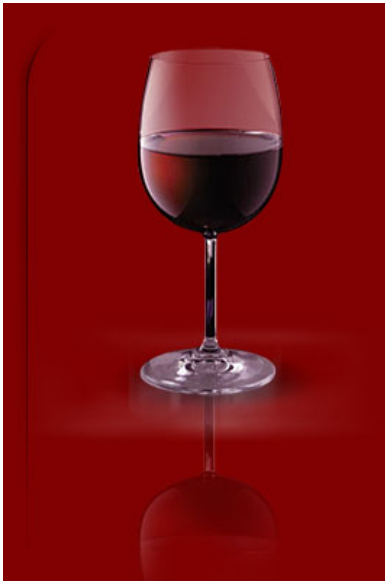


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In Vino Viagras

By Eamonn Doherty



Wine seems to be a fairly straightforward drink which can accompany almost any meal. It comes in red, white and rosé forms and has been with us since about 6000 BC. For such a humble drink however, wine attracts a lot of attention. The ancient Greeks, for example, had no fewer than 80

adjectives to describe its delicious properties and contemporary experts in the matter also enjoy putting a name to some characteristics of the alcoholic nectar. In fact there are two types of wine-drinker; those who drink it and those who ... think about it.

There are wine tasters who basically sniff the stuff in order to define it better. However, their poetic passion for the "beaded bubbles of Bacchus" leave many of us unenlightened souls in the dark. Wine, for these adepts, has many aromas (smells to you and I), that range from musk to what is called a "fruity" fragrance. Wood, nuts, chemicals and spices also receive a mention.

To uncover these aromas the procedure is very simple: you first hold the glass of wine under your nose and sniff. You then proceed to roll the wine about in the glass, thereby releasing the aromas. Next, a small quantity of the aforementioned liquid is poured into the mouth, the wine first affecting the taste buds. These are

situated on the tongue and are not just for decoration. The tip of the tongue senses sweetness, the sides are for acidity, the edges detect saltiness and the back investigates bitterness. You knew it all the time, didn't you? After this exhausting process, you may then swallow a drop of the wine in your mouth. And spit out the rest! Yes you heard correctly, and no cheating either. You may then, of course, lick your lips. Observing this ritual will obviously help in your quest to make friends and influence people. It may even impress your partner or potential partner. The benefits are many and having your nose turn red is a small price to pay.

The word "wine" comes from the Latin "vinum" which means vigour and strength. Medical sources point out that drinking one glass of wine a day may be good for the health. (This glass does not include the drop you had in the tasting process). A word of caution here or you could end up like Dionysus. He was the Greek god of potency, fertility of nature and ecstasy. He was also known to imbibe the odd drop of wine...and you can imagine what happened next. I suppose wine was considered as the ancient equivalent of "Viagra".

Interestingly, the glass containing the wine plays an important part in the taste. Some glassmakers shape the glass in order to direct the wine to the appropriate taste buds. A fruity wine will need one type of glass while a bitter one another. By the way, if a wine gives off a rich aroma, it has "nose". The human equivalent of this could be considered "class" or "style".

Not to be confused with "nosey".

Sniff
unenlightened souls
in the dark
Adept
Musk
Thereby
Taste buds
to lick one's lips
Nosey

inhalar por la nariz
Almas poco instruidas
sin saber nada
experto,-a
almizcle
de ese modo
papilas del gusto
relamerse
fisgón,-ona, cotilla