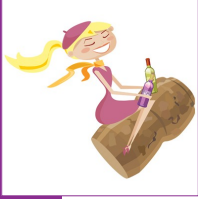


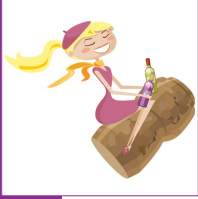
## Wine Touring Survival Guide!



# WINEAGOGO™

- 1) If you plan to be tasting wine at a number of wineries, have a designated driver. It's amazing how quickly those little pours, can end up with you dancing on the tasting bar! If everyone in your group wants to join in on the merry-making, hire a private tour company. (The fun is guaranteed. The bar-top dancing is optional.)
- 2) Buy something...even if it's just a small trinket from the gift shop. Many wineries are family owned and operated and do not make an exorbitant living. Think of it as Wine Karma: Do what you can to support their business and the wine will be ever flowing. Namaste.
- 3) Spitting is good! After half-dozen-or-so tastings, the warm and fuzzies will set in for sure! Spit with confidence, and be rest assured: spitting *is* acceptable. You're there for the experience, not to get giggly.
- 4) Even if you have no time restraints in the day, try to limit yourself to 3 or 4 wineries. After that, you'll start to feel like a 5 year-old, who has been at Disneyland for 3 hours, too long. Two words: Sensory overload. Your taste buds will become numb, and the wineries and the wine, will begin to look the same. Start fresh tomorrow.
- 5) Take the time to really "get" to know the winery. Allow about an hour per stop. If they offer tours, take one! It is amazing what you will learn on how they produce that delicious bottle of wine. Taking the extra time will also help you get to know the people behind the bottle, and their passion for what they do!
- 6) Consider NOT eating the cheese that may be offered on some tasting bars. Why? Proteins, like cheese, soften the tannins in the wine and coat the tongue, making it appear silkier and smoother. Not that it's a bad thing, except it may mask un-wanted flaws or flavours. Instead, have a cracker to clear the palate.
- 7) Ooooooh...they have "expensive" wines to try! Pay the small charge and go for it. This is a rare opportunity to try the winery's finest offerings and pick up a bottle to tuck away for a special occasion. Down the road, the inexpensive stuff won't hold the same sentimental value.
- 8) You may smell as fresh as a daisy, but never, and we mean NEVER, wear perfumes or colognes to tasting rooms or to wine events. You cannot truly "get" the wine if all you can smell is "Axe Body Spray" on the person beside you...ick.
- 9) They say never wear white after Labour Day. Even in the peak of summer, we don't recommend wearing *anything* white when you're out tasting wine. Chances are, you will end up standing next to a group (who had been to 6 wineries prior), and you may end up wearing the wine. 'Nuf said.

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10) Be nice to the wonderful people behind the tasting bar – especially in the summer. Chances are, they've poured for countless people before you that day. Once again, think of it as Wine Karma: If you are sweet and lovable, they may offer something special for you to try.

11) Don't reach for your Clorets! Mints, gum, or candies will affect the flavour of the wine. And not in a good way. If you do have non-wine flavours going on in your mouth, have a glass of water or a cracker. Be sure also, to not to judge the wine until your second sample!

12) Forget the wine snob's ABCs (Anything But Chardonnay). Seriously people, those days are over. Even if you *think* you don't care for a particular grape, this is an opportunity for your palate to explore uncharted territory! As Lululemon states on their famous bags...do one thing a day that scares you. Try that Chardonnay on the tasting list, you wild animal!

13) We finally have a reason to use that little black moleskin Santa put in your stocking last year. Bring it along and fill it with your tasting notes. It will help keep your memories of the wineries and the wines intact!

14) Ah...the dreaded hangover. One way to prevent them from setting in (besides not drinking too much) is to drink oodles of water! When you are exploring the wineries, take a bottle with you (water, not wine) to have on hand at all times!

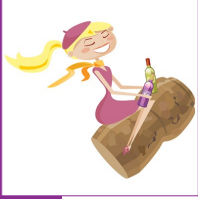
15) There is never a question that is too silly to ask. This is a great way to learn about the winery and the people behind the bottle! The winemakers and vintners would be more than happy to share their story with you...unless you start asking things like "So, like, what's your sign" or "Do you like pina coladas and dancing in the rain"? Then it becomes creepy....

