



## NEWSLETTER – FALL 2023

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the Fall!

Most of us all love September and it is shaping up nicely! I would like to welcome you back to the Fall Season with Friends of the Vine; hopefully everyone had a nice summer.

It is all starting September 22 with **Plates and Palates** at Willow Park Golf & Country Club. Doug Crapo is in charge and is very excited as he says it is a 'stellar selection of many wines to try plus the small plates of food from the Golf Course'. Thanks to your support, the event is sold out!

Coming up soon will be the registration for the **Bubbles Brunch** at Cassis Bistro on Saturday November 25, 2023, starting at 11:30am. It always is a popular event with amazing food, service, and ambiance from the staff of Cassis Bistro. It is a 3-course lunch with a welcome selection plus pairings with each course. Laurie MacKay of Soul Vines, and she still has her program on CBC Radio 1, is back choosing the champagnes and bubbles and will comment on the choices. Tim Tamashiro will be there singing some tunes, so stay tuned for more details shortly.

The *Rosé Wine Tasting* at Metrovino was a sold-out event as well. Richard Harvey led us through a tasting of a variety of Rosés, with a superb cheese platter from Say Cheese in Crossroads Market.

So do remember to renew your memberships for the 2024 year; now at \$30.00 per person.

Ray  
President

Photo from the *Metrovino Wine Tasting*



# FOV WINE RAMBLINGS

## THINGS TO DO and NOT TO DO IN A WINE TASTING - TO ENHANCE YOURS AND OTHER PEOPLE'S ENJOYMENT

Phil Lo 20230816

I am sure most of the members of FOV know or think they know how to taste wine. Here, I am to summarize and remind people of some obvious and some not so obvious things. I have no intention to be snobbish about wines and wine tastings. Afterall, wines are to be enjoyed and you should not feel you need to be constrained by rules.

### BEFORE YOU GO

Always go to a wine tasting with something in your stomach. Wines with an empty stomach is a bad combination and you will be tempted to start eating whatever is there. Or worse, you start to lose your composure and may misbehave and do something you will regret later.

Please make sure you are not wearing any perfume before heading into the tasting room. In fact, it would be best that all tastings be scent free. As wine enjoyment and tasting are based majority on the nose, your perfume will affect other people's enjoyment negatively.

### DON'T TOUCH THE CHEESE

Once you started eating cheeses, your palate will be coated with cheese, and I guarantee you will not be able to taste all the fine nuances and differences the wines have to offer. Same comment for the olives and meat. They change the pH in your mouth and affect the taste of the wines.

I would even suggest you don't touch any of the food, except the bread, until you have at least finished one round of tasting all the wines offered before looking for food pairings. It is okay to have a piece of bread in between each wine to cleanse your palate.

### DURING THE TASTING

You have probably heard the saying "it is all in the nose". The majority of the nuances in a wine is in the nose. So, sniff the wine in your glass. Swirl the wine around to get some oxygen into the wine to enhance the aroma in your nose before tasting in your mouth. Use short sniffs. The nerves in your nose get tired and fatigue very quickly. Long sniffs will get the nerves tired very fast.

Between sniffs, look at the colour of the wine in the glass, preferably with a piece of white background. Is it clear? Is the colour indicative of the grape(s) the wine is made of? A burgundy should not look like a big Cab or vice versa. Finally, have a small sip. Let the wine roll around your palate. You don't want to swallow right away. Let the wine do its dances in your mouth.

You have probably heard this: the nerves in different part of your mouth and tongue can detect different taste. You want the wine to be tasted by all part of your mouth and tongue. I have on occasions tell people to do French kisses with the wine! It is acceptable to slightly open your mouth and softly suck air in to blow over the wine in your mouth. This allows your nose to also get into the action. You will be surprised what nuances you pick up with this action.

Finally, swallow or spit the wine out. Both are acceptable behaviours. As much as you want to swallow and drink all the wines offered, if there are twenty or forty wines on offer, it is humanly impossible to swallow all of them. Besides, it would not be very enjoyable towards the end.

Try not to hold the glass with the bowl. There is a reason why fine wine glasses are made with a stem. You don't want to affect the temperature of the wine being served, assuming the agent or pourer know the best temperature the wine should be served. The only exception: if you think the wine is too cold for the tasting, do go ahead and wrap your hands around the bowl to warm the wine up a bit and taste again.

