

KES | 101



KOBRAND Wine & Spirits

EDUCATIONAL SERIES

TASTING/EVALUATION

BIG SIX TASTING – Exploring the Most Popular Varietals

Facilitator's Guide

Big Six Tasting Mat

Varietal Pages for the Big Six Varietals (Handout)

Wine Tasting Worksheet (Handout)

Aroma Tree (Handout)

Vino Lingo (Handout)



BIG SIX TASTING

OVERVIEW: Participants will taste and familiarize themselves with the “Big Six” Varietals, which are very common in the U.S. market. This exercise will help to create a comfort level in evaluating wines and using wine terminology to describe a wine. Participants will also become aware of common mistakes made when describing wines. Two additional optional wines are added in order to demonstrate the difference between “sweet” tastes versus “fruit” flavors and to show “old world” styles versus “new world” styles.

TOOLS/PREPARATION:

For each participant provide the following:

- “Big Six” tasting mat (consisting of eight wine spots)
- Plain, unsalted crackers (Carr’s Table Water crackers work well)
- Glass of water for drinking and refreshing palate
- Plastic or paper cup for spitting
- Napkin
- Eight wine glasses
- Pitcher of water for rinsing glasses (can be shared by several participants)
- Dump bucket (can be shared by several participants)
- 2 bottles of each sample wine (have back up in case of corked wine)

Chill the whites

Pre-pour 1 – 2 oz. of each wine (Drop-stop pourers are helpful)

Note: If 8 wine glasses are not available, then use 5 and have the participants dump their wines after the white wines and then pour the reds.

RECOMMENDED WINES:

- Pighin Pinot Grigio
- Benziger Sauvignon Blanc
- Caposaldo Moscato
- Louis Jadot Macon-Villages
- St. Francis Chardonnay (or Sequoia Grove)
- Domaine Carneros Pinot Noir (or The Seeker)
- St. Francis Merlot
- Sequoia Grove Cabernet Sauvignon

HANDOUTS:

- Aroma Tree
- Vino Lingo
- Varietal Pages for Big Six Wines
- Wine Tasting Worksheet



BIG SIX TASTING Continued

THE TASTING

PIGHIN PINOT GRIGIO

Sight: Pale straw

Smell: Floral and mineral nuances, white fruits

Taste: Clean, silky texture with crisp acidity, light bodied, peachy and apple fruit flavors, finishes with lingering floral and mineral nuances

Notes about this wine:

- 100% Pinot Grigio
- Estate grown and bottled
- Grave del Friuli offers gravelly, mineral rich soils that are well suited to producing high quality Pinot Grigio.

BENZIGER SAUVIGNON BLANC

Sight: Pale yellow

Sight: Sweet citrus, cut grass, apple and a hint of spicy oak

Sight: Flavors of apple, apricot, citrus and subtle grassiness; crisp structure and long finish

Notes about this wine:

- 100% Sauvignon Blanc
- Family owned and operated winery – the Benzigers are very passionate
- Grapes are picked from specific lots in the vineyard and are vinified individually and blended just prior to bottling to ensure the best flavor

Demonstrate the Difference Between “Sweet ” Tastes Versus “Fruit Flavors”

Ask the group if the Sauvignon Blanc wine is sweet or dry, then taste Caposaldo Moscato.

- Explain that it is common for people to confuse “fruity” and “sweet”. Explain that sweet is one of the 4 basic tastes and is evident if there is residual sugar left in the wine. Dry wines may seem sweet because they have prevalent fruit flavors, but if they understand the difference, they can avoid this mistake.
- More importantly, if they are in the service industry, they should understand that our customers sometimes use the wrong words in describing their preferences and that is why “discovery questions” are so important before making a suggestion, such as “what type of wines do you typically like to drink?” If they say White Zinfandel, you know they want a wine with some residual sugar.



