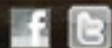




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UNCORKED



How To Find
That PERFECT
Bottle!

April 2018



Inside
the

Glass

Wine lovers can go years without finding that perfect bottle, yet when it is discovered, it changes the way wine is consumed. Find out ways you can increase your chance of uncorking a bottle and never turning back.

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Photos by: Google Chrome



Books have been written about the marvels of Montrachet, the complexities of Domaine de la Romanée-Conti and the luscious wonders of Yquem, all remarkable wines that most people can only dream of being able to afford.

Instagram is lined with photos of the proverbial unicorn wines, bottles so rare that they are sighted with the frequency of mystical animals. Somehow, these shots often seem to be posted by sommeliers, proving that such bottles are scarce only for those without access to other people's money.

As much attention as is paid to the rare and profound bottles that fire the imagination, far less is devoted to the sorts of wines that people might actually consume at any given weeknight meal.

Yet the bottles we might open every day are actually the most important wines in our lives, just as the art we live with in our homes is ultimately more meaningful than what we might see on an occasional visit to a museum.

The rare bottled masterpiece may stretch the mind, enlarging our notion of what wine can be and the emotions it can provoke. These special bottles, if we are lucky enough to drink one, occupy an exalted place because they set benchmarks and stretch context as they surprise and astound.

They forge our relationship with wine, and ultimately define its role in our lives.

The joys of one cannot be understood without the pleasures of the other. But I would argue that for people who love wine or who want to understand it better, paying more attention to everyday wines rather than rare and expensive bottles can improve one's drinking life significantly.

I have great sympathy with this point of view. We have only so much

Nothing is more important than the wine itself

time and energy to absorb new ideas, especially in a world in which the unexpected arrives at frightening speed. Good food and good wine are not everybody's priority.

Even if you would like it to be a more important part of your life, wine still comes in too many varieties and from too many places to comfortably and quickly absorb. So I would like to offer some practical recommendations to make it easier to drink better every day.



This especially holds true for wine authorities of all kinds. Rather than paying lip service every once in a while to "good values," I would like to see purposeful attention directed at everyday wines, good bottles that are moderately priced and easy to drink in relaxed, casual settings, yet are still interesting enough to inspire wonder and to be deeply pleasurable.

Over the last 25 years, an explosion in diversity has blown apart the once-simple framework for getting to know and understand wine. We now have access to more different sorts of wines than ever before, from more places, in more styles, made often from grapes that were largely unknown at the end of the 20th century.

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1 Think of wine as food.

If you care where your food comes from. You will end up with wine that is grown and made more conscientiously, with greater thought and care. Your wines will be less likely to be widgets and more likely to be expressions of divine and pure culture.

2 Topple wine off its pedestal.

It's just a beverage, a pleasurable drink. It should be thought of as a staple of the table, like bread or olive oil. It's just personal taste, not a judgment of one's personality or character.

3 Think of the occasion, rather than what's at the top of a universal scale of greatness.

Many might agree that grand Burgundy or first-growth Bordeaux or older Barolos are among the very best wines in the world. On those occasions, the very best wine might be a good Finger Lakes riesling, or a basic Etna Rosso, not a profound Chambertin.

4 Find a good wine shop.

This greatly increases the odds of finding good bottles, because conscientious talented merchants have weeded out much of the dreck. Avoid supermarkets and other indifferent outlets. Though you may find the occasional decent bottle, they are full of processed wines and vacuous brands that are the equivalent of empty calories.



5 Explore.

If you stick only with inexpensive versions of well-known, high-status grapes like pinot noir, chardonnay or cabernet sauvignon, you will rarely find good value. Many of these cheaper bottles are processed with technology or flavorings to imitate expensive bottles. Instead, you will find better values by seeking out honestly made wines from little-known grapes and largely unknown areas.

For too long, we have thought of great wines solely in terms of their potential to age, to evolve, to be profound and to be complex. These are all wonderful attributes, and they define wine at its highest, upmost level.

But maybe we need to think of greatness in terms of how well wines can play their role. If certain bottles are accessible enough to be everyday wines, yet interesting enough to capture our attention while delighting, isn't that great as well? I think so.



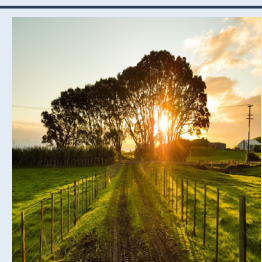
Where to Find the Best US Vineyards



Napa Valley, CA



Palisade, CO



Warwick, NY



Saylorsburg, PA

Bridgeport, NY

