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What to do with a cork?

The consumption of dinner wines has escalated to immense proportions in this country, and the mistique of wines still exists. Here are a few choice words for an expert oeonologist who tells you everything you need to

By Herbert P. Douglas, Jr.

Ordering a bottle of wine in a restaurant can be an unnerving experience.

With a waiter or wine stewart standing at your elbow, and friends, date, or spouse looking on, you may settle for the second least expensive bottle (people tend to avoid the lowest price), hoping for the best, and hardly giving the bottle a glance when the waiter brings it for your inspection.

You may also wonder what in the world you are supposed to do with the cork if the waiter hands it to you.

You may also gulp the sample he pours in your glass, and whatever the wine tastes like, you tell him it's great because you don't know how it's supposed to taste.

perfectly normal. Almost every one goes through this experience. Most Americans, after all, did not grow up with wine as a staple of the dinner table as people in many European and Latin American countries have.

National Phenomenon

But wine is becoming a national phenomenon. From my travels around the country, I see a great interest in wines developing. And the statistics on wine sales reflect this growing interest.

Wine consumption in the United States rose from 163 million gallons in 1960 to 399 million gallons in 1977, according to the wine industry publication,

By 1985, the total is expected to almost double to 717 million gallons a year. You will probably be drinking your share.

And until you attain the knowledge that consumption implies, there is an alternative to guessing about wines.

he waiter who may seer

intimidating, and the wine and spirits merchant who seems to be a forbidding presence behind his store counter, can be helpful allies if you will just admit your temporary ignorance and ask for their help.

And don't be afraid to let them know your budget.

Wines and Food

senseless to complicate it with a lot of rules.

served with a red Bordeaux or Burgundy.

pliances cause vibrations frequently,

Sichel's book offers advice on this.

and garlic.

light and vibrations.

about room temperature.

the bouquet to develop further.

becoming a wine connoisseur.

Wine is such an inspired accompaniment to food it is

Nevertheless, there are some general guidelines. And Peter

Delicate dishes like sole or veal piccata are complemented

Spicy food, on the other hand, requires big wines that stand

Chicken, unless it is coq au vin cooked in red wine, is better

To store wine, find a place where the temperature is con-

The kitchen is the worst place because the temperature goes

Instead find a cool place, not under the stairs or in a highly

When serving wine, whites should be chilled, reds served

Open red wines an hour before serving to let them breathe

As for the cork mentioned earlier, when the waiter hands it

He will pour a little wine in your glass. Take it, swirl it

and bring out their bouquet. Then serve in eight to ten ounce

tulip-shaped clear glasses, filling no more than half way to allow

to you, take it, look at it, sniff it and if it smells of wine, not

musty or corky, lay it on the table and nod to the waiter to

gently to release the bouquet and take a little sip. Then, nod to

the waiter to serve the wine to everyone. You're on the way to

by delicate white wines, such as a light Moselle or a Chenin-

up to it and cut through the spice. Which is why so many Italian

reds, such as Ruffino Chianti, go beautifully with tomato sauce

with a dry or semi-dry wine. Heartier meats like beef are usually

sistently cool (as close to 550 F. as you can come), with little

up and down, the light is too bright and family traffic and ap-

trafficked room, and place the wine bin near the floor where it is

cooler. Lay all cork-sealed bottles on their sides.



Before you begin, however, take the time to learn a few of the

most basic facts about wines, remembering that learning about wines is a lifetime pleasure.

To begin your crash course, there are just two official colors of wine—red and white.

wines get their color from the skins of the grapes, which are left in the juice throughout fermentation. When making white wines, the skins are removed before fermentation begins.

Wide Spectrum
Simple enough? Well, maybe

not quite that simple.

Because of the difference in sugar content, white wines can range from an almost colorless very dry (not sweet) Chablis, for instance, to the very deep gold of

Red wines have an equally vast color spectrum, from the pale pinkness of the roses to the almost purple redness of Burgundies.

from the soft round smoothness of a well-aged Bordeaux to the dry fruitiness of a beautiful young

Four Categories

In the two colors of wine, there are four basic categories. By far the most prevalent in the United States is "still," or table wine, consumed with meals or for most occasions.

Then there are the sparkling wines, generally thought of for special occasions, but now showing up as aperitifs or dessert wines, and even with meals.

Probably the best known wine

(Continued on Page 29)

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