



COURT OF MASTER SOMMELIERS EUROPE

SERVICE STANDARDS

COURTOFMASTERSOMMELIERS.ORG





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- ◆ Wine lists must be clean, correct, up to date and easy to read.
- ◆ Wines are stored neatly and organised correctly.
- ◆ Glassware must be clean, and free from odour.
- ◆ Glassware should be steamed over hot water then polished, bowl first, stem and foot last, using a clean lint free microfibre, linen or cotton cloth (nylon and manmade fibres repel water).
- ◆ Glass stemware is the only thing to touch the tablecloth; bottles, decanters and corks should be placed on an underliner, or coaster which should be cleaned and polished before service.
- ◆ Service cloths are folded and prepared before service.
- ◆ Bottle opening tools are organised before service.
- ◆ Ice buckets, coasters, decanters, and decanting tools are organised.
- ◆ Wines should be stored and offered for service at correct temperatures.
- ◆ Beverage service is always performed (where possible) to the right of the guest.



- ◆ Identify the host and present the wine list from their right-hand side.
- ◆ Offer assistance with the listings. Be prepared to answer questions on the style, history, quality, vintages and food pairings from your menu.
- ◆ Stand to the right of the guest to take the order. The Sommelier should repeat verbally the order to confirm the choice; the vintage, producer and vineyard.
- ◆ Select the correct glassware and bring to the table on a tray along with underliners prior to the service of the wine.
- ◆ Glassware is placed to the right of each guest and is placed near the tip of the knife.
- ◆ Actual positioning is often dictated by house style or size of the table, but the standard format for one wine glass and water glass would be to place the wine glass above the large knife with the water glass diagonally below to the right, or diagonally above to the left.
- ◆ There are many different placements which are acceptable, but it is important that the placement of glassware is identical for each guest.



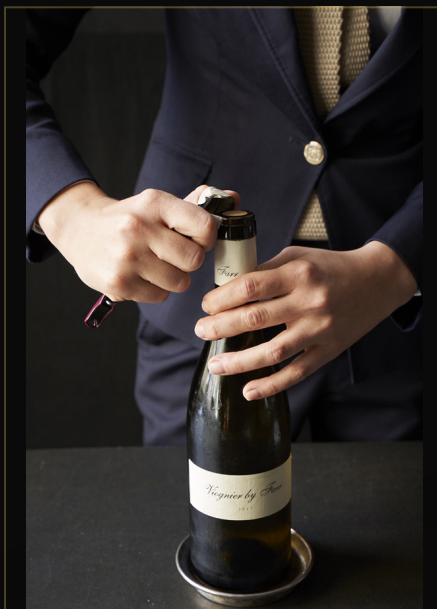
- ◆ Glass placement starts with the person to the left of the host and continues clockwise to finish with the host.
- ◆ Underliners/coasters for the cork, if to be presented, are placed to within easy reach.
- ◆ Underliners/coasters for bottles and decanters are placed on a side station or in a suitable space on the table.
- ◆ The Sommelier presents the bottle to the host label side up, on a clean service cloth and repeats verbally the vintage, producer and vineyard of the wine to re-confirm the order.
- ◆ Using the corkscrew blade, cut the foil below the second lip to prevent the wine dripping behind the foil & contaminating future pours.
- ◆ The foil is placed in the Sommelier's pocket and the top of the cork is wiped with a clean serviette.
- ◆ The worm of the corkscrew is inserted into the cork just off centre and is slowly twisted through the cork, stopping just before the bottom of the cork is reached. The cork is then gently levered out of the bottle without causing a pop.

- ◆ Wipe the top of the bottle again with the serviette and present the cork to the host placing it on the underliner/coaster.
- ◆ Hold the bottle in the right hand – label towards the host's and pour a small amount for the host to taste (approx. 50ml).
- ◆ Step back and wait for the host to approve the wine.
- ◆ After approval, the Sommelier serves the wine, moving to the left (clockwise) around the table, serving the ladies first, gentlemen second and the host last – regardless of gender.
- ◆ If there is a guest of honour, that person is served before anyone else on the table. In parties of eight or more it is acceptable to serve everyone in a clockwise direction regardless of gender.
- ◆ Fill glasses one third, to half full, dependant on the size of the glass.