In a technical, sit-down tasting where a flight of wines is offered for comparison, do save a few sips in each glass, and come back to do the comparison between all the offerings. If it is a walk-around tasting, either finish the wine or spit them out and go to the next wine. In between, rinse and cleanse your tasting glass with water before the next wine.

In a lot of walk-around tasting, where wines are poured by an agent or pourer, I see a lot of people want or like to discuss the wine with the agent. This is perfectly okay but please watch yourself that you are not monopolizing the pourer. Please keep in mind that there are other people lining up behind or at your side wanting their pour! By you parking in front of the pourer and keep talking, you are diminishing the other people's enjoyment of the tasting! So, please move on or at least, move over a bit to the side, so other people can get their pour!

## NOTES MAKING

I encourage you to make notes during the tasting. In a sit-down situation, this allows you to monitor how the wines develop over the period of the tasting when you go back to each wine in subsequent sipping and comparison.

In a walk around situation, with many wines, it can be very confusing, and you will quickly lose track of which wine is which. This is even more important if you are tasting to buy. I know how difficult it is to have a glass in one hand and a note pad and pen in the other, even more so when you have food as well in a small plate.

I use a simple way to rate the wines in those situations. I use either checkmarks or stars to denote how much I like the wines. A wine which deserves some notice is one star or check. An above others wine will be 2 stars or checks. An outstanding wine I would consider buying will be 3 stars or checks. I also use short hands to denote things such as 'c' for clove, p for plums, 'rc' for red cherry, 'bc' for black cherry, 'bf' for black fruit, 't' for tannins, 'long' for long finish, etc. You can develop your own shorthand.

## **EVENTS 2023**

We have some wonderful events planned for 2023 and are always open to adding more! Do you have an idea for an event, special tasting, interesting location, new partner? Please share it with our Board members and help co-organize it.

Our first event, the Lunar New Year dinner, was a fantastic example of a member lead event.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Organizer</b>
<u>2023 COMPLETED EVENTS*</u>			
February 16	Wine Pairing Dinner*	Bill's Peking House	Doug, Phil, Gorreti
March 31	Burgundy Wine Tasting*	Market Wines Uni	Flo, Margo
April 20	AGM*	Richmond Hill Wines	Mike
June 11	Annual BBQ*	Winston Golf & Country	Tara
July 20	Rose Tasting*	Metrovino	Ray
<u>2023 UPCOMING EVENTS</u>			
Sept. 22	Plates & Palates	Willow Park G&CC	Doug
October TBD	Wine Tasting	TBD	Tara
November 25	Christmas Bubbles Brunch	Cassis Bistro	Ray

## NEXT EVENT

***Plates and Palates*** – Friday, September 22

The beautiful main dining room of Willow Park Golf & Country Club will be the setting for the 10<sup>th</sup> FOV Plates & Palates. This event focuses on finding the perfect pairing of wines with foods. And there will be lots of each!

The eight different food plates arrive at 15-minute intervals. The 60 guests will be able to taste from 35 wines, specially selected by the five expert wine agents to match the menu. Which wine goes perfectly with that food? Has your palate changed? What treasures will you find?

The bonus! Guests can purchase the wines they love for only 10% over cost! What an opportunity to stock up the cellar.

There are wines from around the globe - - Bordeaux, Burgundy, Italy, Spain, California, Oregon, Australia, New Zealand, Portugal, Germany, and Greece. Prices range downward from \$49.49 retail (your price \$35.45). Whites, reds, rosés and sparkling - - there's a style for everyone. There's even a canned wine!

If you were not able to register in time, don't despair. We will email the order form to FOV members, and they will have 36 hours after the event to place their order. Wines are usually available for pick up. You will have 36 hours after the event to place your order. Wines are usually available for pick-up in about 1½ weeks.

## FOV WINE RAMBLINGS

WINE AND FOOD PAIRING BASICS

Phil Lo 20230911

There are two basic approaches for pairing wine with food. One is to pair them such that the wine and food complement each other in a harmonious way. The other is to pair them such that their characteristics contrast each other. Sounds very simple, right? But then things get complicated because both food and wine are not simple entities which come with only one characteristic. They both are complex. So, these two simple basic rules become very hard in practice. But it also means that there are a lot of possibilities for you to experiment.

