



TEAM OMF

Steps for Planning Your Wine Tasting

Throw a wine-tasting party for family, friends and neighbors as a way to fundraise. You should call everyone or send out a flyers or invitations well ahead of time. What you should charge should be based on the cost of your party. You should keep your expenses down by not selecting the most expensive wines. It will most likely take you about a month to plan your party. The biggest job is selecting the wine.

Here are some tips for doing so:

1. Prepare your wines. Put bottles in plain brown paper bags before guests arrive. This covers the labels and makes people rely on their tongue for true tastes. Give each bottle a number.
2. Serve the whites chilled and the reds at room temperature.
3. Give guests a clean wine glass, paper and a pen. The paper and pen will let them record their observations during party. At the end of the tasting, they can rank their favorites.
4. Use only glass to serve wine. Plastic ware interferes with the taste and experience of the wine.
5. Set up samples from red to white, dry to sweet so you don't confuse your palate. You may want to number them in this order to make it easy for your guests.
6. Instruct guests to taste and rate wine as follows. Suggest that they take notes so you can compare later:
 - Look. Hold the glass up to the light. The wine should be clear. White wines should not appear brownish. Red wines should have depth of color.
 - Smell. Swirl the wine to release the aroma. Hold your glass to your nose and sniff. It should have pleasant aromas of honey, fruit, chocolate, etc.
 - Taste. Take a reasonable swig and bubble it across your tongue. This adds air and releases the subtleties. You may want to swish it a little so you hit all the taste sensors on your tongue and fully experience the wine. How does it taste? Is finish or aftertaste pleasant, too?
7. Provide plenty of water to rinse wine glasses between samples. Offer simple saltine crackers to cleanse the palate between wines.
8. Encourage guests to limit their samples to small swallows. If they want to act like the professionals, they can spit out the samples to preserve mental clarity.

9. Remember that your palate starts to get tired after four or five wines so it will become difficult to compare more than that.
10. Avoid cigarettes and coffee while tasting the wines. Both numb your taste buds. If you have a cold, know that your tasting ability will be limited as well.
11. Plan time for a finale. At this point, you can compare notes, reveal the labels and give the favorites your own personal gold, silver and bronze medals.
12. Think safety. Provide plenty of food to offset the alcohol and have designated drivers ready.

