

NH LIQUOR COMMISSION WINE EDUCATION SERIES

Buying AND ENJOYING WINE



Explore. Discover. Enjoy.

Have you ever walked into a store and been overwhelmed by the selection of wine? Or gone into a restaurant for dinner and been intimidated by the wine list? Not to worry. You're not alone. Many people find picking the perfect bottle of wine to be a confusing and often stressful experience.

As part of our Wine and Food Education program, the New Hampshire State Liquor Commission would like to help. So, we've put together this simple, easy to use guide to buying and enjoying wine. We hope you'll find it helpful and keep it handy the next time you're in a restaurant, at home, or visiting a New Hampshire State Liquor and Wine Outlet Store.

Deciphering WINE Labels

When shopping for wine, you'll find that different varietal wines have different labels. Here are the most important things to look for on any wine label. We're using a Trefethen Vineyards wine label to illustrate the following examples.

Look for:

1. Name of producer
2. "Estate Grown, Produced and Bottled by" reiterate that the wine is estate-bottled. "Estate Bottled" means that the same company (in this case Trefethen Vineyards) grew the grapes, made the wine, and bottled the wine. According to law it also means that Trefethen owns the land on which the grapes were grown, and that all of its facilities – the vineyards, the winery, and its bottling plant – are located in the appellation of origin (in this case Napa Valley).
3. The Approved Viticultural Area (AVA). According to United States wine laws, 85% of the grapes in this wine had to come from the Napa Valley.
4. The vintage. According to United States wine laws, 95% of the grapes in this wine had to come from the 1997 vintage.
5. The varietal. According to United State wine laws, 85% of the grapes in this wine must be Cabernet Sauvignon. If the place name on the label is a very large area like California or North Coast, those wines only need to contain 75% of grapes from that variety. Knowing these simple facts can help you in choosing the right wine for any occasion.
6. Alcohol percentage is legally required, unless it's labeled table wine, which guarantees that it contains no more than 14% alc. Sometimes producers choose to put this on the back label.



Ordering WINE IN A restaurant

Don't be intimidated by an extensive wine list. Here are a few quick tips to keep in mind the next time you want to order wine in a restaurant.

1. First, decide what you and your party are going to eat. This is the best way of narrowing down your choices.
2. Second, browse the wine list. Get a feel for the types of wine offered. Most restaurants will organize their wine list into simple broad categories (i.e. red, white, sparkling and then into varietals: Merlot, Chardonnay, etc.)
3. If you don't already have a wine in mind, ask for the help of your server or wine steward. Many people feel self-conscious about doing this, but the wine steward can be your best friend in finding the right wine. Letting the wine steward know what food you're ordering, the types of wine you like, and your price range will also be of help.
4. When the wine arrives make sure it is the bottle you ordered, then taste it. If the wine smells fine, tell the waiter to continue to pour, and enjoy! (Heads up! The waiter gives you the cork so you can check to see that it is still pliant and in good condition and not, as you see in movies, to sniff it.) When your server pours the wine for your approval, he or she is not looking to see if you like the wine, but if it is sound. If the wine is not corked or damaged, then you've bought it! However, if you really don't like it, most restaurants will work with you.
5. If you find yourself in a situation where the wine list is not extensive or the wait staff is of no help, your best policy is to stick to wines you know. If it's a wine you've had before, chances are you'll enjoy it with whatever food you're ordering.

Tips TO buying A BETTER WINE

1. Always taste before you buy. Trying different vintages from the same winery will give you a better sense of the consistency of the maker. Don't get trapped into buying what your friends or critics call the "best." Use your own palate.
2. Diversify your collection. You may have a passion for one particular kind of wine or another, but variety is the spice of life when it comes to wine and over the years your taste may change.
3. Shop for values. Value = the best wine for the money at any price.
4. Drink your wines before they get too old. Even the most age-worthy reds from Bordeaux or California reach drinkability in 10-15 years. Remember that most everyday type wines are meant to be consumed at an early age. However, even one year of aging usually improves a wine.
5. Keep costs in perspective. Keep in mind, there are many well-made, reasonably priced wines on the market.
6. Purchase multiple bottles of the wines you like so that you don't run out or hesitate to open the last bottle.

Putting THOSE TIPS INTO action

The following is a short list of basic wine varieties to purchase in order to ensure that your home is wine-ready for any occasion or menu.

Full-bodied Whites

Chardonnay, French Premier Cru Burgundy, Pinot Gris from Oregon and some white Bordeaux

Medium-bodied Whites

Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling, Pinot Grigio, Semillon, Gewürztraminer, Viognier

Light Whites

Chenin Blanc, Orvieto, Vouvray, Verdicchio

Sparkling Wines

Champagne, Sparkling California Wines, Asti Spumante

Full-bodied Reds

Barolo, Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel, Syrah and Northern Rhône. Also some Chateauf-neuf-du-Pape

Medium-bodied Reds

Pinot Noir, Merlot, Sangiovese (Chianti), Tempranillo (Rioja), Cru Beaujolais, Dolcetto

Light Red Wines

Gamay (Beaujolais), Rose (White Zinfandel or Tavel)

Dessert Wines

Port, Madeira, Asti Spumante

Storing WINE

There are many factors that can affect the graceful aging of fine wines. Following is a list of helpful tips to keep in mind when storing your favorite wines at home.