- ◆ Twist the bottle slightly as you raise the angle of the bottle at the end of each pour and wipe the bottle neck with the service cloth to prevent drips to the table.
- ◆ Place the bottle on an underliner/coaster or alternatively for White or Rosé wines, in a bucket or cooler. If the wine is at the correct temperature it is also appropriate to leave it on a coaster or in an insulated cylinder on a plate or coaster. Be careful not to overchill.
- ◆ The Sommelier should ask the host if they may remove the cork at this point.
- ◆ If a second bottle of the same wine is ordered, bring the host's a clean glass to taste the wine and then ask the host if clean glasses should be offered to everyone or if the same glasses can be refilled.
- ◆ For additional new wine orders, the glassware is placed diagonally below the original glass, either to the left or right, depending on the house style.



STANDARD SERVICE TECHNIQUES



PROFESSIONAL AND FRIENDLY WINE SERVICE IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR EXAMINATIONS; ALONG WITH THEORY AND TASTING ABILITY.



COURT OF MASTER SOMMELIERS EUROPE

- ◆ **1st Method** - The bottle is presented and opened in the air.
- ◆ **2nd Method**- The bottle is presented and opened in a bucket or at the service station.
- ◆ The correct glassware, tulips or flutes, bucket and stand containing iced water, sufficient to cover the bottle up to the neck, and two service cloths are prepared.
- ◆ Make sure the wine is cold enough for service. (NV- 6-8°C) (Vintage 8-12°C).
- ◆ Position the glassware for each guest. Place an underliner/coaster to present the cork.
- ◆ Position the bucket and stand close to the table. Place a clean service cloth on top.
- ◆ Remove the bottle and wipe with own service cloth to prevent drips on floor.
- ◆ Sommelier should present the bottle to the host and verbally confirm the vintage, producer and cuvée .
- ◆ Cut the foil at the bottom of the cage. (using the tab is permitted but not preferred).





- ◆ Remove the foil and place in pocket.
- ◆ Grip the bottle neck with the left hand and place thumb firmly over the top of the cork, use the right hand to loosen cage.
- ◆ **Control must be maintained at all times.**
- ◆ **ALWAYS point the cork AWAY from guest, towards ceiling.**
- ◆ The Cage (Agraffe) is untwisted, (six full turns) and loosened for removal later. **Keep the hand or thumb over the cork at all times.**
- ◆ The Sommelier should firmly grip the cork and twist the bottle away from the cork, holding the bottle at an angle of 45°. This is done in the air or in the bucket, but never against the body.
- ◆ The cork is gently released with little or no noise and the bottle is held at an angle of 45° until the gas dissipates.
- ◆ Remove the cage from the cork (cage placed in pocket or presented with cork).
- ◆ Place cork on underliner/coaster on the table.