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BIG SIX TASTING Continued

CAPOSALDO MOSCATO (Optional)

Sight: Bright golden yellow

Smell: Exotic fruit and spice aromas

Taste: Light bodied with flavors of peach and apricot

Notes about this wine:

- 100% handpicked grapes
- A preferred natural second fermentation results in a superior effervescence
- Perfect with any fruit dessert

To transition back to tasting dry wine, make sure participants eat a cracker before tasting the Chardonnay
Demonstrate “Old World” Versus “New World” Styles by Tasting French and California Chardonnays

LOUIS JADOT POUILLY-FUISSÉ

Sight: Pale yellow

Smell: Aromas of floral, apple and citrus

Taste: Medium bodied, citrus aromas and flavors, with mineral notes

Notes about this wine:

- 100% Chardonnay from the Mâconnais area of Burgundy, France
- Made from the highest quality fruit of the year’s harvest
- Vinified without oak to retain the wine’s elegant aromas and clean, fresh character
- Versatile with poultry and white meat, shellfish, grilled tuna, salads

ST. FRANCIS CHARDONNAY

Sight: Gold

Smell: Clean, fresh melon, citrus, pineapple and butterscotch aromas

Taste: Medium bodied, moderate complexity, supple texture and crisp acidity; flavors of ripe, tropical fruit, butterscotch and pineapple with subtle oak and vanilla

Notes about this wine:

- 100% Sonoma Chardonnay
- 100% hand picked fruit
- French and American oak barrel aged
- Malolactic fermentation provides a classic buttery mouthfeel



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BIG SIX TASTING Continued

SEQUOIA GROVE CHARDONNAY

Sight: Gold

Smell: White and tropical fruits offset by subtle notes of soft vanilla and spice

Taste: Full bodied with a balance of full fruit and acid with a crisp texture. Lemon citrus, white and tropical fruit flavors with discreet oak notes and a toasty, creamy finish.

Notes about this wine:

- 100% barrel fermented Chardonnay
- Production focuses on minimum winemaker influence and allowing the natural fruit intensity of Carneros Chardonnay to shine.
- Grapes are grown in Carneros where the climate is considerably cooler than central Napa. The grapes are generally higher in acid and show ripe tropical fruit with a crisp lingering finish.

DOMAINE CARNEROS PINOT NOIR

Sight: Cherry red

Smell: Intense aromas of dark fruit, smoke and exotic spice

Taste: Medium bodied with a silky texture, full flavors of raspberry, black cherry and spice; perfect balance of lushness, acidity and tannin

Notes about this wine:

- 100% certified organic estate-grown Pinot Noir from Carneros, one of the cooler growing areas in Northern California
- Hand harvested fruit is picked in the early morning hours (cooler temperatures offer fresher grapes)
- The wine is aged in 100% French oak barrels
- Domaine Carneros is a partnership between Kobrand and Taittinger, the famed Champagne house in France

THE SEEKER PINOT NOIR

Sight: Light cherry red in color

Smell: Red fruit and spice

Taste: Flavors of sweet cherry fruit, earth and spice. Silky texture with balanced acidity and ripe tannins

Notes about this wine:

- Made by a 10th generation family winery
- Made with the Burgundian method, at a higher quality level than Vin de Pays
- Screw cap closure is practical, environmentally friendly and well-suited for wines meant to be enjoyed on release



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BIG SIX TASTING Continued

ST. FRANCIS MERLOT

Sight: Deep garnet red

Smell: Aromas of plummy black fruit with spicy herbs

Taste: Full bodied with generous structure, supple tannins and a long finish, flavors of cherry, chocolate and plum

Notes about this wine:

- 100% Sonoma County Merlot grapes
- Hand harvested fruit
- French and American oak aging

SEQUOIA GROVE CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Sight: Deep garnet red

Smell: Aromas of black and red fruit with sweet spice

Taste: Elegant and full-bodied, smooth tannins with a full, velvety texture; flavors confirm the aromas of blackberry, red and black cherries and currants with sweet spice and mineral notes

Notes about this wine:

- Rutherford-dominated blend of Cabernet Sauvignon complemented by Bordeaux grape varieties
- Aged in oak barrels for added complexity
- Small winery that specializes in Cabernet Sauvignon

“A bottle of wine begs to be shared; I have never met a miserly wine lover.”

—CLIFTON FADIMAN