



TASTING NOTEBOOK

TAKE THE TIME TO TASTE,
UNDERSTAND AND REMEMBER



THE WINE CELLAR

OVER 800 WINE STYLES AVAILABLE AT
CAVE ESSENTIELLE

The collection comprises rosé, white and red wines, champagnes, spirits, Japanese sake, teas and coffees. Each product is tasted, assessed and approved to the highest standards by our team, to ensure a selection that combines quality, authenticity and character.

This constant pursuit of excellence results in a range featuring the finest French and international brands.

Renowned for the rigour of its selection and the judiciousness of its choices, Cave Essentielle is now the preferred partner of many exceptional restaurants. Over the years, the business has developed partnerships with renowned houses and estates, including the Henri Giraud Champagne House, the Billecart-Salmon Champagne House, Château Malherbe, the Bollinger Champagne House as well as the prestigious Riedel crystalware company, an international benchmark in the art of wine tasting.

THE VINEYARD

THE RICHNESS OF FRANCE'S WINE HERITAGE IS ONE OF THE
CORNERSTONES OF THE CAVE ESSENTIELLE SELECTION

From the grands crus of Bordeaux to the wines of Burgundy,
from the freshness of the Loire terroirs to the sun-kissed expressions of the Rhône Valley, via the finesse of the
wines of Alsace, Champagne, the Jura, Savoie,
Provence, Languedoc-Roussillon and even Corsica, each region reveals a unique identity shaped by its terroir, its climate and the
expertise of its winemakers.

Faithful to this exceptional diversity, Cave Essentielle selects both iconic wineries and more exclusive properties, prioritising
above all authenticity,
excellence and the emotional experience of tasting.

This approach enables us to offer a collection that is representative of the richness of French vineyards, capable of meeting
the expectations of discerning wine lovers
as well as the finest gourmet restaurants.



THE VINE

EVERY STAGE OF THE VINE'S LIFE EXPRESSES THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF ITS TERROIR,
INFLUENCED BY THE CLIMATE, THE SOIL AND THE WINE-GROWER'S SKILL

From winter pruning to the harvest, every stage of the growing cycle helps to reveal the
unique character of each vintage.

After the harvest, the grapes are vinified with precision to preserve
the full aromatic richness of the fruit.

Fermentation, ageing in tanks or oak barrels, blending and bottling are all stages that shape the wine's identity.
Behind every bottle lies a living heritage, inherited from several millennia of tradition, enriched by innovation
and the constant pursuit of excellence.

At Cave Essentielle, this wine culture guides every selection we make.

We prioritise estates where respect for the vines, the expression of the terroir and
mastery of winemaking methods come together to produce exceptional wines, true
to their origins and the vision of their creators.

TASTING

EVERY WINE TELLS A STORY THAT UNFOLDS IN THREE STAGES:

Appearance

The first impression comes from observation.

The wine's colour, clarity, brilliance and intensity offer valuable clues as to its age, grape variety or even its production method. The nuances evolve over time: a white wine may reveal hues ranging from pale yellow to golden, whilst a red wine takes on ruby, garnet or brick-red hues as the years go by.

The nose

The nose is an essential stage of the tasting.

An initial sniff allows you to appreciate the purity and intensity of the aromas. After gently swirling the glass, the wine releases its full aromatic palette: floral notes, fresh or candied fruit, citrus, spices, forest floor, roasted notes, cocoa and even mineral nuances. This aromatic richness reflects the expression of the grape variety, the terroir and the ageing methods.

The taste

On the palate, the wine reveals its balance. The attack, texture, freshness, tannic structure, roundness and length combine to create a unique sensory experience. The flavours perceived on the nose often linger on the palate, complemented by the texture and aromatic persistence – the true hallmark of great wines. A harmonious tasting experience is characterised by a balance between acidity, tannins, alcohol and the richness of the fruit, offering an elegant and memorable finish.

Taking the time to observe, smell and taste allows you to better understand each wine and appreciate its full personality. Tasting then becomes a moment of discovery, sharing and emotion, where each bottle reveals the unique expression of its terroir.

The rule of terroir

For centuries, produce from the same region has evolved together, shaped by a shared climate, soil and culinary heritage.

This proximity creates pairings of remarkable harmony. An alpine cheese comes into its own with a wine from its mountain range, whilst a river fish finds its perfect match in a neighbouring vineyard.

More than just a tradition, the rule of terroir embodies a cultural and gustatory coherence.

The principle of non-competition between flavours

A great pairing also rests on mutual respect for each other's aromatic expressions.

The aim is never to pit two powerful personalities against one another,

but to create a harmony in which each finds its place. A particularly oaky, concentrated or tannic wine can mask the finesse of a subtle dish.

The sommelier's role is therefore to seek out a complementarity where the aromas respond to one another, extend one another or enhance one another, without competing.

