



# A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE

Choosing wine which you know you will enjoy can be a scary old business. Trying to wade your way through a restaurant wine list, in the absence of a sommelier or even a waiter with some knowledge, can be a daunting thought. Even wandering up and down the wine aisles in a supermarket can be a bewildering and slightly intimidating experience. The wine industry has long had a reputation of being the privilege of the wealthy with an aura of mystique attached. There are various ways to glean snippets and tips to help make the purchase of the ideal bottle of wine simpler and more successful.

There's no doubt that the rising number of articles and columns on wine have generated a huge amount of interest in wine. Books, magazines and Sunday supplements provide advice on star choices and recommendations to suit all pockets. They encourage even the most unadventurous of us to experiment and push the boundaries. Knowing someone else has already tried the wine in question, and approves, makes trying something different a little safer.

Wine society tastings are a

great way to taste a broad range of wines and share the experience with groups of like minded enthusiasts in a social atmosphere. Newly founded Clitheroe Wine Society meets locally in the heart of the Ribble Valley and is spearheaded by local aficionado, Steve Burns who is happy to welcome new members. Some of these groups are open to occasional visitors where guest speakers are often invited to share their expertise. One such society is Ribble Wine Society which, although is not taking new members at present, is always keen to encourage visitors to their monthly open meetings in Leyland. There are also a number of societies who regularly meet on the Fylde whose enthusiasm cannot be disputed. Details of all the above groups and contact numbers are available from Barrica Wines.

If something a little more structured is called for, some local colleges offer adult education courses from the WSET (Wines & Spirits Education Trust) to different levels which culminate in a nationally recognized qualification.

Here at Barrica Wines we are holding our own Barrica Foundation Course on Saturday, 6 March.




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Informal wine-tastings and one-day courses are a great way to find out what to look for in a good wine, says expert *Jane Cuthbertson*

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A basic, one-day introduction to wine tasting. How and why do you taste wine? What do you look for in a good wine? What can you expect from different grape varieties? All of these questions, and many more, are answered during a very informal, fun-based day where we aim to take some of the mystery out of wine tasting. This will be the second foundation day of its kind, the first one being a resounding success. A more in-depth course at intermediate level will follow where we will look more closely at the influences of geography, climate, variety and winemaker on the wine in our glass, whilst retaining an informal and relaxed atmosphere.

Places are very limited – tickets and further details are available by contacting us at Barrica.

We also have a programme of tastings which are held at Barrica Wines, either in the shop or restaurant. On Friday 5 March, we will be hosting another Tapas Night. Our spring portfolio tasting will take place on Friday 26 March where a number of our suppliers will be on hand to guide you through their selections. These events have proved to be very popular so early booking is advised.

But the very best way to learn about your palate and your individual likes and dislikes – practice! Experiment – it is only a glass of wine! ■

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