

The Busy Lady's Guide to *Great* Wine



EXPLORE



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INVEST

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Introduction

Every time we turn around there's another study about women and our value to the American economy. Now dubbed "super consumers," we have more influence on every aspect of spending and saving than ever before, and with good reason! Collectively, we represent about:

- 85% of all household spending decisions
- 80% of all healthcare decisions
- 50% of the American workforce and the clear majority when adjusted for self-employment
- 60% of college enrollments
- More than \$10 trillion in managed assets

Yes, ladies, we've been very busy. So, when it comes to our social time, we're also very particular.

We choose our friends carefully. We plan our trips – whether a vacation abroad, a day-long hike or a quick trip to the store – with precision.

If Covid taught us anything, we've learned to cherish and protect our together time, and to create settings where special memories can be made.

It is in this spirit we present this Ladies Guide to Wine.





Women and Wine History

WINE HAS LONG BEEN CONSIDERED A LADY'S DRINK.

Originally – and through the 50s – the majority of wine made and sold in the US was fortified, sweet wine such as Muscatel, Port and Sherry. These wines had high alcohol content and were inexpensive, and early advertising presented them as a sweet mealtime drink, though they really were (and still are) dessert wines.

In 1934 the Wine Institute of America opened and tried to reeducate Americans away from dessert wines and toward table wines. It was a struggle – until two key events happened in 1962:



The first was on February 14, when First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy gave a televised tour of a renovated White House. In it, she included the beautifully set dining room, complete with wine glasses at each table setting. The market for glasses immediately surged and wine purchases started to increase.



Women and Wine History



The second was February 26: Julia Child's first broadcast of *The French Chef*. Julia always ended the show with a glass of wine to enjoy the meal she had just prepared.

While she always chose a wine to go with the meal, her favorite wine was White Burgundy.

THESE TWO WOMEN TRANSFORMED THE OCCASIONAL GLASS OF WINE TO AN ART FORM, AND MAKE IT AN INTEGRAL PART OF ENTERTAINING AND ENJOYMENT WITH EVERY MEAL.





From setting the table to building community, women hold sway.

From the casual ladies' lunch to more formal holiday dinners and everything in between, a great glass of wine is always part of the plan.

Whether you're in a restaurant, around your kitchen island, or in your backyard, there's a sense of pageantry that goes with popping a cork and pouring that first glass.

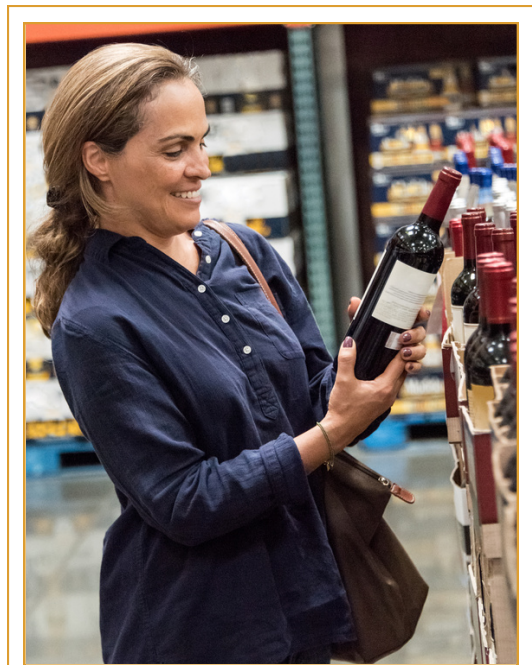
Your community is with you and for a short time, all's right with the world.

No wonder wine is referred to as the language of love. It even seems to taste better when shared with those you love.

An impressive 55% of all wine purchases are made by women, and 42% of those women are millennials. It's a surprising statistic since the vast majority of us are intimidated when we walk into a wine shop or look at the wine list in a restaurant.

