

How does your wine make you feel?

August 29 2014, by Robyn Mills



University of Adelaide researchers are investigating the links between wine, where it's consumed and emotion to help the Australian wine industry gain deeper consumer insights into their products.

A trial is being carried out involving 360 wine consumers who have been sampling specific wines in different environments, and rating their emotional response on a specially devised 'wine emotion scale'.

"There has been a lot of work done on sensory analysis of wine so we now have a very good idea of what consumers like about wine," says project leader Dr Sue Bastian, Senior Lecturer in Oenology and Sensory Studies, in the School of Agriculture, Food and Wine.

"But just knowing what flavours consumers like and don't like is not enough. We need to learn from the food and perfume industries and understand how wines affect our emotions - and the role emotions play in influencing what we choose to drink at certain occasions and how emotions affect our purchasing decisions."

Over the past 18 months in preparation for the consumer trial:

- Experts have helped to identify four distinct quality levels of 100 Australian Shiraz wines;
- Consumer focus groups were used to validate a wine emotion scale;
- A trained tasting panel compiled detailed sensory profiles of 40 of the 100 wines, chosen as distinct examples of their quality groups;
- 12 wines were finally selected to make three flights of four wines (one from each quality group) for random allocation to the trial participants.

The participants then blind tasted four wines in three different settings - a restaurant, at home and in the sensory laboratory. They rated 19 different emotions the wines may have prompted ranging from warm-hearted or nostalgic through to tense or irritated on a scale of 1-9 (not-at-all to extremely).

"There are characters in wines which may generate negative emotion; but we also want to understand what it is about wine which drives positive emotion," says Dr Bastian.

"We are also looking at how the wine setting, for example drinking in a restaurant as opposed to home, impacts the emotions that are stimulated as well as how the consumers like the wines and their perceptions of [wine quality](#) and the price they are prepared to pay.

"And we're investigating how consumer research lab results compare to those from more natural settings of home and restaurant to see if lab data can successfully predict consumer decisions compared to using more representative places and measures of consumer behaviour.

"Ultimately we want to have a clear understanding of our [emotional response](#) to wines and help the Australian [wine](#) industry, worth over \$2.4 billion domestically, utilise this knowledge in its product development, differentiation and marketing."

Provided by University of Adelaide

Citation: How does your wine make you feel? (2014, August 29) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-08-wine.html>

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