Vertical pairing

Vertical pairing involves establishing a direct link between the dominant flavours of the dish and the wine's characteristics. Acidity calls for freshness; richness is balanced by liveliness; whilst tannins soften when paired with protein. This 'vertical' approach allows for the creation of precise pairings, where every element of the dish finds its counterpart in the wine. The overall experience then gains in intensity, length and elegance.

Pairings based on complementarity and contrast

Whilst some pairings seek similarity, others deliberately play on contrast. The freshness of a wine can lighten the richness of a sauce; a slight sweetness can temper a hint of spice; whilst minerality adds tension to a creamy texture.

The key lies in mastering the balance: a successful contrast never creates a jarring effect, but rather a dynamic that enriches the tasting experience.

Balance above all else

Beyond the technical principles, the best pairing is one that evokes emotion.

The intensity of the wine must match that of the dish; the textures must interact with finesse; the aromas must linger naturally; and the finish must leave an impression of unity.

A great food and wine pairing does not seek to demonstrate a rule: it tells a story, that of a balance in which food and wine enhance one another to offer an exceptional gastronomic experience.

THE TERMS

THE LANGUAGE OF TASTING

SIGHT

Intensity

Pale | Medium | Intense

Colours



NOSE

THE TASTE

Sweetness

Dry • Semi-dry
Mellow Sweet

Acidity

Low • Medium
High

Tannins

Low • Medium
Strong

Body

Light • Medium
Full-bodied

Flavours

Primary • Secondary
Tertiary

Finish

Short • Medium
Long

Conclusion

Overall quality: Faulty, Mediocre, Acceptable, Good, Very good, Excellent Ageing potential: Too young, Good ageing potential, Ready to drink, Too old

FLAVOURS

PRIMARY AROMAS AND FLAVOURS

Floral

Acacia, Honeysuckle, Chamomile, Elderflower, Geranium, Flowers, Rose, Violet

Green fruits

Apple, Gooseberry, Pear, English sweet, Quince, Raisin

Citrus

Grapefruit, Lemon, Lime, Orange peel, Lemon peel

Fruits

Stone fruits: Peach, Apricot, Nectarine

Exotic fruits: Banana, Lychee, Mango, Melon, Passion fruit, Pineapple Red fruits: Redcurrant, Cranberry, Raspberry, Strawberry, Cherry, Red plum Dark fruits: Blackcurrant, Blackberry, Wild berries, Blueberry, Black cherry, Blue plum

Dried / cooked fruit: Fig, prune, raisins, currants, kirsch, jam

Plant-based

Green pepper, Chopped herbs, Tomato leaf, Asparagus, Blackcurrant leaves, Eucalyptus, Mint, Medicinal plants, Lavender, Fennel, Dill

Spices

White pepper, Black pepper, Liquorice

Other

Flint, Wet stones, Wet wool

SECONDARY AROMAS AND FLAVOURS

Yeasts

Biscuits, Bread, Toast, Pastries, Brioche, Bread dough, Cheese

Dairy products

Butter, Cheese, Cream

Oak

Vanilla, Clove, Nutmeg, Coconut, Salted butter caramel, Toast, Cedar, Burnt wood, Smoke, Chocolate, Coffee, Resin

TERTIARY AROMAS AND FLAVOURS

Deliberate oxidation

Almond, Marzipan, Hazelnut, Walnut, Chocolate, Coffee, Caramel sweet, Caramel

Development of white fruit notes

Dried apricot, Marmalade, Dried apple, Dried banana, etc.

Development of red fruit notes

Fig, prune, tar, dried blackberry, dried cranberry, cooked blackberry, etc.

Ageing in the bottle (white)

Petrol, Kerosene, Cinnamon, Ginger, Nutmeg, Toasted bread, Dried fruit, Mushroom, Hay,
Honey

Ageing in the bottle (red)

Leather, undergrowth, earth, mushrooms, game, tobacco, vegetal notes, wet leaves,
farmyard

TASTING NO. _____

DATE ____/____/____

The Wine

Name of the wine _____

Estate / Producer _____

Appellation _____

Vintage _____

Type of wine _____



The view

Intensity ☐ Low ☐ Medium ☐ Intense

Colour _____ Highlights Clarity

☐ Clear ☐ Slightly cloudy ☐ Cloudy



Taste

Mild _____

Acidity _____

Tannins _____

Body _____

Flavours _____

Finish _____

OVERALL RATING
/ 20



The nose

Intensity

☐ Low

☐ Medium

☐ Intense

Aromas



Red
berries



Dark
fruits



White fruits



Citrus



I



Spicy



H

Mineral



y

Roasted



Buttery

Development _____

Conclusion

Overall quality: ☐ Faulty ☐ Poor ☐ Acceptable ☐ Good ☐ Very good ☐ Excellent

Ageing potential: ☐ Too young ☐ Good ageing potential ☐ Ready to drink ☐ Too old

Food and wine pairings: