

What Do You Know About White Wine

Think of a traditional European meal and a tall glass of chilled clear wine, set on a table under a blue Mediterranean sky comes easily to the mind. From a humble beverage made by farmers trying to preserve grape juice, wine making has come a long way through the centuries. The world over, no sophisticated meal is complete without a wine list and white wines are a favorite as it is available as dry, sweet and semi-sweet selections. A bottle of wine lends an aura of mystery and grace to the meal while pleasing the palates of the most health-conscious.

Wine making is a complex and many layered system with the wine-makers often dedicating their entire lives to perfecting the process. Super-premium wines are the most expensive of all food available today, and outstanding vintages dominate the highest end of the food market and are a collector's item. Wines from the best vineyards may sell for thousands of dollars a bottle. White wines actually cover a wide range of different tastes and colors. White wines range from the clear whites to golden yellows, and taste that vary from dry to sweet, they are the wines that are defined by their light color, body, and complex taste.

Colour in white wine does vary, often from the type of grape, occasionally from the use of wood. White wine is an integral part of many European and Mediterranean cuisines, from the traditional simple daily meal to the most stylish. Wine accompanies and enhances the food with its flavour. White wine is extremely popular as it suits every meal, and is classified as a light wine because it has only 10–14% alcohol by volume. The light acidic yet fruity flavour of wine balances rich and sweet dishes. Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, French Colombard, Gewurztraminer, Riesling and Sauvignon Blanc are all famous white wines and each has a very characteristic taste and aroma. Though no wine ever tastes of grapes, the kind of grape determines the taste and aroma of the final wine.

White wine is made from both dark grapes and white ones. The clear colour is due to the process. Whereas red wine is made by fermenting the grapes along with the skin and seeds, white wine is made by separating the skin from the juice. The pigmentation of the skin or seeds is not allowed to colour the juice but the very dark skins give a faint colour to the wine, which is called 'blush'. White wine is drunk chilled in a tall fluted glass, so that the warmth from the hand of the drinker does not elevate the temperature of the wine contained in the glass. Like all wines, sometimes the label contains directions to aerate the wine so that it 'breathes' and thus enhances the taste while drinking. This is more common in younger wines.

The health benefits of wines is profound as is well demonstrated by the French, who are traditional wine drinkers, enjoy a low level of heart disease, even though their diet consists of high levels of fat in the diet. Research has attributed this positive trend to the beneficial chemicals released by the grapes during fermentation. Studies suggest that risk of cancer is reduced with wine, and the presence of various antioxidants and valuable chemicals make it a very desirable part of a meal, as is demonstrated.

About the Author

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