Why are we most comfortable grabbing a bottle or two from the grocery shelves quietly mumbling "this'll do," when it's easier than you think to find the perfect pairing for your budget, lifestyle, and setting?

If you love a great glass of wine as much as we do, but recognize your wine routine is a bit stale, here's your chance to simplify the process of choosing and enjoying great wine.





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Learn Your Style

Picture it: the iconic scene from the 2004 comedy movie *Sideways*. Paul Giamotti's character, Miles Raymond, heads into a Santa Barbara restaurant with his lookin'-for-a-good-time pal (Thomas Hayden Church) and declares with utter disgust, "If anybody drinks Merlot we're leaving! I'm not drinking any ***** Merlot!"

Poor Merlot. It's such a fantastic old-world grape that lost its luster because of one line in a fictional movie. And how often do we order the same as the person before us, just because it's easier? It seems like every wine has its own 15 minutes of fame. Pinot Grigio, Sauvignon Blanc and Chablis have all had their moments in recent years. And then there's Rosé – because that's a wine you get to drink "all day"!



There are now more than 10,000 grape varieties growing around the world. So when it comes to wine, as the saying goes, few of us are experts and half of them are faking it. The joy in the wine experience is simply to enjoy it, to explore different grape varieties and the associated terroirs (soils and climate they grow in), and to engage with others who want to share this journey with you.



The Basics of Winemaking



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THE WINEMAKER'S LANGUAGE

A winemaker's notes are typically presented to cover the three most important aspects of wine tasting:

The Nose:

If you're new to wine, smelling your wine (at a 45 degree angle) seems kind of odd. What are you looking for? Have some fun and rattle off everything your nose picks up: asparagus, pencil lead, burnt cigar. Try to actually put words to what you smell. The more you do this, the more you'll discover wonderful characteristics of what you're about to taste. Don't skip this part.



Image from WineFolly

The Palate:

Enjoy a generous sip and swish it around to all parts of your mouth. You'll notice sweetness on the tip of your tongue, acidity on the sides, and the tannins on the center and back of your tongue. As you swallow, you'll uncover all these combined.

The Finish:

This is the lingering sensation of aromas, texture and complexity that remain on your tongue and back of throat. A long and complex finish is a great indication of fine wine.



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The Art of the Swirl

Ladies, if you've mastered the "bend and snap," this'll be a piece of cake.

Swirling actually aerates the wine to open up the aromas.

When swirled, the wine can show off its "legs" – lines of lingering wine that run down the sides of the glass. Legs are an indication of its viscosity (consistency), its sugar content and alcohol levels.



Tock and other travel sites have sections with information about wineries and private tastings. These are places where you can perfect your swirl!

Here's a sample:

[Tock's Sonoma Winery Guide](#)



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What does your perfume say about your wine preferences?

FUN FACT

Women have better palates than men! We're able to pick up more scents and tastes, meaning we have a more sensory experience with things like wine and perfume.

So, is it possible that your favorite perfume will determine your favorite wine? Some experts say, "Yes!" – or, at least it can be a fun exploration.

Our tongues can sense sweet and sour, bitter and salty tastes. But our sense of smell governs up to 80% of what we perceive as "flavor". See what your perfume says about you:

FLORAL & FRUITY	Scents produced by grapes/fermentation	tropical fruit, herbs & spices, floral, citrus stone, mineral, grass, mint	Pinot Grigio, Sauvignon Blanc, California Chardonnay, Rosé, Viognier
CARAMEL & VANILLA	Scents produced by winemaking	buttery notes from yeasts, acids, vanilla, nutmeg, & woody notes from barrels (cedar/oak)	California Chardonnay, Chateauneuf du Pape, Roussanne, Pinot Noir
HERBAL & CRISP	Scents produced by aging	nuts, honey, dried fruits in whites	Riesling, Chenin Blanc, White Burgundy
WOODY & EARTHY	Scents produced by aging	cooked fruit, earth, leather, tobacco in reds	California Syrah, Cabernet, Malbec, Merlot, Cabernet Franc



Dining Out



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Ordering wine in a restaurant doesn't have to be intimidating once you know a few "insider" tips. Arm yourself with the knowledge you need to order wine in a restaurant with confidence!

