



Wine Tasting – Name that Red!

Goal: You will taste the five different red wines listed below. These wines have been selected because they are primarily indigenous grapes, meaning grown only in one country and somewhat off the radar of US consumers. Nonetheless, they are all unique, and may offer an affordable substitute to the better known red wines such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, and Merlot.

Read the brief descriptions below and after tasting each wine, see if you can match the wine with the description. Bear in mind the descriptions are for the variety in general, not the specific wine so they are “representative” of the flavors and characteristics of the wine and may or may not match the particular wine being tasted.

Write your name on each form below, cut or carefully tear, and place one vote at the base of each bottle.

Have fun and good luck!

Brian Gurnham

Chief Cork Officer

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Bonarda – This grape, little known in the US, was only recently surpassed by Malbec as the most widely planted grape variety in Argentina. Its parentage is confusing at best but it is generally agreed that it comes from Italy, probably the Bonarda Piemontese grape. Its popularity in Argentina is for very average bulk table wine. Recently vintners have begun to improve the quality of grape production and produce single variety still wines.

Bonarda wines can be lighter-bodied and fruity - cherry, wild strawberries and plum flavors, light tannins and moderate acidity. However ageing and fruit from older vines, the wine can be a deep red color, dense and concentrated. Representative flavors include plums, black cherries, fig and raisin. Tannins range from moderate to strong.

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Touriga Nacional – The signature grape of Portugal – think Sangiovese for Italy, Tempranillo for Spain, Malbec for Argentina. Perhaps best known as the major grape in Port, Touriga Nacional is increasingly being made into still wine, particularly in the Douro and Dao regions. Because the grape clusters and berries are small, the high skin to pulp ratio produces a wine that is deep in color and has intense aromas often compared to a Cabernet Sauvignon. Tannins are common although usually manageable. Representative flavors include

blue and black fruits – rich overly ripe scents of black berries, blueberries and yes, a hint of Port.

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Brunello – OK, truth be known it's a clone of, and for all intents and purposes – Sangiovese the most widely planted grape in Italy - best known as Chianti. This particular Sangiovese, Brunello di Montalcino is a red wine produced in the vineyards surrounding the town of Montalcino, about 70 miles south of Florence. Like many Sangiovese, the wine has flavors of bitter cherries and violets, can have a touch of tomato, and a tea like finish. Brunello, roughly translated as "small dark one" was

awarded the first Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita (DOCG) designation and today is one of Italy's best-known and most expensive wines

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Petit Verdot – One of the five traditional grape varieties allowed for blending in Bordeaux, Petit Verdot is a powerful tannin rich grape rarely bottled as a single variety. It is the power of the fruit, dark color and tannins of this grape that winemakers use in blending, and the grape is typically less than 10% of any blend. Originally from Bordeaux, Petit Verdot is having some success in California, Chile and even parts of Australia

and Bulgaria. Representative flavors include banana and violet. Tannins are medium along with the acid levels, which result in a wine rich in structure.

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Nero d'Avola ("Black of Avola") also called 'Calabrese' is the most important red wine grape in Sicily and is one of Italy's most important indigenous varieties. It is named after Avola in the far south of Sicily. Until the 1980s commercial use of Nero d'Avola was almost exclusively used to blend with and fortify weaker reds in the northern Italy and France. Nero d'Avola was frequently overly alcoholic with content reaching eighteen percent. New viticulture techniques aimed at reducing the potential alcohol while retaining the big fruit flavors have

resulted in still table wine from this variety gaining in popularity. This very dark ruby red wine's flavors cherry, blackberry, cassis and even dried fruit. Nero d'Avola is frequently compared to Syrah.

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