

21 DAYS TO WINE: DAY 2

Learn How to Smell Wine

WINE: Gaspard Sauvignon Blanc Touraine Sauvignon 2017

SCENTS: Citrus, specifically grapefruit



21 DAYS TO
WINE

AROMAS

The aromas, or scent notes, in a glass of wine can give you all kinds of information beyond just the flavor. Believe it or not, you can tell everything from the grape variety, to the country, to where the grapes were grown and harvested - on a mountain top or by the sea - and even how old the wine is. Some people can even identify the winery that made it and the year it was bottled.

TRY THIS

Think of your favorite food. Something you've been eating your whole life. Can you imagine the smell and taste of it? Is your mouth watering? Whatever you imagined eating likely brings you great joy or at least comfort and familiarity.

SCENT = MEMORY

Our sense of smell is our most primitive sense. Unlike hearing, sight and touch, scent molecules travel directly to the Limbic System of the brain, where memory is stored and emotional responses are triggered. It's also where our fight or flight impulse come from.

HOW DOES OUR SENSE OF SMELL WORK?

Scientists are still at war over the exact neural mechanisms of the sense of smell. They agree on delivery system. Volatile aromatic compounds react with the air and float up our noses as well as the back of our throats where they are received by scent receptors.

At that point, how the limbic system actually reads the scents is still being determined. Either the shape of each molecule or the vibration within each molecule, triggers an instant memory or association that we interpret as a smell.

THE PLEASURE OF SCENT

Wine connoisseurs love to talk about what they smell in a glass of wine. It's part of the pleasure, unraveling an

olfactory web of different smells, and finding things we recognize and things we love. It's actually the same for perfume lovers. Certain fragrances, whether or not we realize it remind of someone or something.

BUILDING SCENT VOCABULARY

None of us was born with the ability to do this INSTANTLY. I have been training my nose PURPOSEFULLY since 2006. At **Associazione Italiana Sommelier**, where I studied, I've started every class by smelling something. Our homework was to smell more things during the week.

We only recognize aromas in wine when we know what those things smell like in the real world. Before you can learn to smell wine, you have to learn how to smell in general.

STEP 1

RELEASE THE SCENT

In the case of the grapefruit, other types of citrus and most fruit (including grapes) the aromatic molecules are concentrated in the skins. Slice into it or squeeze it.

Not everything with a smell has a skin. Sometimes you have to heat it up. Scent molecules become volatile aromatic compounds when their protein binds break and they are released into the atmosphere. Take a bouquet of flowers for example. As the buds mature and open, they smell much stronger. Florists keep them in the refrigerator to prolong the process. Flowers bloom when the temperatures rise.

Cold temperatures preserve protein binds, so sometimes all it takes is to rub a stone between your hands to understand what stony minerality smells like.

STEP 2

TAKE SHORT, STRONG SNIFFS

Send little blasts of scent molecules up into your brain. This may seem strange, but it's much more effective. Our sense of smell works instantly and intuitively. It also adjusts to scent, which is why you can get used to terrible smells if you encounter them regularly.

STEP 3

MAKE A MEMORY AN ASSOCIATION

Chances are you already have a memory associated with citrus. I can think of both my dad and my grandfather in the morning with a half grapefruit (and that little serrated spoon), dry toast and National Public Radio. What about you?

STEP 4

DON'T STOP UNTIL YOU'VE SMELLED EVERYTHING!

You can practice smelling everywhere, starting with your house. After that take your nose and your emotional brain out into the world. You don't need to write anything down but you do have to focus on the association.

Sauvignon Blanc is a great place to start distinguishing notes of wine. Depending on where it comes from it can be huge and bursting with tropical fruit notes, or cooler and more mineral and grassy.

NOTES OF SAUVIGNON BLANC

<i>Lemon</i>	<i>Lemongrass</i>
<i>Lime</i>	<i>Grass</i>
<i>Grapefruit</i>	<i>Gravel</i>
<i>Gooseberry</i>	<i>Bell Pepper</i>
<i>White Peach</i>	<i>Basil</i>
<i>Kiwi</i>	<i>Pineapple</i>
<i>Starfruit</i>	<i>Green Apple</i>

SAUVIGNON BLANC

PRONUNCIATION: Too-Rain / So-Veen-Yawn - Blahnk

WINERY: The winery is located in the Touraine Appellation of the Central part of the Loire Valley in France.

GRAPES: 100% Sauvignon Blanc
Cold-fermented for a month (to preserve aromas).
Lightly filtered with minimum Sulphur.



DAY 3 of this course is all about the colors of white wine. Don't miss it!



TASTING NOTES

LOOK: Pale, green-tinted yellow

SMELL: Grapefruit, citrus, lemon verbena, stony mineral notes

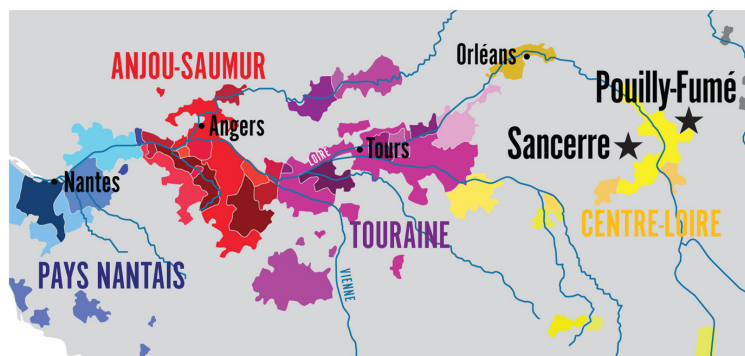
TASTE: Bright and crisp, dry, with a medium mineral finish

DISCUSS

This is a young, fresh and vibrant wine and great to drink now. Try it with roasted salmon. The saltiness and fattiness is a great balance for the crisp acidity and fruity profile of this wine.

CENTRAL LOIRE VALLEY

The entirety of the Loire Valley produces beautiful red, white, and rosé from a very diverse selection of grapes. Here are some of the main appellations, or wine growing and producing regions.



CENTRAL LOIRE VALLEY APPELLATIONS

Sancerre (and across the Loire River) Pouilly-Fumé
Extremely famous for steely, bone dry Sauvignon Blancs with a distinctive flinty, mineral note.

Anjou
Look for very dry, Chenin Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc, Light and peppery Cabernet Franc and juicy Gamay (the Beaujolais grape).

Saumur
Chenin Blanc, Cabernet Franc and Champagne-style sparkling wines (Crémant).

Touraine-Vouvray
Touraine produced dry, steely, and aromatic white wines made from Chenin Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc and Arbois, as well as dry, tannic, crisp red wines made from Cabernet Franc, Gamay, and Chinon. Vouvray is usually made with Chenin Blanc and comes in dry, as well as super aromatic semi-sweet, sweet and sparkling versions.

Muscadet
Muscadet Appellation is most famous for delicately sparkling wines, mineral-rich dry white wine made from Melon de Bourgogne grape (Muscadet).

my notes

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Cheers!
ANNIE