

Where To Start If You Are New To Wine?

The world of wine can be overwhelming to someone who is new to wine, or is looking to begin learning about wine and enjoying this wonderful beverage. So where to start? That's where Wine Resource Hub can be a valuable community and source to guide you wherever you are on your wine journey. We started this community, this site, and social media platforms as a great place to provide valuable content to those who are just starting their wine journey, or for those that are a little further along in their journey.

Gain Perspective and Some Basic Knowledge About Wine

We think it is valuable in order to gain full enjoyment of wine, just as with many hobbies or subjects by learning some basic information about wine. This allows you to learn the basics of grape varieties, styles of wines, world wine regions, basics on how wine is produced. Wine is indeed a complex beverage and in order to grasp it and properly enjoy it, it is best if you learn about it.

Wine Folly is in our opinion the premier online destination for a beginner to start reading and learning about wine in an easy to understand format and style. The site has great content to help you learn and gain more perspective.

Kevin Zraly's "Windows on the World Complete Wine Course" book is another great place to start your learning process and a reference guide.

Nowadays there is great content on the Internet, and I'm sure others in our community can provide recommendations on our discussion boards for improving your wine knowledge.

Gaining some basic knowledge will greatly assist you in understanding and appreciating wine, and gain full enjoyment.

Great Youtube Channels to digest wine content and entertainment:

Attorney Somm

Trophy Wine Hunter

Vint WIne TV

Bob Paulinski, Master of Wine

V is for VIno Wine Show

Jamessucklingtv
Corkbuzz Wine
Wine Access Unfiltered
Erin Larkin
Got Somme - Master Sommelier's Wine Podcast
The Soul of Wine
Our Pour Decisions
No Sediment
Jasper Morris Inside Burgundy
The Wine Society
Konstantin Baum - Master of Wine
Dr. Matthew Horkey

Great Wine Podcasts

Wine for Normal People
Another Bottle Down

Tasting

Most importantly to enjoy this beverage you have to taste wines, and try and taste a wide variety of wines. This is indeed very crucial, as it allows you to compare and contrast wines. Comparing and contrasting is one of the beauties of wine, as no beverage in the world has as many different tastes, flavors, aromas, mouthfeel as wine does.

Tasting many different wines allows your palate to expand, and you become much more knowledgeable on wine, and allows you to gain further enjoyment from tasting wine. Wine is a very experiential product and really tasting a lot of different wines is what makes wine so incredibly enjoyable.

So how do you accomplish tasting many different wines?

- A great way to do this is to form a wine tasting group or link up with others who have an interest in tasting wine. What this allows you to do is try more different wines, as you can get a small group together, and everyone purchases a bottle, and the group tastes the bottles. So instead of buying 1 bottle for yourself and enjoying a bottle on a Saturday night. If you can round up 4 other wine curious people, now you can each buy a bottle and you will have tasted 5 different wines in an evening. So groups are a great way to expedite you on your wine journey.

- A great way to taste a lot of wines is to find a great wine bar that has a Coravin (a great wine invention which allows for the dispensing of wine without removing the cork) program. These Coravin programs oftentimes will serve wine in small portions such as 1 oz, 3 oz, 5 oz, or by the glass. It allows you to try a wide variety of wines, and also allows you to try some of the more gold standard/benchmark wines in the world of wine. Early on in my journey my wife being a big fan of Disney, we would visit Disney World in Orlando once or twice a year, and I would visit one of these places, Wine Bar George. This wine bar is just one of the best ones out there, and has a great wine list and has so many great wines from around the world, and everything is available by the Coravin. This wine bar allowed me to taste some of the great wines of the world in small amounts to really rapidly progress my palate.

Purchasing Wines

Purchasing wines is an important part of your journey. How do you know where to start to purchase wines of quality?

Hopefully at this point you've done at least some basic reading or basic knowledge-dive into wine to help you better understand some of the wines you should be trying. Or at least you are purchasing wines and simultaneously reading up on wine as you are drinking the wines you purchase to learn more about what is in the glass.

Assuming you are now purchasing wines and gaining some basics about wine, you need to know how and where to purchase wine.

The single best way to purchase wine these days is through Winesearcher.com. This site allows you to drill down to the most specific type of wine you might want to purchase, and also find the lowest price on that wine on the Internet. At last check it is \$10.99 per month or \$9.49 a month if you purchase the annual subscription. This site allows you to find wines by proximity to your address, or retailers, auction sites, etc. that ship to you. It is truly a must-have tool to find wines.

The other ways to purchase wine are to find trusted wine retailers on the Internet who can ship wine to you, find specialty wine shops that are in your area who provide a good selection of quality-artisan wines. Costco is another great option for purchasing wines and at a very good price. Total Wine is another retailer that provides a good selection of wines.

Wine Travel

Visiting wineries through travel is a great way to learn about wine and broaden your wine experience. If you are fortunate enough to travel in your home country or abroad and visit wine producers and taste wines this will provide you a deeper connection with what is in the glass. Different regions have different protocols with how to schedule appointments. Some wineries in the United States you can drop into the tasting room and gain a tasting of their wines. Many in Europe and other parts of the world, and some of the more prestigious wineries you need to book a winery appointment out in advance.

Tools of the Trade

There are certain what we call “tools of the trade” which are essential in our opinion for those who want to start enjoying wine.

