



WINE NOTES

By Dorothy J. Gaiter and John Brecher

IN THE YEARS we have been writing our Tastings column, which appears on Fridays, we have received thousands of questions about wine from readers. In this column, we answer some questions that touch on common themes. We have edited the questions for space. If you have a question, drop us a note at wine@wsj.com. Be sure to include your full name, city and state.

HOW DO YOU SAY THAT?

I have often struggled with how to say the names of many wines, particularly the French. Is there a site that has the phonetic names?

—Doug Engelhart, Knoxville, Tenn.

Thanks to the wonder of the Internet, there now are all sorts of sites that will help with pronunciation. Some will even say the word for you.

For instance, try wineloverspage.com (search for “lexicon”), louislatour.com (sound library is in the “Terroirs” tab), bbr.com (search for “pronunciation”), stratsplace.com (look for it in the “Wonderful World of Wine” section) and tasters-guildny.com (in the “All About Wine” section). But don’t let a lack of linguistic skills keep you from enjoying wine. After all, very few people can pronounce words in every language, from *Trockenbeerenauslese* to *Vacqueyras*. Not only that, but “correct” pronunciation is often a matter of opinion or regional preference. We both grew up in the South, so we know that Coca-Cola is pronounced *Co-cola*, but we’ll still offer a Coke to someone who mispronounces it.

GETTING STARTED WITH WINE

I am a 25-year-old professional who has yet to learn how to appreciate wine. How do I get started?

—Francis Quimby,
New Brunswick, N.J.

There are more and more wine courses being offered all over the country. If you missed our column about that, drop us a note at wine@wsj.com and we’ll send it along. In addition, you might want to read our book “The Wall Street Journal Guide to Wine: New and Improved.” In the long run, though, the only way to really learn to appreciate wine is by drinking it. Find a good, patient wine merchant—there are many of them out there—and buy a case of wine. Set yourself a price limit—say, \$100—and tell the merchant you want

a mixed case of wine from all over that will not exceed that limit. Put the wines in a dark place with a moderate, constant temperature, like the bottom of your closet, and drink up. Try to take some notes on the ones you like, especially the ones you might want to try again. When those are gone, buy another mixed case of wines that are new to you. Now is a great time to be discovering wine because there are so many reasonably priced, tasty wines available from all over the world. Enjoy the journey!



SAVED BY SANGRIA

A few weeks ago, someone asked what you do if you open a bottle of wine and do not like it. What I do with wine I don’t particularly care for is make sangria.

—Helen Diehl, Ivyland, Pa.

As it happens, we are often asked for a recipe for sangria, but we don’t make sangria, so we asked Ms. Diehl for hers, and we must say this sounds mighty tasty to us. We understand that there are a million recipes for sangria, but here’s hers:

- 1 bottle red wine (750 ml)
 - ¼ cup sugar
 - ½ cup brandy
 - ½ cup Cointreau
 - 1 orange, lime and lemon, seeded and thinly sliced into wedges
 - 1 apple, cored and thinly sliced into wedges
 - 1½ cups seltzer (12 ounces)
- Make a syrup by mixing sugar and 2 tablespoons of wine in a microwave-safe container. Microwave the sugar and wine mixture for one minute and stir to dissolve the sugar into the wine. Pour remaining wine into a large pitcher and stir in syrup, brandy and Cointreau. Add sliced fruit to pitcher and stir to combine. Allow mixture to marinate overnight (or at least a few hours) in refrigerator, covered. Before serving, add seltzer and stir gently to combine.

—Melanie Grayce West
contributed to this column.