Then there is this thing that every rule comes with exceptions! You probably heard of red wine with red meat and white wine with fish. Try a red Beaujolais with grilled fish and you will be surprised how well they go together. Or, try a steak with a hearty white Rhone wine.

Some pairings are like marriages made in heaven. For example, Chianti and Italian food made with tomato sauce or a grilled steak with a robust Cabernet Sauvignon. Your first thought is probably the acidity in the Chianti complements the acidity of the tomato sauce. But there is more. The acid in the Chianti also contrasts the umami in the tomato sauce. Also, there are nuances in the Sangiovese grape that complement and contrast the spices and herbs used to make the tomato sauce. Similarly, you may think the tannins in the Cabernet contrasts the fat in the steak in a very flavourful way. But again, there is more.

The nuances of the Cabernet in your nose and palate such as the plum, cloves, violet, spices and vanilla also complement the complexity found in the meat and the spices in making the sauce, and the searing process of cooking and transforming the meat. If a lot of black pepper is used on the steak, you would also have the opportunity to call for a Syrah.

The message in the last paragraph is that you need to think of the complexity and nuances of both the food and the wine for an excellent pairing. You will have fun in experimenting in an event such as the upcoming Plate and Palate. But what happens at a restaurant where you only have a menu and a wine list? In this case, the sommelier will be your best friend. Don't be intimidated by the sommelier. A good sommelier knows his list and also knows his chef's food. What spices and herbs were used to marinate, to make the sauces. Use his knowledge for a perfect pairing. Of course, you will have to steer him towards what food you have in mind. And if you can ask him intelligent questions about some wines in the list you have in mind, so much better.

I can go on and on with things such as a Chardonnay with round mouthfeel with shellfish or a Pinot Noir with tuna or a freshy Sauvignon Blanc with salmon, etc. But I will leave that for a later day. Have fun experimenting in the Plate and Palate!



## OUR BENEFITS & PARTNERS

In addition to our club's fantastic tasting events, all members receive great discounts thru our partners. Present your Membership card for discount. Check out their websites for their curated wine tastings.

### *Craft Cellars*

[www.craftcellars.ca](http://www.craftcellars.ca)

1345 - 32 Avenue N.E., Calgary

### *Crowfoot Wine & Spirits*

[www.crowfootliquor.com](http://www.crowfootliquor.com)

### *Highlander Wine & Spirits*

[www.highlanderwine.com](http://www.highlanderwine.com)

### *Kensington Wine Market*

[www.kensingtonwinemarket.com](http://www.kensingtonwinemarket.com)

1257 Kensington Road N.W.

### *Market Wines*

[www.marketwines.ca](http://www.marketwines.ca)

520 77 Avenue SE (Calgary Farmers Market)

4109 University Avenue N.W.

### *Metrovino*

[www.metrovino.com](http://www.metrovino.com)

722 - 11 Avenue S.W.

### *Richmond Hill Wines*

[www.richmondhillwines.com](http://www.richmondhillwines.com)

108, 3 – 51 Street S.W.

### *Rocky Mountain Wines, Spirits & Beer*

[www.rockymountainwinespiritsbeer.com](http://www.rockymountainwinespiritsbeer.com)

225 – 58 Avenue S.E.

### *Vine Styles*

[Vinestyles.ca](http://Vinestyles.ca)

1127b Kensington Rd NW (downstairs)



## **MEMBERSHIP 2024**

A reminder that FOV memberships 2023 expire on December 31.

2024 memberships are \$30.00 per person.

Register for 2024 at <https://zone4.ca/reg.asp?id=32633> website [www.friendsofthevinecalgary.com](http://www.friendsofthevinecalgary.com) has membership renewal and event information and can always be checked for details.

## **FOV 2023/24 Board Volunteers**

You can contact the Board Volunteers by sending an email to [info@friendsofthevinecalgary.com](mailto:info@friendsofthevinecalgary.com).

Debra Johnstone – Membership & Marketing

Doug Crapo – Industry Wine Coordinator

Florence Haliburton – Systems and Data Information

JC Cornell – Website and Social Media

Judy Hunt – General

Margo Frederickson – Secretary

Marion Hurley – Newsletter

Mary Kupchenko Hill – Website and Social Media

Mike Buckley – Treasurer

Phil Lo – Wine Educator

Ray Todd – President

Sheena Woodhead – Treasurer Shadowing

Tara Glumac – Vice President

**ENJOY THIS BEAUTIFUL FALL!**