Glassware/Stemware

It is critical in our opinion to taste wine from a quality glass. Glassware does make a difference in influencing how wine is perceived and how it tastes. You don't have to go out and buy the most expensive hand blown wine glass out there, but you should at least have some universal or general machine made glasses which provide a good experience. Look at Riedel, Schott Zwiesel, Gabrielglas, and there are many others who make a quality wine glass. One of the most critical elements to a quality glass is you want a thin rim on the glass. I started out with Schott Zwiesel Beaujolain machine made glasses which I purchased a set of 6 for around \$80. Having a thin rim on the glass allows you to better taste all of the elements of the wine, and also perceptually a thinner rim allows the glass to get out of the way between you and the. A glass which is more clunky and thick just provides an extra sensory barrier between you and the wine.

If you want to really step up your wine experience hand-blown, lighter and thinner glasses from Riedel, JosephineNHutte, Zalto, Gabrielglas, and others are some of the best glasses out there. If you go to those from a machine made glass you will definitely notice a tick up in the wine tasting experience. Be careful with these glasses as they are very expensive, and very delicate. These glasses are generally going to run you in the \$80 to \$90 a glass price range. So certainly, don't go to these until you are ready to start drinking wines of high quality and you are ready to begin more seriously into this hobby/interest. But if you are they are certainly a worthwhile investment.

Also you need a decanter or two to aerate wines which are red wines with more youth and higher tannin levels. You should never drink a higher tannin red wine without aerating the wine. These wines need exposure to oxygen to soften the wine and make them more enjoyable, and open the wine to allow it to express more of its flavors. I don't think it is necessary to spend a bunch of money on a very exquisite decanter. You can find very suitable basic decanters for around \$30 and up that do what you need them to do.

Corkscrew - You need to purchase a decent corkscrew. You don't need to go overboard on some fancy corkscrew. A basic waiter's corkscrew or a wing style corkscrew will be just fine on the vast majority of wines with a corkscrew. You should be able to find a very suitable corkscrew for less than \$10. Then if you want to start enjoying older bottles where the cork might be more delicate and fragile that is when you want to start looking into the Durand corkscrew. This is a combination of a corkscrew and an ah so wine opener which allows you securely remove the cork on older, or more delicate corks.

Wine storage - If you are going to enjoy wine and get the full enjoyment out of purchasing wines and storing wines for potential aging, you need storage. You don't have to build out a \$10,000 wine cellar or even a more expensive larger storage unit. But you do need to purchase a basic smaller wine refrigerator. You do not need multi-zones with different temperatures. There is no need to store wines at different temperatures. Yes it is true that sparkling wines and some others you will want to serve at less than 55 degree storage temperature, but those you can simply transfer to a standard refrigerator prior to serving them. Wine should be stored ideally at a stable 55 degrees Fahrenheit and at 70 degrees of humidity, and this achieved through one of these wine refrigeration units or through a cellar. You will want to store all still wines on their side, and the reason for this is you want the liquid to stay in contact with the cork so it helps keep the cork moist and prevent it from drying out. You want the wine to be out of light exposure, and the more important thing you want wine to be out of extreme heat. The higher the temperature as well, even room temperature will cause the wine to age at a more rapid pace. Also you want a stable temperature as that keeps the cork in a stable position. If the wine experiences temperature fluctuation it can cause the cork to move like a piston and then the cork can lose its seal and allow oxygen to creep in and make contact with the wine, resulting in oxidation.

There are a lot of wine gadgets out there, and in our opinion a lot of them are just mostly a waste of money.

Get yourself a good wine opener (doesn't have to be fancy), get yourself some quality glasses, have good storage, get a good decanter or two, and the last thing is a Coravin. A Coravin will allow you to enjoy wine by the glass and preserve the wine. These vacuum products, while better than nothing, are a waste in our opinion. Just buy the basic Coravin product and the capsules, and that is the way to go to preserve your wine as you enjoy less than a bottle at a time.

Basic Starting List

Wing Corkscrew - \$6 at your local grocery store, or online

Wine decanter



Something similar to this shape, and you can find in retail stores and Amazon and other places for around \$25 to \$30

Wine Storage - around \$300 to \$400

You should be able to find a good wine refrigerator locally or online. I have two of these at the current moment. One I purchased at Costco around 10 years ago and it is still doing well (although the temperature fluctuates a bit on it - which is not 100% ideal). But

the temperature doesn't fluctuate too much. Earlier this year I purchased a better one off of Wine Enthusiast and I spent about \$300 and it is a bit better as the temperature readout always stays at 55 degrees.



Wine Glasses - I would start with a set of 2 of the GabrielGlas Universal Machine blown glasses. Set of 2 of these I'm showing on their website are currently \$68. Universal glasses are the best to start with, as they are designed as the name implies to be great for all kinds of wine. I personally own the Gabriel Glas Gold hand blown glasses and they are a great glass for lighter bodied red wines and white wines, and really all kinds of wine do great in these glasses.

Wine Searcher Annual Subscription - About \$100 - this is just a great place to start purchasing wines. With that being said if you are having wines shipped, make sure you avoid extreme temperatures for shipping. Shipping wine in 80+ degree heat, or freezing temperatures is not ideal

Wine Review subscription - For around \$100 a year subscribing to one of these services is a great idea as you start into enjoying wine. As you are new to wine, these services will help you select wines, and they will also hone your tasting skills as you drink wine and read the tasting notes on the wines you are drinking they will be both a trusty companion in helping you purchase wine, and also hone in on your tasting skills, and also help you develop your qualitative assessment of the wine. And of course we at Wine Resource Hub provide various wine reviews on wines we taste. Recommended wine subscription services are the Wine Advocate, Vinous, Jeb Dunnuck, The Wine Independent, and for Burgundy wines are Jasper Morris and Burghound.

Now that you have your list out, it's time to get to tasting and enjoying wine. Once you start on your wine journey you will discover how rewarding this hobby can be to enhancing your enjoyment of life.

Cheers Wine Hubbers!!!!