



KES | 101

KOBRAND Wine & Spirits EDUCATIONAL SERIES

WINE 101

WHAT IS WINE? (10-15 Minutes)

Facilitator's Guide

PowerPoint Presentation

What is Wine? (Handout)

Varietal Pages (Handout)

What is Wine Quiz (Handout)



WHAT IS WINE

OVERVIEW:

A basic introduction to wine, its classifications and the most popular varieties.

HANDOUTS: ▶ What is Wine
▶ Varietal Pages

WHAT IS WINE? Wine is fermented fruit juice. Typically wine is made from grapes, but it can be made from peaches, plums or berries. Fermented apple juice is cider.

FUN FACTS:

- There are over 5,000 grape varieties grown all over the world
- One Barrel of Wine Contains:
 - 740 pounds of grapes
 - 59 gallons of wine
 - 24.6 cases of wine
 - 295 bottles of wine
 - 1,180 glasses of wine

Talk about how the same table grape that you eat can become wine through a natural process called fermentation. Discuss how complicated the details of wine can be and how our goal is to keep it SIMPLE. If you know the basics you'll be fine.

CLASSIFICATIONS OF WINE:

- Table
- Sparkling
- Fortified

Have them participate by giving examples of each category listed. Use examples from their wine list.

“SEMI-GENERIC” WINES

- Chablis
- Burgundy
- Port
- Champagne

Ask them what their grandmothers used to drink. Was it Chablis? Discuss the difference between the actual place name of a wine and the “generic” reference. (i.e. Chablis is a place in Burgundy where high quality Chardonnays are made versus jug “Chablis” which is a generic name for an inexpensive white wine).





WHAT IS WINE? Continued

According to The Wine Bible by Karen MacNeil:

- There are nearly 24,000 grape names
- It is believed that there are about 5,000 different grape varieties

Many grapes are the same variety but are called different names in various parts of the world (i.e. Syrah is called Shiraz in Australia; Pinot Grigio is called Ruländer in Germany).

- Only an estimated 150 varieties are planted in significant amounts for commercial use
- Nine grapes are considered “classic” (grapes grown in many areas of the world that produce excellent wine).

Whites: Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon

Reds: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir and Syrah

Though the Big Six can vary (including Riesling instead of Pinot Grigio or Syrah/Shiraz instead of Pinot Noir), we will use the following to demonstrate the BASICS needed to successfully sell wine in the U.S.

“BIG 6” GRAPES (3 WHITE/3 RED)

Discuss how knowledge of the “Big 6” grapes is such a great foundation. Discuss a bit about where each of these grapes originate or thrive and how the majority of all wine drunk today falls into these categories. Refer to the Varietal Pages handout which offers more detail on each grape.

PINOT GRIGIO (Light Bodied)

Characteristics: noticeable acidity, aromatic

- A light quaffing wine that quenches the thirst and refreshes the palate.
- Discuss the differences in the name (i.e. Pinot Grigio in Italy, Pinot Gris in France and Ruländer or Grauburgunder in Germany).

Key Growing Areas:

- Northeast Italy
- California
- Pinot Gris – Alsace/New Zealand/Oregon

SAUVIGNON BLANC (Medium Bodied)

Characteristics: aromatic, high in acid

- A white wine known for its intense, aromatic character and flavors (from distinctly herbal to grapey and melon-like).



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WHAT IS WINE? Continued

Key Growing Areas:

- France (Loire – Great Sauvignon Blancs of the world, Bordeaux)
- New Zealand
- Other areas: California, Austria, Australia, Chile, Italy, South Africa, Spain, Washington State

CHARDONNAY (Full Bodied)

Characteristics: naturally high in extract, high sugars when ripe, risks being low in acid

- A wine that is esteemed around the world for its richness, complexity and depth of flavor.
- Ranges in style from elegant and crisp to full and luscious.
- Extensively used in sparkling wine production.

Key Growing Areas:

- France (Burgundy – great Chardonnays of the world; Champagne)
- U.S. (California, Oregon, Washington State, New York, Texas, Virginia) and Australia
- Other growing areas: Italy, Chile, Argentina, Southern France, New Zealand, South Africa

PINOT NOIR (Light-Medium Bodied)

Characteristics: low to moderate grape tannins, good acidity, broad expansive aroma and bouquet

- One of the world's most noble grapes. Prized for rich, complex character and sumptuous texture, though it can range in style from fruity and light/medium body to rich, full and age-worthy.
- Widely used in making top quality sparkling wines and Champagnes.

Key Growing Areas:

- France – native to Burgundy and Champagne
- U.S. – Oregon, California – especially successful in Russian River Valley, Carneros and Santa Barbara
- New Zealand

MERLOT (Medium Bodied)

Characteristics: moderate tannin, high alcohol, low acid

- One of the world's greatest red wine varieties.
- Dry red wine prized for rich fruitiness and velvety texture.

Key Growing Areas:

- France – native to Bordeaux where it is traditionally blended with Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot and Malbec.



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WHAT IS WINE? Continued

Merlot prevails in the Bordeaux areas of Pomerol and St. Émilion where the soils are predominantly clay and limestone.

- Other growing areas: Italy, California, Bulgaria, Argentina, Chile, New Zealand, South Africa and Washington State.

CABERNET SAUVIGNON (Full Bodied)

Characteristics: high tannin, high acid, high pigments

- Considered by many to be the “king of red wines”.
- A dry, full-flavored wine with very distinctive character and remarkable aging potential.

Key Growing Areas:

- France – Bordeaux (home to some of the most renowned Cabernets and blends in the world)
- Other growing areas: California (particularly successful in Napa), Tuscany, Chile, Australia and Washington State.

From here, it would be a natural progression to flow into “How Wine is Made,” “The Big Six Tasting,” “Your Nose Knows” or the “Jelly Belly Experience” to further define characteristics of wine.

*“Nothing more excellent or valuable than wine
was ever granted by the gods to man.”*

—PLATO