

# LA CREMA WINERY'S GUIDE TO WINE TASTING PARTIES

## LA CREMA

Combining great wines, great friends and great food? What better way to spend an evening.

### GUEST LIST

Consider your space — how many people can fit comfortably around your dining room table or living room? Typically **5 - 8** guests is easiest for conversations. Also consider the level of your group's wine knowledge. Whether connoisseurs or casual wine fans, you can provide some quick tasting tips to help everyone come away with a better understanding of what's in their glass.

### PARTY STYLE

Framing your tasting and choosing wine is part of the fun. Use location as your guide—Napa, Sonoma and France, for example. Choose different varietals, or choose several examples of the same varietal to taste differences in terroir and style.

As specialists in cool-climate varietals, we like to choose a Pinot Gris, two Chardonnays and three Pinot Noirs.

### HOW MUCH WINE TO BUY?

#### *For tasting:*

Taste = **2** oz pour

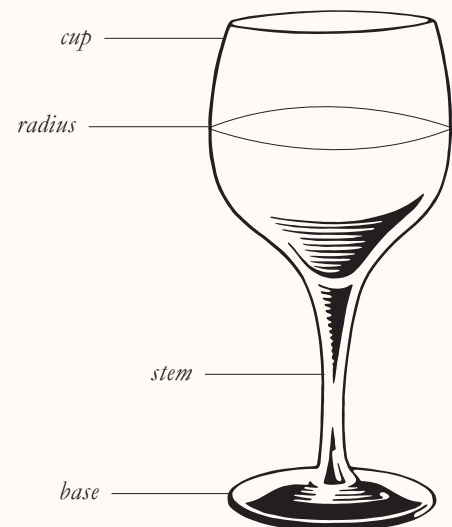
**1** - 750 ml bottle = **12** 2 oz pours

#### *For enjoying:*

Standard glass of wine = **5** oz

**1** - 750 ml bottle = **5** glasses

We recommend having two bottles of each wine you'd like to sample, so you have enough to enjoy a full glass once the hard work of ranking is finished!



## SERVING TEMPERATURE

### *White Wine*

Serve between **45** and **50°F**

If white wine is served too cold, flavors and aromas will be masked. Too warm and they become flat and flabby. Chill whites for 45 minutes to 1 hour.

### *Red Wine*

Serve between **55** and **65°F**

Red wine will seem excessively tannic and acidic if served too cold. Too warm, they will become overly alcoholic and lifeless. Chill room-temperature bottles for 10-15 minutes in the refrigerator.

## GLASSWARE AND SUPPLIES

If possible, have one glass for each wine for each guest. Don't have a full rack of glasses? No worries. Another great option is one white wine glass and one red wine glass for each person. You can even just give everyone one glass — choose one with a wide bowl and narrow rim.

It's also good to provide water glasses for clearing the palate, and a “dump bucket” in case a guest prefers to empty their wineglass or spit instead of drinking each sample.

Grab a few corkscrews, too!

The day of your party, set out pens, wine score cards and a few of the Wine Words sheets (pg. 5) to help get discussion flowing.



## NIBBLES

Offer a neutral cracker to cleanse palates between wines. After the formal tasting is done, let everyone try their hand at wine-and-cheese pairings.

Choose a selection of cheeses with diversity in mind. Source selections from different animals (cow, sheep, goat), different countries, and especially different flavor and textural profiles. A plate of three soft cheeses isn't nearly as exciting to your taste buds as a mixture of soft, semi-soft and hard cheeses. For example, triple crème brie, smoked gouda, goat cheese and Reggiano Parmesan.

### *To pair, we enjoy:*

Chardonnay with Triple Crème Brie



Pinot Noir with Fiscalini Cheddar



Rose with Goat Cheese

## OTHER IDEAS INCLUDE:

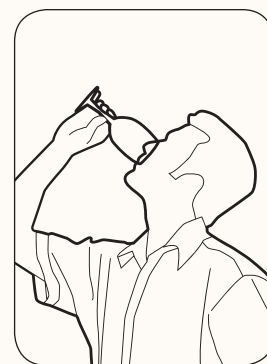
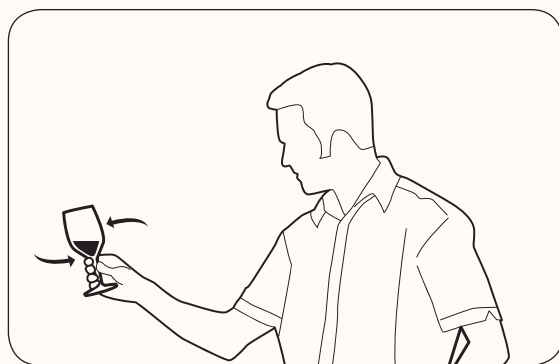
- Honey or truffle-infused honey
- Marcona almonds
- Quince paste (membrillo in Spain)
- Dried figs or cherries
- Fresh grapes, figs, pears or apples
- Sliced fresh baguette, as well as something crunchy like crackers or crostini
- Hot Coppa
- Smoked Prosciutto
- Cold Smoked Salmon
- Gourmet Olives
- Peppadew peppers



## SERVING & TASTING

Taste from lightest-bodied to fullest-bodied wine and use all your senses.

1. *See:* Notice color and clarity
2. *Swirl:* Swirl wine in the bowl of the glass to release aromas
3. *Sniff:* Take several short, deep sniffs. Get your nose right in there!
4. *Sip:* Roll the wine around your mouth. Slurp in a bit of air if you feel confident.
5. *Savor:* Swallow (or spit) and notice how the wine lingers in your mouth.
6. *Share:* Talk about it! Describe your experience and compare with your friends.



What celebrity would this wine be?

.....  
.....

If this wine was a fashion accessory, what would it be?

.....  
.....

What food would you pair with this wine?

.....  
.....

What kind of book would pair with this wine?

.....  
.....

Who is the best person to share this with?

.....  
.....

# WINE WORDS

Thought starters to help you describe what's in your glass.

## COLOR

Garnet  
Brick  
Tawny  
Ruby Red  
Soft Red  
Red Brown  
Amber  
Gold  
Pale Gold  
Straw

## FRUIT

Pear  
Peach  
Grapefruit  
Orange  
Lemon  
Tropical  
Green Apple  
Baked Apple  
Melon  
Strawberry  
Raspberry  
Blackberry  
Blueberry  
Cranberry  
Plum  
Bing Cherry  
Jam  
Raisin  
Prune

## FLORAL

Rose  
Violet

## SPICE

Herbal  
Anise  
Licorice  
Sage  
Cinnamon  
Clove  
Pepper  
Mint

## BAKING

Chocolate  
Cocoa  
Cola  
Molasses  
Caramel  
Vanilla  
Butterscotch  
Custard  
Butter  
Cream  
Hazelnut  
Almond  
Toast

## VEGETABLE

Mushroom  
Green Pepper  
Olive

## SAVORY

Bacon  
Smoke  
Tabaco  
Leather  
Espresso  
Ocean  
Chalk  
Hay  
Straw  
Stone  
Forest Floor  
Dirt  
Mineral

## TEXTURE

Lush  
Velvet  
Crisp  
Clean  
Chemical  
Full  
Light

## OTHER

Ava Gardner in a Glass  
Barnyard  
Brooding  
Burt Rubber  
Burnt Toast  
Forest Floor  
Dirty, Sexy Tennis Shoes  
Fruit Bomb  
Petrol  
Voluptuous  
Tight  
Muscular  
Thin  
Sexy  
Alluring  
Sleek  
Syrupy  
Sappy  
Sassy  
Playful  
Bombshell  
Masculine  
Rugged  
Delicate  
Powerful  
Balanced  
Vivid  
Muted





# WINE SCORECARD

Evaluate & Note Your Favorites

WINE #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Description:

← *not my favorite* *madly in love* →

WINE #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Description:

← *not my favorite* *madly in love* →

WINE #3: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Description:

← *not my favorite* *madly in love* →

WINE #4: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Description:

← *not my favorite* *madly in love* →

WINE #5: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Description:

← *not my favorite* *madly in love* →

WINE #6: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Description:

← *not my favorite* *madly in love* →

WINE TASTING MAT

Winery

Wine

Vintage

Varietal

LA CREMA