HOW TO ORDER WINE LIKE A PRO!

Plan ahead.

Most good restaurants have their wine list on their website. Know *before* you go!

Take control.

Most people don't like to be in charge of ordering wine for the table and will gladly yield the task to you -- so ask for it.

Consider everyone.

Ask your friends if they have a preferred wine/color or meal selection and plan accordingly. Remember – five glasses to a bottle, so depending on party size, consider a variety.



Take your time.

Don't be intimidated by the sommelier. They WANT to help you, so smile when you see them coming. Maybe narrow your selection to two and ask for the Somm's recommendation. Everyone will be impressed.



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Dining Out

HOT TIP: BYOB AND CORKAGE FEES

In some geographies like Pennsylvania and New Jersey, BYOB restaurants are common.

That's great because the wine markup in restaurants is usually two (and in some cases up to four) times the list price. If you have a favorite wine you'd like to share with friends and would rather not buy from the wine list, you can always call your restaurant ahead of time and ask if they have a corkage fee. Many restaurants do.

So if it's a special occasion and you're popping a \$100 bottle with your beloved and paying a \$30 corkage fee, you're still saving at least \$70 by not ordering the exact same bottle off the menu.

This is especially worthwhile if you're pulling finer, older vintages out of your cellar for special occasions.





Entertaining



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One of the best ways to share your passion for (and knowledge of) wine is entertaining at home.

Don't worry about trying to choose wines that will please every palate. Proudly serve your favorites, expertly paired with foods you love.

EXPERT TIPS FROM THE PROS

Proper temperatures.

No thermometer needed! Don't let your whites get too cold or your reds get too warm.

Lean into the pageantry.

Engage your friends in opening the wines and sharing why you chose each one. Maybe it was a secret gem you found, or your favorite for whatever food you're preparing.



Use a decanter.

Nothing impresses guests like a beautiful wine decanter. For red wines, they serve the important purpose of aerating the wine to open flavors and aroma. But you can decant white wines, too, because – well, decanters are cool. If you do, choose a narrow beaker-style because white wines don't really need to “breathe” in the same way. Decanters can be a beautiful part of your table décor when open bottles aren't welcome.

Large format bottles.

A magnum of your favorite wine is a real crowd-pleaser. Large format bottles are very accessible and surprisingly affordable when direct from wineries.



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Sharing & Giving

Nothing says “love,” like a passion shared. Few things can express the preciousness of community the way wine can.

In a world of digital connections and virtual communities, coming together to share great wine and food is a time-honored ritual that will never go out of style.

THE GIFT OF WINE

[Host/Hostess Gift](#) – something hand-selected with a note from you about your selection.

[Gift certificate](#) to a virtual wine tasting from a favorite winery.

[Wedding and anniversary gifts](#) packaged in custom-made wooden boxes that become keepsakes. Easily found on Etsy.

[Large format bottles](#) are easily accessible and make great gifts.





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Buy Wine Like a Pro

Not everyone is lucky enough to live in California or a designated wine region where you can pick up your favorite bottles from the winery. The vast majority of wine shoppers continue to purchase wines from either a wine/liquor store or a grocery store. In fact, so many of us grab a bottle in a grocery store, and larger chains have the buying power to offer a deal or two. Each wine drinker consumes an average of two cases of wine in a single year. That volume is enough to keep lots of wine moving from the shelves of retail shops.

But what you should know about buying wine in a grocery store (and most larger wine shops) is that you will never be able to truly expand your wine skills and knowledge beyond knowing your favorite grape varietal. That's because:

- Unless you shop the “super secret corner” of the wine shop, you'll only be offered current vintages. Like amazing women, wine becomes more interesting with age. Once you fall in love with a varietal or two, take the time to learn about the wineries that make wines of that varietal (in different parts of the world) and start to explore various vintages. If you're a red wine drinker, once you discover the magic of wines that are 5-10 years old, you'll never shop in a grocery store again – unless your relatives are coming for the holidays!
- Grocery stores are often selling wines provided by their distributor. Wine is often controlled by state law, and distributors are the companies authorized to sell wine to wine shops, grocery stores and other retail outlets and restaurants. Your grocery store is the distributor's customer, and they decide your selection. Given that there are more than 16,000 wineries in the US and the vast majority of them only sell their wines online or at their cellar door, do you ever wonder what you might be missing?



Learn to be Obsessed with Quality



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Unless your go-to is 2 Buck Chuck (and let's be honest, we've all dabbled), you're probably mature enough to be a bit more particular about your wine. If you're like half the female online shoppers who are shopping right now, it means you're curled up in bed...a perfect time to have a great glass of wine on your nightstand as you explore wineries that make special wines from your favorite varietal.



For example: Your favorite wine is Chardonnay. Well, they grow Chardonnay grapes in more than 40 countries. As you explore, you discover the Chardonnay style you seem to like is not citrus forward, but more minerally and dry. They're crisp, not buttery. You start bumping into terms like "Burgundian style whites." Ah, Julia Child's favorite.

Soon you discover many wineries in the US and abroad that create beautiful and sought-after Burgundian style Chardonnay wines. The chances of you finding any of them in your local grocery store are really low.

That is where the fun of hunting down your next favorite wine begins.

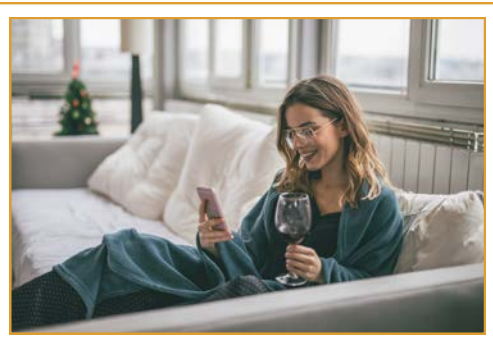


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Acquiring

According to VINEPAIR, there are more than 16,000 wineries in the US and like we mentioned before, the vast majority only sell their wines online or at their cellar door. There are thousands of amazing wineries you'll never find in a grocery store, so don't be afraid to order wine online!

Once you know what wines you prefer, learn how to be a savvy online wine shopper to acquire wine for your household or friend group.



Use social media to connect with others who share your passion.



Facebook has several groups for women who enjoy wine, and several are specific to your geography. Just do a groups search and see what appeals to you. For example, "women who enjoy drinking wine" has 64,000 members!



Buying Wines Direct from a Winery



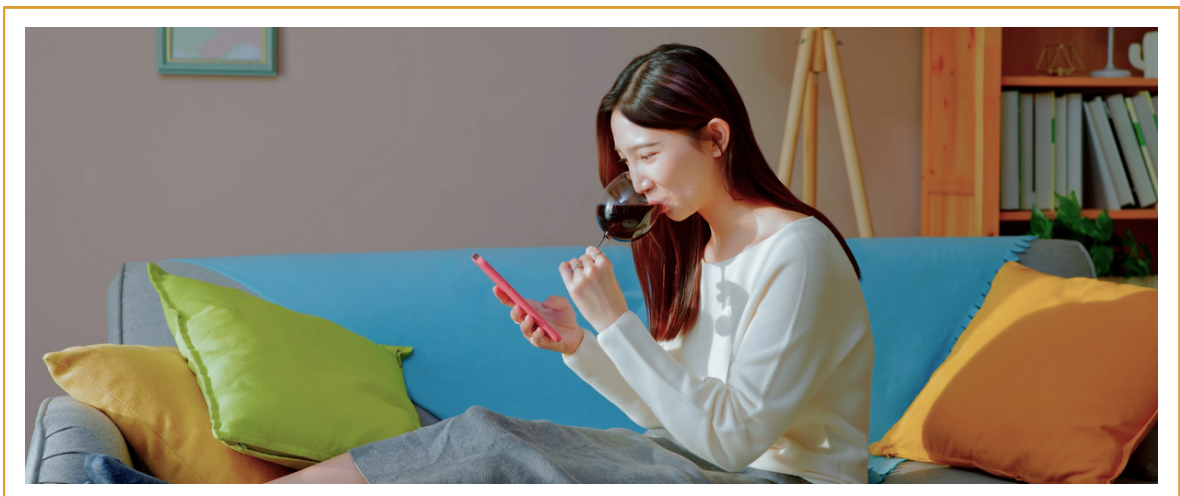
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Q: Can you buy one bottle just to try?