16) Tried a wine that you particularly did not enjoy? Please refrain from using comments like "That tastes like a farm " or "I detect a hint of dog vomit on the palate". Wine is subjective and everyone will get something different out of each and every wine. Just politely tip the wine into the bucket that is provided, and carry on.

17) Purchasing wine from the winery is like taking home the best souvenir that you can. Months, maybe even years from now, you will open that bottle, and think about the incredible experience you had. Priceless.

18) Unless you are a week away from your debut on the Victoria Secret's runway....eat! As we all know, your body will not absorb the alcohol as fast if you have a solid meal before going out. You could become very impaired, very quickly, without even drinking very much.

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19) Ask the winery if they have anything to try that maybe is not on the tasting list. Sometimes you may find that they have a library wine, or a new release, that they have just opened that day. You have nothing to lose and only great wines to gain, as you may only be there once!

20) Wine Clubs. Most wineries today will have a wine club of some sort. Either in the form of a free newsletter, or a quarterly or bi-annual shipments of their wine. The wine you will receive is usually of a premium calibre, or they will do releases that would not be offered to the general public. Plus, they will keep you cellar stocked! It's like bringing the wine shop to you...Nice!

21) Have fun! Many feel intimidated when they walk through the doors of a winery, because of their lack of wine knowledge. The key is to let whoever that is helping you, know that you are bit of a newbie. Guaranteed, they will shower you with more information than you would ever remember. You could become a proud cork-dork just after just one visit!

22) Plan to visit the wineries earlier in the morning, and then plan to have a picnic lunch mid- afternoon. Many of the wineries will be quite busy in the afternoon, and the staff will not have as much time to spend with you. Have you ever tried to do a tasting with a bus tour containing 55 other thirsty people?

23) If the winery requires an appointment to come by and taste their wines, do not let that deter you from going. Many wineries do this to ensure they staff on hand and they can give you the attention you deserve. It could be an amazing way to try the wines in a more personal atmosphere.

24) What is a better pairing with wine, than entertainment at the same time? Some wineries hold cultural events, art exhibits, or even concerts. The backdrop of the vineyards and/or winery, or if you are lucky enough, the event will be held right in the cellar. Very fabulous!

25) Be sure to not pass over the farm-gate wineries here in BC . Many are award winners and some of their wines are only available to purchase in their wine shop . Plus, most likely the person behind the tasting bar is either the winemaker or vintner; brimming with stories a passion they would eagerly love to share.

26) Another way to see the wineries...is by bike. It is a great option, especially at the busier wineries to avoiding any parking hassles. Only catch...watch how much you consume, pack a water bottle..and wear a helmet!

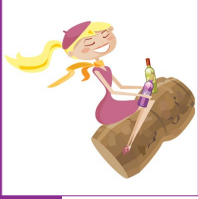
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- 27) You have the most adorable little bambinos and you would love to expose them to the history and culture of wine! Ummmm, not a good idea. Wineries are generally not equipped with toys and colouring books to keep your kids entertained, while you soak up the wine and the atmosphere. Find a super fun sitter, and take the time out for yourself.
- 28) Give the winery that you plan to visit a jingle before hand to see if they offer tours. Tours are a great way to get behind the scenes look at the wineries operations. Many are by reservation only, or only held at certain times throughout the day. It's worth the quick call to avoid any disappointment!
- 29) Do not forget your wallet. Many wineries may charge a small fee to taste their wines. Plus, some cases the winery may have a wine that is not available anywhere else. You do not want to be missing out on that special buy.
- 30) Patience is a virtue. Especially when you are in the middle of the tourist season at the wineries. Just remember, the staff are trying to give each and every person that comes through those big cellar doors, a memorable experience.
- 31) Spit or swallow...what to do? Some people feel it is rude to spit the wine after tasting it. Well, it's not. Actually, that is how professionals do it; otherwise they would all be checking in at the Betty Ford clinic. Spitting is the new black, as far as wine etiquette goes.
- 32) Pop into the local visitor's center before starting your adventure. Not only are they filled with information...you will get the straight-up goods on where to go. While you are there, don't forget to buy a bumper sticker for your car... "I Heart BC Wine"!
- 33) Footwear. We cannot believe we are saying this...wear good, solid shoes. Sadly, fabulous footwear does not fare well in the vineyards and many wineries have flooring is either concert or hardwood. So leave the 4 inch Jimmy Choos safely in the car, and change back into them when you are off to dinner.
- 34) Private tour companies are a wonderful way to let someone else do the driving, so you can enjoy all the sensory pleasures of the wineries. Perks of using them are quite simple: they do the driving so you can sample the wines, they will have the insider's tips on what's hot and can provide a little history of the area

