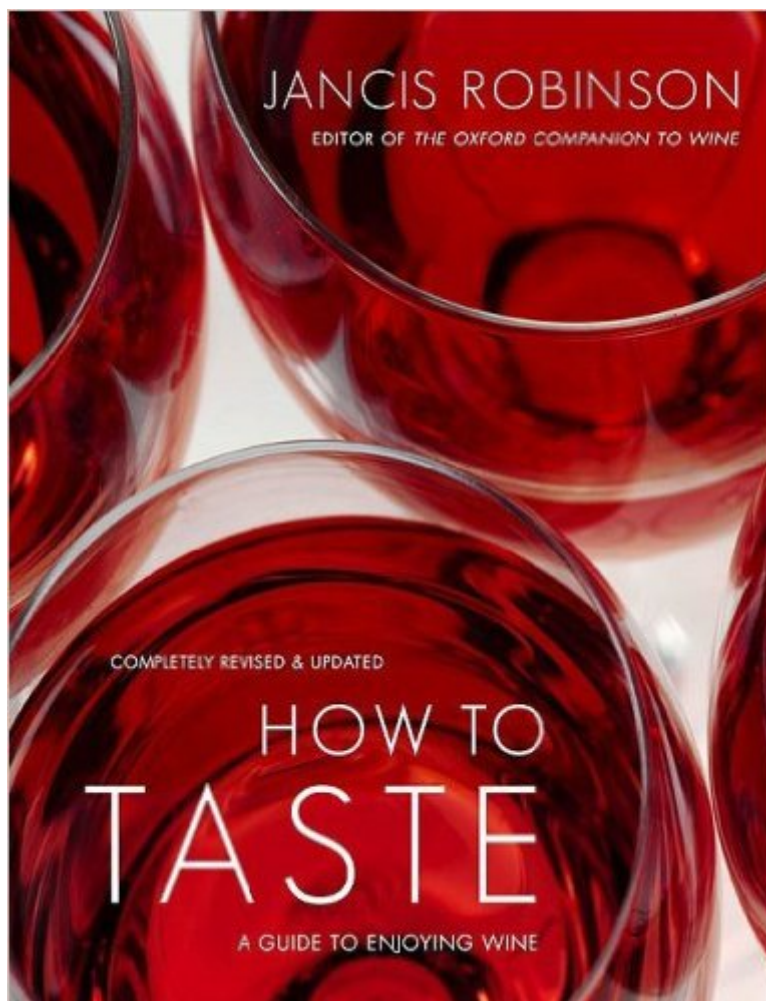


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How To Taste: A Guide To Enjoying Wine



Synopsis

Hailed by Jerry Shriver in USA Today as "the woman who makes the wine world gulp when she speaks," Jancis Robinson created in *How to Taste* a classic for connoisseurs of all levels and the first introduction of its kind to focus on practical tasting exercises. Now fully revised and updated, Robinson's renowned guide proves once again that learning about wine can be just as engaging as drinking it. What better way to learn about wine than to taste it? Written in Robinson's trademark accessible style, the new *How to Taste* features thoroughly updated vintages and producers as well as up-and-coming wine regions and styles. Incorporating wines that are both easily obtainable and reasonably priced, Robinson's lessons are separated into complementary portions of theory and practice to help you both learn and taste your way to wine expertise. One of the world's best-loved authorities on wine, Robinson explains first how to get the most out of the flavor of your wine and food, and then about specific grapes and the wines themselves. By the time you finish the book, you will have learned how to recognize the most popular grape varieties from Chardonnay and Riesling to Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon, and why a good sparkling wine is always better than cheap champagne. You will discover how to judge sweetness, acidity, and fruitiness as well as the difference between the length and the weight of a wine. You will also be given practical advice for dealing with wine in the real world: how to choose from a wine list, organize your own wine tastings, and pair wines with specific foods. From the armchair to the wine shop and back to the table, *How to Taste* will transform anyone on any level into a confident connoisseur who can leave faltering sips behind and have fun along the way.

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Customer Reviews

See the review dated September 29, 2001 for an excellent treatment of this book. Since I first became interested in blind wine tasting almost 25 years ago, I have searched for a book that provided a complete and authoritative guide to describing the taste of different wines and grapes—a reference point or sounding board, if you will, against which to calibrate my own impressions. Never mind that the essence of blind tasting and the apprehension of quality depend on forming your own innate vocabulary of scents and flavors. There have been many times when I have struggled, and have just wanted an expert to tell me what the heck a textbook Crozes-Hermitage, for example, is supposed to taste like. Jancis Robinson's *Guide To Wine Tasting* is an excellent contribution to this subject for beginners. I didn't realize until around page 150 that the book had originally been published in 1983 under the somewhat unfortunate title, *Masterclass*, but I think we can forgive her this youthful indulgence. Because over time, she has truly become the heir apparent to the mantle of most prolific British wine commentator, eclipsing my other English heroes Michael Broadbent, Hugh Johnson, and Clive Coates. With multiple books, a TV show, videos, a weekly column, a new DVD and a website ... she is, to paraphrase wine newcomer Howard Stern, the Queen of All Wine Media. This book systematically lays out the factors that contribute to the taste of a wine, and how to appreciate them. It follows the model of a "wine course," in that each chapter combines theory and practice, the practice consisting of specific instructions of what wines to try that best illustrate the principles being taught.

If you decide to read only one book about wine tasting, you can happily make it this one. Unless you have tasted many wines, chances are that you have not yet found the 20 wines you would like the most in your price range. If you are like me, you don't want to spend thousands of dollars to locate wines you would like better than what you now drink. What can you do? Read this book, and start tasting along with some adventuresome friends! In the mid-1970s, I was fortunate to work for Heublein which made and imported many fine wines. At dozens of tastings, I was introduced to hundreds of superb wines and had a chance to buy them very inexpensively. From that rich experience, I have been given the opportunity to select wines at many great restaurants and many social occasions. People always marvel at how much I know about wines. Can I let you in on a little secret? If you use the process in *How to Taste*, you will probably exceed my wine knowledge in a few months. What's the reason? Well, I haven't tasted geographically as widely as this book

suggests. I know a great deal about French, German, and California wines but relatively little about those coming from other locales. In fact, I plan to use this remarkable book to guide myself into a broadened palate. Jancis Robinson is a wonderful wine tasting resource. She obviously knows her stuff. She breaks the most complicated issues down into simple, constituent pieces that can be easily grasped. She knows how to give you the experiences you need to find wines you will like better with a minimum of effort and expense. And she writes well, so the words go down easily. Each chapter has theory and practice sections, along with tasting exercises (sometimes of common foods rather than wines).

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