1. Temperature

The ideal temperature range for storing wine is between 52 and 55 degrees. The proper temperature will aid in the graceful aging of certain wines, and preserve others that are just being held until you are ready to drink them. Serving temperatures for wines are as follows: for red (cool 55° - 62°), white and sparkling (colder 45° - 58°).

2. Humidity

Wine should be stored where the relative humidity is kept between 70 and 75%. Lower levels of humidity can cause the cork to shrink, allowing air to enter the bottle causing oxidation. Never store wine in the refrigerator. Never store wine upright unless it has a stopper for a closure like many tawny Ports. You can also stand up wines with screw tops if you like although this is not necessary. Wines which are cork finished should be in contact with the cork for long-term storage

3. Vibration

Avoid it! Vibration breaks down the chemical composition in wine causing it to age quicker.

4. Light

Wine is affected by light, especially sunlight. This is one reason wines are placed in colored bottles. When stored, try to keep your wines in total darkness.

How much TO BUY

When planning a party, deciding on how much wine or spirits to buy can often be a dilemma. This simple formula will help you determine the right amount of wine or spirits you'll need to ensure a successful party.

First, determine the number of guests that will be attending. Next, take the number and multiply by the number of hours the party is intended to last. This will give you the number of servings you'll most likely need.

Then, use the following chart to determine approximately how many bottles of liquor and wine you'll need to correspond to your serving quantity.

Drinks per bottles and bottle size

Spirits (based on 1.5 oz. Spirits serving per drink).

Bottles	1	2	4	6	8	10
750 ML	16	33	67	101	135	169
1 Liter	22	45	90	135	180	225
1.75 Liter	39	78	157	236	315	394

Wine and Champagne (based on 5 oz. Wine serving per glass)

Bottles	1	2	4	6	8	10
750 ML	5	10	20	30	40	50
1 Liter	6	13	27	40	54	67
1.5 Liter	10	20	40	60	81	101
3 Liter	20	40	80	120	161	202
4 Liter	27	54	108	162	216	270

Information

Our website is a convenient resource for helpful information about our products and store locations. Visit www.nh.gov/liquor or call **1-800-345-6452**.

SPECIALTY WINES AVAILABLE AT THESE LOCATIONS

BEDFORD (55)

Colby Court Plaza
603-627-5878

BROOKLINE (22)

44A Route 13
603-672-8426

CENTER HARBOR

(12)
Route 25B
603-253-3169

CLAREMONT (8)

Claremont Mall
345 Washington Street
603-543-0200

CONCORD

Storrs Street (1)
603-271-1700
100 Fort Eddy Road (72)
603-271-1725

CONWAY (23)

Route 16
234 White
Mountain Highway
603-447-2782

GILFORD (56)

Airport Plaza,
9 Lake Shore Drive
603-524-6083

GLEN (54)

Route 302
603-383-9000

HAMPTON

Interstate 95 (73)
(South Bound)
603-926-3272
Interstate 95 (76)
(North Bound)
603-926-3374

HOOKSETT

Hooksett Rest Area (66)
I- 93 (North Bound)
603-485-5663

Hooksett Rest Area (67)

I- 93 (So. Bound)
603-485-5816
K-Mart
Shopping Plaza (4)
1271 Hooksett Road
603-641-5145

KEENE (15)

6 Ashbrook Court
Monadnock Plaza
603-352-1568

LITTLETON (7)

568 Meadow Street
Globe Shopping Center
603-444-5726

MANCHESTER (33)

North Side Plaza
31 Hamel Drive
603-622-5044

MEREDITH (42)

Olde Province Common
Route 104
603-279-7018

NASHUA

27 Coliseum Ave. (69)
603-882-4670

Southgate

Shopping Mall (50)
269 DW Highway
603-888-0271

NEW LONDON (64)

New London
Shopping Ctr.
Route 11
603-526-6868

NO. HAMPTON (68)

Village Shopping Ctr.
Lafayette Road
603-964-6991

NO. WOODSTOCK

(47)
North Woodstock Plaza
Main Street
603-745-8922

PETERBOROUGH

(21)
One Jaffrey Road
603-924-6671

PLAISTOW (49)

Shaw's Plaza
Route No. 125
603-382-8511

PORTSMOUTH

Portsmouth Plaza (6)
800 Islington Street
603-436-3382

Portsmouth Traffic

Circle (38)
603-436-4806

SALEM (34)

417 South Broadway
603-898-5243

W. LEBANON (60)

Powerhouse Plaza
10 Benning Dr.
Route 12-A
603-298-8629

WOLFEBORO (39)

35 Center Street
603-569-3567

For what's on sale and product information,
visit our web site at www.nh.gov/liquor



Explore. Discover. Enjoy.

Please drink responsibly.

You must be 21 years of age or older to purchase or consume alcoholic beverages.