

The best way to market fine wine: Teach and learn or wine and dine?

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According to new research, wine promoters may want to spend more money on brochures and flyers and less money on wine tastings as they market to novice wine drinkers. A recent study published in *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly* (a SAGE journal) finds that without teaching about the background and process of wine production, new wine drinkers can be more easily influenced by advertising to make their purchases than their experienced counterparts.

Authors Kathryn A. LaTour, Michael S. LaTour, and Andrew H. Feinstein wrote that while the sensory approach used by most [wine](#) restaurateurs and marketers to promote expensive wines are beneficial for expert wine drinkers, new [wine drinkers](#) can be easily swayed by competing marketing material that can overwhelm their own personal preferences despite having tasted a different wine. To combat this problem, the authors suggest that wine producers combine the experience of tasting their wines with background material that guides the learning process in a creative way.

"As the consumers acquire experience in a product category, they acquire... knowledge that allows them to categorize marketing communications (such as 'this does or does not describe the product')," the authors wrote. "That information can be used to strengthen their judgments and to shape their expectations for future product encounters."

The authors conducted two experiments in which they tested a total of

375 participants with varying levels of wine expertise. They concluded that novice wine consumers were able to create a stronger memory of their wine tasting experience if they better understood the background of the product.

"Additional learning steps for novices have to be taken even when the quality to the trained palate and nose is unmistakable," wrote the authors. "This is not to say that the 'mystery' and 'romance' for higher end wines is a thing of the past. To be swept off one's feet requires 'cultivation.'"

More information: The article "The Effects of Perceptual and Conceptual Training on Novice Wine Drinkers' Development" in Cornell Hospitality Quarterly is available free for a limited time at: [cqx.sagepub.com/content/early/ ... 420695.full.pdf+html](http://cqx.sagepub.com/content/early/.../420695.full.pdf+html)

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