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Tis' the Season
10 件新婚厨具好礼

TYING KNOTS WITH
THE BEST VENUES

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Nuptial Icings
糕上添花
最 in 花朵婚礼蛋糕

南腔北调



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A Chinese Consumer's Guide to Becoming a Certified Wine Geek (Part II)

I now continue with my suggestions for all aspiring Chinese wine geeks. If you successfully digested Part I and Part II (Steps One & Two), you're ready for Part II Step Three. Just this Step and Part III and you'll be certified. So pay attention.

Step Three: Mastering "Wine Flights"

As a Chinese wine authority when you arrive at a restaurant or bar the question becomes: How best to further your wine education, while exhibiting your new found understanding of wine for one and all to worship your every word? The answer at a growing number of bars and restaurants in Asia is "Wine Flights". Even if you have not as yet been to a place that is forward thinking enough to offer wine flights to their guests, you must know what they are and if they are not offered, you should politely ask if they will sell you and your friends one or more "flights" of wines to try.

If you are not offered pre-set flights of wines the bar or restaurant has composed, simply select three red wines; three white wines; or three Champagnes and/or sparkling wines that you want to try and compare with one another. You may try all the same varietal (like Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Shiraz,

etc.) or you may mix varietals. It is best not to mix colors, however, so do not choose a red and two whites or the reverse, for example.

A wine flight consists of three 50-60ml tastes of different wines. The glasses should be tasting glasses, which are about half the size of a normal wine glass. The tasting glasses might be around 230ml to 250ml for still wines and 120ml to 180ml for Champagne or sparkling wines. The reason for this is that you will be poured three 50-60ml "tastes", which collectively, just

happens to equal a normal wine by the glass portion (150ml-180ml), but divided among three glasses, rather than all in one glass. So for wine flights, a smaller glass makes much better sense, since it is a "tasting", not a drinking.

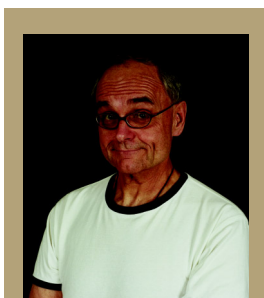
Wine flights are both educational as well as entertaining. Unless a bar or restaurant does not offer wine flights as a practice, every wine flight should come with either a wine tasting paper placemat with three circles to position the wine glasses in front of you; individual wine placemat coasters that are placed underneath each wine glass; or a wine card placed in front of the array of three tasting glasses. No matter the style of placemats or wine cards, they must always have the most important information about each wine as well as a place for tasting notes. You should take the placemat or card home to save as a reference should you want to purchase one of the wines for enjoying at home or as part of your "wine library".

The wine flight glasses are placed horizontally in front of you in a row. The wines should always be poured where you are seated, at the table or the bar. You should always see the bottles and watch the wines being poured to insure that you are being served exactly what you ordered and to enhance your education and entertainment. Since the wines are all clearly identified by the placemat, the server as well as the customer always knows which glass must be filled with which wine. Each wine should be identified with the following information: The grape variety (or varietals and the percentage of each if it is a blend of more than one variety); if it has a "proprietary" or given name by the winery, then that name; the vintage, unless it is a "non-vintage"; tasting notes from the winemaker and plenty of lined space for tasting notes.

Tasting samples of wine should be done exactly as one would taste wine by the glass; examine each glass to determine the clarity and color of the wines; next focus on the nose or bouquet; then taste the wine and of course if you have a great wine in front of you, revel in the after taste. And try stopping after just one flight; you and your friends will be having so much fun, it will be next to impossible.

Live from China, I am **Red Fred**. Red as the love that is the love of my life.

To be Continued... ★



Fred Tibitts Jr. is a global wine consultant based in New York. He assists some of the top hotel and restaurant chains in the U.S. and Asia Pacific developing their wine by the glass programs, leading educational trips to wine producing countries and hosting VIP industry dinners at New York and across Asia.