

'Expert' shares knowledge in appreciation of fine wine

By Lyle George

I am an expert on wine. I have just completed a three-session wine course and I must confess that enologically I am a full head and shoulders above most people when it comes to the selection and appreciation of wine.

To appreciate a wine, one should roll it around in the glass and smell the bouquet. This gives you clues about what the wine is like. Take a sip and let it contact your entire palate so you can fully appreciate the taste components and profile. Feel the wine in your mouth and then swallow and notice the aftertaste.

You are now starting down the road to wine appreciation. There are several lists which tell which wine goes with different foods. These are good guides, but you shouldn't let them dictate your personal taste. It is the bottom line in determining what kind of wine is right for you.

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Perhaps I sound a little arrogant. I happen to think that anybody who learns to say Boone's Farm Apple with a French accent deserves to be as arrogant as he can.

A person can start learning about wine simply by walking into a liquor store, buying a couple of bottles and then drinking them. This jump-off-the-pier-to-learn-to-swim approach will teach you about wine, but it has the potential of being unpleasant and may slow down the learning process.

After you have purchased a bottle of wine, the next thing you should do is see that it is stored properly until you are ready to consume it. The best way is to store it on its side in a vibration-free environment with a temperature between 53 and 56 degrees. Temperatures below 40 and above 75 will damage the wine. If you store wine upright or in a sunny window that has an air conditioner in it you will very likely find the taste to be disappointing. The wine remembers how it was handled.

To fully taste wines, serve them at 50 to 55 degrees. An exception to this would be the sparkling wines, which should be served at 40 degrees. Some wines say on the label to serve well-chilled or even over ice. The lower temperatures tend to mask disagreeable flavors that occur in some lower-quality wines.

Novices reveal themselves every time they serve champagne or sparkling wine in a wide topped New York style champagne glass. This style of glass allows the champagne to go flat almost immediately. It should be served in a tall thin champagne flute, which allows the wine to hold bubbles for much longer.

There are only two good reasons to reject a wine. If the wine is corked, that is an indication that something went wrong with the cork seal. The wine will smell like cork. If the wine has turned to vinegar that is another good reason to return a wine. If you just don't like the wine you should keep it and remember not to order that type again.

Reagan...

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He said he did not want to discuss possible options open to the United States, because, "Maybe there's something we're thinking of that the Iranians have not thought of."

If economic sanctions against Iran have a negative impact on American allies, "so be it," Reagan said, because U.S. allies have not been supportive of our responses to Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Reagan reiterated support for an Olympic boycott, but denounced any presidential order that Americans not go to Moscow.

"For the president to set the precedent that law-abiding Americans not be allowed to leave the country . . . and just revoke their passports . . . who's he going to do that to next?" Reagan asked.

Reagan repeated his plan to cut taxes to spur economic growth, but said he would not yet reveal his plans to phase in various tax cuts.

"Then, you wouldn't have anything to save for October, if you get the nomination."

Although he has won about 35 percent of the delegates needed for nomination at the Republican national convention in July," Reagan said he is "running scared." He leads his nearest challenger, George Bush, by about a 2-1 margin in the delegate race.

Reagan defeated Gerald Ford in the 1976 GOP presidential primary.

He left Nebraska today for Pennsylvania, where the nation's next major primary is scheduled for April 22.

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