

21 DAYS TO WINE: DAY 7

Tasting Aromatic Wine

WINE: Michele Chiarlo Nivole Moscato d'Asti 2016

SCENTS: Apricots, Dried apricots, Sage, Pink rose petals

SUPPLIES: A white napkin or piece of white paper (to observe)



21 DAYS TO WINE

REVIEW

Color and consistency and INTENSITY of the color can tell you a lot about the grapes and the winemaking techniques that were used. After sight comes smell.

USE YOUR NOSE

In the first episode, I explained that the best way to smell is to really get in there and take short strong sniffs. Give your glass as gentle swirl to release those aromatic compounds and let them in.

Remember, you don't need a lot of wine in your glass. In fact, if you pour too much you'll actually smell less. Aromatic compounds must react with oxygen in order to reach your nose.

HOW DO YOU TALK ABOUT WHAT YOU SMELL?

In the same way we talk about intensity of color in terms of opaqueness, we apply a similar measurement to the aromatic qualities of wine. Are the aromas, whatever they are, delicate and barely perceptible?

Or are they in your face and super powerful? Or somewhere in between?

WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU SMELL?

This comes with practice, it's the only way to smell more and unlock and understand your wine.

If you've got a pen and paper, start making a list of scent notes. If you smell wine, great! The word for that is "Vinous." VINE- us.

It's a predominant scent note in younger wines, and it's present to some degree in every wine.

WHAT ELSE?

Some grape varieties produce much more powerful and distinctive aromas than others. If you've already got an

idea by looking at a deep ruby red color, and then you smell bell peppers, there is a very good chance there is Cabernet Sauvignon or Cabernet Franc in there.

And if you know you like Cabernet, now you can begin to describe it and discover more aromas in the ones you like. Better yet, once you start to isolate the aromas you like best, you can ask for wines with a similar profile and expand your repertoire.

AROMATIC IS AN ADJECTIVE, BUT ALSO A DISTINCT FAMILY OF GRAPE VARIETIES.

There are three main categories of grapes: Aromatic, semi-aromatic, and neutral.

Aromatic Grapes are instantly recognizable for very specific characteristics. Examples include:

- *Moscato*
- *Malvasia*
- *Gwürtztraminer*

If you eat one of these grapes they actually taste like the wines smell. They have powerful white floral aromas and distinctive fruity notes and almost waxy/glossy quality to the aromas.

Semi-Aromatic grape varieties are still very distinctive but to a lesser degree. A few examples include:

- **WHITE:** *Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling, and Chardonnay*
- **RED:** *Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Merlot*

These grape varieties always produce recognizable aromas, even if it's subtle. If you know it, you'll find it. The more intense the aromas, the easier it will be.

Neutral Grape Varieties produce wines that are more expressive of their surrounding land and climate and the winemaking process, like barrel aging. You can eventually learn to recognize them too, if you drink enough of them. bet some of you could recognize the nose of Pinot Grigio or Malbec with your eyes closed, and you didn't even know it.

MOSCATO

PRONUNCIATION: **Mo's-Scott-Oh**

Moscato or Muscat, is actually a family of aromatic grape varieties, both white and black-skinned (red), though the white skinned grapes are much better known. The name likely derives from the Latin, musculum (musk) for the grapes' intense and distinct aroma. The variety arrived with from ancient Egypt and Persia, via the Greeks and spread throughout Italy and the Mediterranean, and later the world at large.

Moscato Bianco, or White Moscato is the variety used for Moscato d'Asti as well as Spumante d'Asti in the Northern Italian region of Piemonte (Piedmont).

Moscato Giallo (yellow) and Moscato Rosa (pink) and an avery dark-skinned version that is a cross between Moscato d'Alessandria and Alpine red variety Schiava.

Moscato d'Alessandria, also known as Zibbibo, is cultivated in Sicily for a famous dessert wine made from dried grapes, *Passito di Pantelleria*. *Passito* refers to *uva passa*, or "dried grapes."

Moscato is also a parent grape of popular Argentinian variety Torrontés.

Distinctive qualities include powerful aromas of pink rose, white flowers, and variations of peach, apricot, nectarine.

**MICHELE
CHIARLO NIVOLE
MOSCATO
D'ASTI
2016**

MOSCATO D'ASTI

Moscato D'Asti is a DOCG wine, *D'Origine Controllata e Garantita*. That requires producers follow rigorous standards of quality and traditional winemaking.

By Italian law, it may only be produced in the province of Asti, named for the hilltop town of the same name in the northwest Italian region of Piedmont.

It must be made from 100% Moscato Bianco grapes, specifically on hillside vineyards.

It is generally made in *frizzante* style and is naturally effervescent. Moscato is meant to be consumed very young, as it is very low in alcohol. Acidity and fresh fruit flavors subside over time.

WINE NOTES

WINERY

Michele Chiarlo was born to a family of farmers and generations of wine growers in Piedmont, in the hilly Langhe region which is often likened to Burgundy for the elegant and cru designated wines produced there. This wasn't always the case in the Langhe. For years Chiarlo struggled alongside several other winemakers to develop a market for high quality wines made from indigenous grape varieties, especially Nebbiolo, and is widely associated with bringing world recognition to Barolo and Barbaresco wines and putting Piedmont on the map.

The family remains dedicated to the other beloved local varieties as well, Moscato, Barbera, and Gavi that enabled him to live and continue to grow and experiment. He has applied his cru mentality to Barbera as well, and was part of a push for new DOCG recognition in Nizza (Asti) now recognized for particularly lush and distinctive wines. He and his son are passionate about their land and sustainable farming. Chiarlo wines are a genuine reflection of grape variety and terroir.

WINEMAKING

The grapes are pressed whole in controlled, cold temperatures to preserve aromas. The wine is fermented to 5° in a closed tank which results in a pleasant fizz. Microfiltered for clarity.



TASTING NOTES

LOOK: Brilliant pale gold color

SMELL: Intense and distinctive Moscato notes, opulent apricot and peach

TASTE: Fresh, bright and fruit forward on the palate with a shimmer of effervescence.
Balanced sweet, fruity finish.

DISCUSS

This wine should be served cold and young to fully appreciate it. The fruit and floral notes fade after the first year, so try to get a current vintage. Drink on its own after dinner or alongside delicate creamy cheeses.

Cheers!
ANNIE

my notes

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