

Keys to Understanding YOUR Personal Wine Preferences

There are so many aspects that play a part in determining what you like and it is not always just how a wine tastes.
 Use the guidelines and have fun exploring your personal preferences.

1. Your Personal Experiences and Memories

How you sip wine and how you interpret the experience you are having determines your wine values and personal preferences. For example, you are tasting wine in Italy at a 100 year old stone winery. You are standing next to wine aging in French oak barrels, all neatly stacked from floor to ceiling. The room is filled with aromas of fermenting grapes and when you step out onto the veranda you are amazed by the view of rolling hills covered with rows and rows of vineyards. You are breathing in the romance of it all! At that moment you love the wine you are tasting.

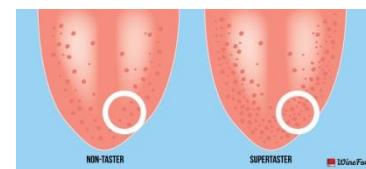
Back home in your kitchen you are preparing dinner and you open a bottle from the case you purchased on vacation. Standing in front of a sink full of dirty dishes, a pile of laundry in the background waiting to be folded and somehow the wine does not taste as you remember it. Why? Because your experiences affect your perception.

2. Your Personal Psychology

These are your hedonistic qualities. You will pay a lot for what you perceive as great characteristics in wine. Maybe you love the story of the winemaker, maybe you love the description of the wine, maybe you love the aromas and it triggered a pleasant memory for you. Maybe you love how it feels in your mouth, maybe it is full of a particular taste that you love. It all comes down to what is important to you, and when a wine meets those expectations, you will not hesitate to pay more for it. It is a proven fact, you get more pleasure from items that cost more if they also fill your expectations.

3. Your Personal Physiology

Some people have hundreds of taste buds on their tongue and others have thousands (supertasters). Look in the mirror and see what you have.



If you have thousands of taste buds you are generally more sensitive to tastes and do not prefer intense flavors but prefer mild and more balanced flavors. You may prefer sweeter white wines and more mild balanced light reds.

If you have fewer taste buds you are less sensitive to tastes and more tolerant of intense flavors. You may prefer stronger more tannic wines such as big bold reds and very dry whites.

4. Food Preferences

The chart on the following pages describes foods that have characteristics that are found in wine. With each food category select your preference, then follow that to the type of wine that is similar. This will reveal the types of wines that you may prefer based on your food preferences. This is meant as a guideline and there are no right or wrong answers. As your palate expands, so will your preferences for wines. The most important thing is to have fun exploring new and different wines to see what you like. And when you find one, by all means, enjoy it!

Your Personal Wine Preference Taste Evaluation Chart

Take a look at the foods you prefer to discover your own personal wine preferences.



Coffee: flavor is similar to tannin which gives a “cotton mouth” feel Tannin can be intense or smooth and adds depth dimension to wine. Where the flavors keeps on going.

Do you love coffee rich, dark, strong and black?

If yes, then

You most likely prefer intense stringent red wines such as Shiraz, Petite Syrah, Tempranillo and Zinfandel. These wines have some level of tannin and big bold flavors that linger on your palette.

Do you love coffee medium or light roast, with lots of cream and sugar or sweeteners and flavors?

If yes, then

You likely prefer sweeter wines such as Moscato or a Muscat. Rose and a Light California Pinot Noir might also be a favorite. These have little or no tannin and usually have lighter fruit flavors.



Chocolate:
Who can resist?

Do you love rich or bitter dark chocolate?

If yes, then

You might try Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec or Syrah. These wines have very little sweetness and richer, more intense flavors of fruit, spice or smoke. They are higher in tannin and give your mouth a drying feeling with flavors that linger.

Do you love sweet creamy milk chocolate or rich creamy white chocolate?

If yes, then

You may like wines that coat your mouth with flavor and texture and have a balance of tannins and acid. Where you have flavor and texture all over your mouth. Look for red blends. Labels will state Meritage or Red Blend.



Fruit: The acid level in fruit is similar to acid levels found in wines. So you might find out which wines you like, depending on which types of fruits you prefer.



Do you love the tartness and tanginess of lemons, limes and grapefruit?

If yes, then

You may prefer wines with more acid. You know your mouth starts to water when you take a sip. White wines such as a Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris and Chablis will match your palate well.

Do you love the smooth creaminess and mild flavor of a ripe banana?

If yes, then

You may prefer white wines with higher residual sugar like a Riesling, Gewurztraminer, or a late harvest wine where the grapes are left on the vines longer and are sweeter.

Mushrooms:
You either love them or you don't!



If yes, then

You most likely love the smell of dirt and earthy elements translating this to wine. Try old world style wines such as Tempranillo, Zinfandel, Chardonnay and Viognier. These all have earthy, musty characteristics such as oak, potting soil, barnyard and truffles .

If no, then

My husband Darius will give you a big High 5!
He does not like mushrooms at all!



Dessert:

The texture and mouth feel of a creamy dessert vs. the crisp fresh brightness of a fruity dessert is similar to mouth feel of white wines .



Grass: Nature, Earth, Herbaceous smells, bringing back memories of childhood



Do you love a fruit dessert at the end of a meal such as a tart or pie full of rich fruit flavors that is crisp and clean?

If yes, then

Select a fruity wine such as Chenin Blanc or an Ice Wine which is light, crisp and fruit forward, meaning the first thing you taste is bright fruit. It will be very refreshing any time of day!

Do you prefer a rich, creamy, indulging dessert such as Tiramisu?

If yes, then

An Oak aged buttery Chardonnay or a Viognier will have similar creamy mouth feel. The wines that appeal to you will have a "thicker" mouth feel.

Do you love the smell of fresh cut grass and herbs in the summer?

If yes, then

Then a herbaceous wine such as a Sauvignon Blanc is a perfect match. It sometimes even has a slight green color to it.