A: Of course. Consider each winery contact as if you have your own personal concierge/sommelier. They really will want to work with you to understand your lifestyle, wine preferences, and your budget. You certainly can start small and explore. Most wineries have their “everyday” wines, their “investor-level” wines, and lots in between.

Q: Do you have to join a club when you contact a winery?

A: It depends. Some wineries do require membership just to have access, but others are happy to let you start slowly. You probably won't get immediate access to a “cult wine,” because their lists can be a lifetime long. That doesn't mean that there aren't amazing wines within reach right this very minute, though. You're on a journey. Have fun and don't be afraid to email the winery directly.



EMBRACE THE CASE

Even if you share the case with friends, buying a full case at a time is a great way to save money since many wineries reduce case pricing and eliminate shipping charges.

THINK BIG

Nothing says a party like a magnum bottle of a great wine. Wineries often don't list them at their websites, so email and ask!



INVEST



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Discover and Embrace Your Investment Style

LEARN HOW TO
CURATE YOUR OWN
PRIVATE
COLLECTION

While 55% of wine is purchased by women in the US, the average price of a sale varies based on gender.

Men spend more on a single wine purchase. Their online spending per transaction is also higher than women's. This is due to the fact that men have been in the investment chair for longer than women.

The Paris Wine Tasting of 1976, known as the Judgement of Paris – when California wines beat French wines in blind tastings – was the key event that inspired Americans (mainly men) to begin appreciating its real investment potential.

Since then, and as women grew in strength and skill, we became not only impressive winemakers and winery owners, but major investors in the trade and an influential voice in the industry's future.

What's different, however, is how women think about investing.





A Woman's Guide to Investing in Wine



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	MEN	WOMEN
Approach to Wine	More interested in technical aspects and exhibiting their knowledge.	Value the social aspects of sharing something special.
Attitudes About Investing in Wine	Looking for financial gain, men have a tendency to see their worth in society as it relates directly to their net worth.	Embrace a “worth beyond wealth” mindset where creating special moments now is as important as saving for later.
Research	Men tend to be very objective, empirical and conduct their research privately.	More likely to seek information from wine experts, sommeliers, and friends.
Wine and Status	Engage in high-status behaviors and conspicuous consumption.	Place a much higher value in the social aspects of wine and building community.
Risk Aversion	See investing as high risk - high reward.	Cautious, prioritizing stability over high returns.
Taste and Style in Wine	Collect wines to impress others.	Collect wines that they themselves enjoy.



About Donelan Family Wines

Donelan Family Wines is a family-owned winery and tasting room located in Santa Rosa. We make small-production Chardonnay, Rosé, Viognier, Pinot Noir, Syrah, and other Rhône varietals from extraordinary vineyard sites throughout Sonoma County.

Our wines are of premium quality, highly rated and crafted for both wine explorers and aficionados alike.

Meet our favorite ladies: Christine, Nancie, Moriah, Keltie, Annabelle and Pierrine – wines named after some of the Donelan gals.



[JOIN OUR ALLOCATION LIST](#)

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