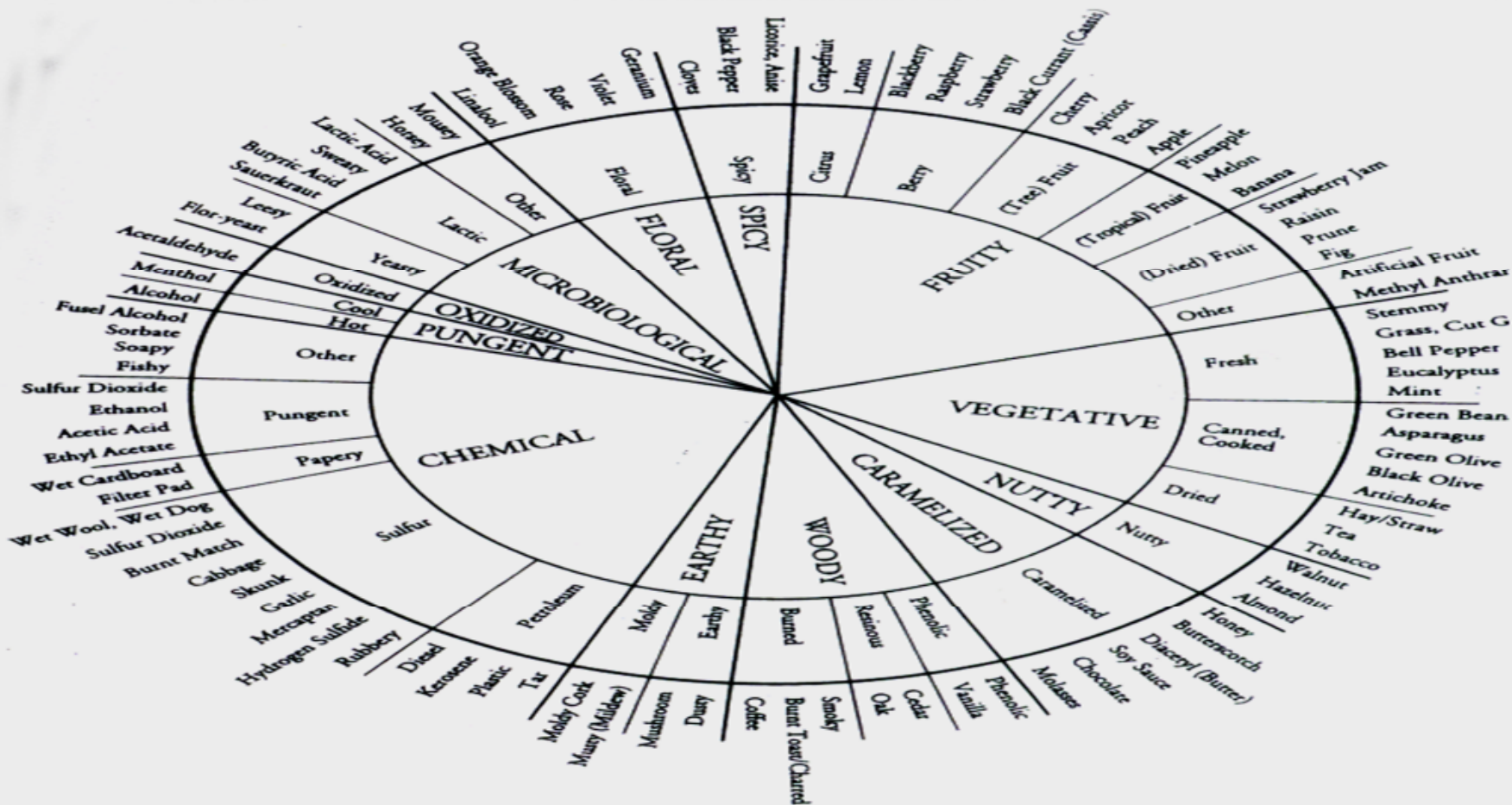


Figure 2.5 The Wine Aroma Wheel

Noble, A. C., R. A. Arnold, J. Buchenreiter, E. J. Leach, J. O. Schmidt, and P. M. Stern. Modification of a standardized system of wine aroma terminology. American Journal of Enology and Viticulture 38(2):143-146. 1987. © 1987 American Society for Enology and Viticulture.

Smell

- Aromas should be pleasant and attractive
- If the aroma is an off aroma but not positively bad think of it as a unique feature because there could be more to this wine

Smells

- As for positively bad smells there are only a few you need to know
 - Musty, Dank, moldy smell = corked wine
 - Vinegar
 - Oxidized (nutty/ sherry)
 - H₂S = rotten eggs, burnt matches, burnt rubber
- No smell at all (occurs in young wines referred to as the dumb phase)

Finally Taste!!

- Take a generous sip but not to much where you are forced to swallow
- Now roll the wine around in your mouth so that it hits every taste bud.
- Now aerate (slurp) only do this in private or at the right time
- Roll wine around again and finally spit or swallow depending on the situation
- Now count how long the aftertaste lingers on your palette (finish)

Taste

- What are we evaluating when we are tasting
 - Balance (any rough edges or something that doesn't mesh)
 - Length of flavor
 - The tastes do they match the aromas we were smelling
 - The overall sensations given to our palate

Taste

- Where do we taste
 - Front of tongue perceives the sugar
 - Sides are alert to acid
 - Back of tongue picks up the bitterness (tannins)

Conclusion

- Overall weight of the wine and memorable factor
 - Reflect on the visual, and sensory evaluation to conclude if this is a pleasant wine that should be tasted again and again.

Information

- Kris Kane - Winemaker
Presque Isle Wine Cellars
814-347-0055(office)
814-725-1314