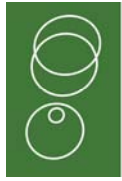


To provide you with an *aide-memoir* when you are tasting wine, we have put together this set of criteria to help you remember what to look, smell and taste for. Your ability to understand and enjoy wine will be enhanced if you follow at least some of the steps below while you're drinking wine. Make notes if you can and then you'll build up a base of information on what types of wine you like and don't like and why.

Do remember however, that if you like a wine, it's a good wine, no matter what "experts" and the books tell you so don't be afraid to drink whatever you like best.

Sense	Evaluation	Key Observations
<p>Appearance</p>	<p><i>Colour (or Hue)</i> Colour should be appropriate for style and age of wine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reds will range from purple through to mahogany or possibly amber • Whites will range from water-white through to yellowy-brown • Rosé will range from pink to orange <p><i>Colour Intensity</i> Relative depth of colour can give an indication to the quality of the wine, but this must be comparative and is less of an indicator for white wines than it is for reds.</p> <p><i>Clarity</i> The wine should be clear and bright, but don't confuse this with the presence of sediment, cork or tartaric acid crystals in the wine. None of these indicate a faulty wine.</p> <p><i>Core vs Rim</i> Can be an indicator of the age of the wine – the size and colour of the rim will show signs of ageing before the core.</p> <p><i>"Legs" or "Tears"</i> Indicates viscosity in the wine, which could indicate sugar (i.e. a sweet wine) or higher alcohol, or both.</p>	<p>As a wine ages, it tends to move through the range, but the colour will also be influenced by the grape variety and vinification methods</p> <p>A more intense (comparative) colour can indicate a higher quality wine.</p> <p>Is the wine clear and bright?</p> <p>What is the size and colour of the rim relative to the core?</p> <p>Presence of "legs"</p>
<p>Nose</p>	<p><i>Cleanliness</i> Does the wine smell "off"? Musty, cooked cabbage, vinegar, sulphurous smells are all likely to indicate faulty wines.</p> <p><i>Age and maturity</i> Young wines tend to have a pronounced and raw nose, showing primary fruit aromas As the wine ages, the bouquet becomes more complex and "integrated" taking on secondary aromas such as liquorice, coffee, leather, nuts, butter, etc.</p> <p><i>Intensity</i> Does the smell of the wine jump out of the glass or do you have to search for it? Generally, higher quality wines have a more intense nose. Very high quality wines can sometimes have a "closed" nose in their youth, which can be confusing.</p>	<p>Does the wine have a clean nose?</p> <p>Are primary or secondary aromas predominant? What are the aromas?</p> <p>Does the wine have a light, medium or pronounced aroma?</p>



Sense	Evaluation	Key Observations
<p>Palate</p>	<p><i>Acidity</i> Wine needs acidity to balance out the fruit (and tannins in red wine) and to keep it refreshing. Acidity makes your mouth water and you should be able to detect this. Is it balanced with the fruit or overly tart?</p> <p><i>Body and alcohol</i> Body in a wine is difficult to describe, but it refers to the weight of wine in the mouth and how full it feels. This is also closely related to the alcohol content of the wine, which will result in a warming sensation in the mouth</p> <p><i>Tannins</i> Mainly found in red wines, tannin provides structure to wine and certainly is one of the elements of a wine designed for ageing. Can be disagreeable in young or poorly made wines.</p> <p><i>Flavour</i> What does the wine taste like? Is it like the nose or different. Again, intensity of flavour is key to determining the quality of the wine.</p> <p><i>Balance</i> Ultimately this is key to the indication of a wine's quality. Are all the aspects of the wine in balance with the others? High acidity and tannin are acceptable in wine, if they are balanced by intense fruit – try Barolo as an example. If the wine is out of balance, it will taste thin or overly alcoholic. The assessment of balance is relative.</p> <p><i>Length</i> How long does the taste of the wine linger in the mouth after swallowing. Presuming it is a pleasant taste, this again is a good indicator of the quality of the wine. The longer the better – some tasters use a stopwatch to measure the length of a wine.</p>	<p>Is the wine low, medium or high in acid?</p> <p>Is the wine light, medium or full bodied? Is the wine high, medium or low in alcohol?</p> <p>Does the wine have a high, medium or low level of tannin?</p> <p>What flavours does the wine have? Does it have a pleasant flavour?</p> <p>Are all the components of the wine in balance?</p> <p>Does the wine have a short, medium or long length?</p>