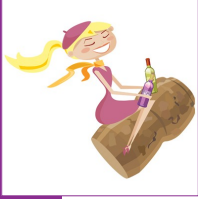
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- 35) If you have one winery tour planned for the day...that may be enough. There really are only a few variations on how to ferment grape juice! Maybe spend the time trying the same varietal at the different wineries, and compare how each winemaker has his/her own style to the grape.
- 36) Remember how Mom always said "Never judge a book by its cover". Well, the same goes for when you are trying wines, never judge a wine from your first try. The second time around, your palate will have been wiped clean of the previous wine or food you may have had. Give the wine a moment to linger in your mouth, and enjoy all that it has to offer!
- 37) Looking for a quaint place to dine, or a romantic inn to spend the night? A wealth of information and insiders tips can come from the staff at the winery. They usually are all local...and enjoy the same lifestyle that you do...good food, good wine and all other simple, but fabulous, pleasures in life.
- 38) Many wineries now offer quaint picnic areas; pick up a loaf of bread, enjoyed with a lovely bottle of their wine, and lay out a blanket in the most beautiful setting you could ever imagine. Question: is it ok to drink another wineries wine on their property? Answer: most definitely "no".
- 39) When going through the wine tasting process, follow the old saying of "white before reds, and dry before sweet." Otherwise your poor little palate will be turned upside down, and the wine will not taste right!
- 40) To rinse or not to rinse? You do not need to rinse your glass in-between wines, because if you do, it may water down the next offering you are about to taste. Rinse if you are going from a red to a white wine or from a sweet dessert wine.
- 41) Curious on how to hold a wine glass properly? Well the stem was put there for a reason. Hold your glass by the stem, always. If you hold it by the bowl, you will warm up the wine in the glass, leave nasty smudge marks, and even the scent of you lotion will interfere with the smell of your wine.
- 42) Wondered why sometime the people around you make that slurpy noise, when trying their wine? The reason for this is to aerate the wine in your mouth. This can be achieved by pretending you are sucking up a spaghetti noodle. Words of wisdom....practice this at home first. First-timers usually end up wearing their wine!

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43) Feeling a little under the weather...maybe pass on the wine touring today. If you are not able to smell your wine...it will not taste as it should. One suggestion we may have is that scotch is a next best option...it clears everything up and kills whatever ails you!

44) If you would like to help the aromas of your wine pop out of your glass better...give a swirl. For beginners, hold the glass on a flat surface, and move the glass in a circular motion! The longer you swirl it, more of the natural aromas will be released...10 seconds will do nicely. Think of how the wine has been trapped in the bottle for months, maybe even years, and it needs a breath of fresh air to come alive again!

45) Ever wondered how they get raspberry, citrus or the barnyard aromas and flavours into the wine? They do not add those items to the wine, nor put in any flavouring either. It is just the grape expressing its own personality, just as how an orange smells and tastes like an orange. So, do not worry if you have allergies to one of the descriptors; the wine will not make you break out in hives.

46) Even though we love the heat...our wine does not. If you are out visiting a number of wineries on a hot day, pack a cooler with ice packs to store your wine in (otherwise all it will be good for just cooking....if that...ick)

47) Pick up that phone (or hit the web) and do a 411 on the winery you would like to visit in the winter. Hours of operation for most, will either shorten in the months between mid-October to mid-April, or will close all together. (Good news is, they are in the process of making more wine...so it's ok!)

48) Most tasting rooms will have a line up of what is offered for that day to try. It is perfectly ok to skip to the reds, or any other wines that you particularly do not like. We do encourage you to try some wines outside of your comfort zone. You may have a "oh ya, baby" moment, and fall in love with a new grape today! (Grapes are not the jealous types...You can love many types and it's ok!)

49) Wine speak can be a tad intimidating...so before going out, it may be helpful to just get on-line and google "wine terms". Words like "terrior", or "malolactic fermentation" may pop up, and leave you a little bewildered. If in doubt, ask, or do what we sometimes like to do...nod, bat your lashes, and smile!

50) The last and we believe the most important Wine Touring Survival Tip...have fun! Wine is a beverage of enjoyment and it is meant to be enjoyed! Cheers!