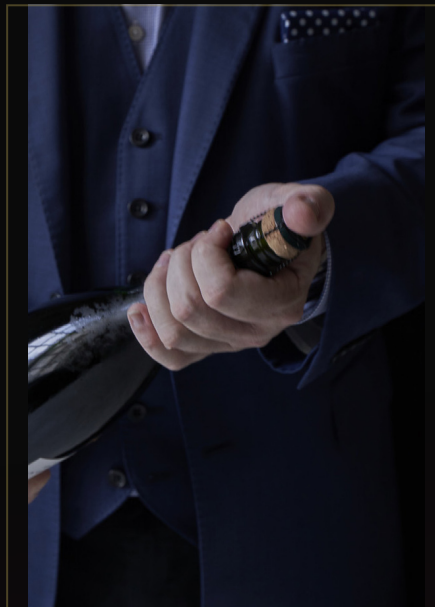
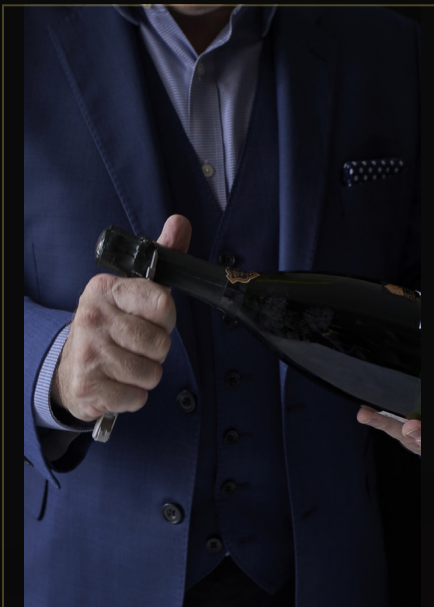
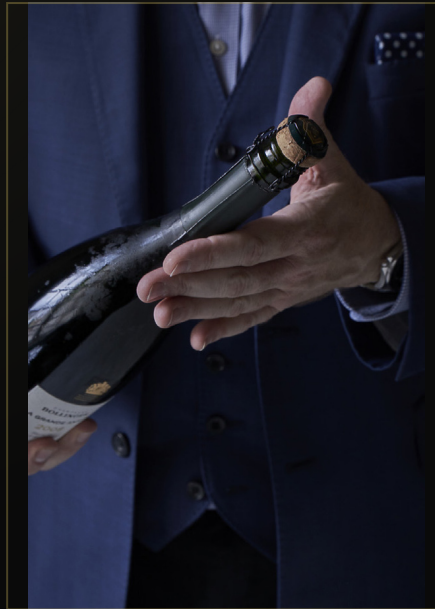
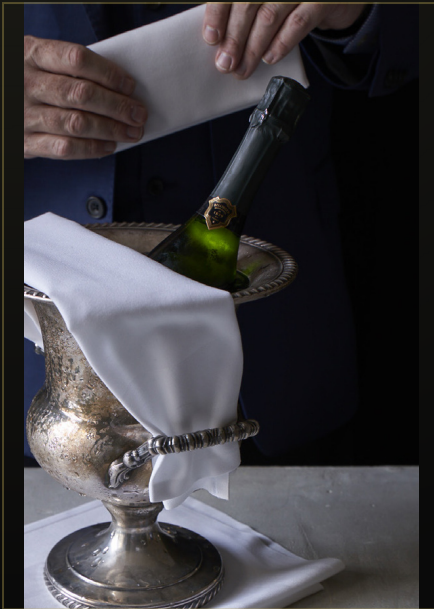
- ◆ Pours are done in a single stream - two pours permitted if necessary.
- ◆ Always complete the pours for one guest before moving on to the next.
- ◆ Hold bottle in right hand and service cloth in left to catch drips (unless left-handed).
- ◆ Two fingers under the neck for support is acceptable.
- ◆ Wine service is completed as for standard wine service.

After pouring the wine is placed -

1st method - In a bucket & stand in a suitable position close to table.

2nd method- In a cooler, placed on an underliner/coaster on the table.

Both should have a clean service cloth neatly draped over the bucket /cooler.



SPARKLING WINE SERVICE

ADDITIONAL POINTS FOR WHITE WINE SERVICE

- ◆ **1st method** – Open on a guéridon next to, or close by, the table. Preferably to the hosts right and then place in an ice bucket and stand close to the table.
- ◆ **2nd method** – Open in the ice bucket and stand. Return the bottle to the bucket after pouring the wine.
- ◆ **3rd method** – Open on the table on an underliner or coaster (if there is sufficient room on the table) and placed in an ice bucket and stand or in a cooler, on an underliner/coaster, on the table.
- ◆ **4th method** – Open on a side table or stand and return to an ice bucket and stand, or alternatively, place in a cooler on an under-liner on the table.
- ◆ **5th method**- Open in the air and return to an ice bucket and stand, or to a cooler on an under-liner on the table.
- ◆ Opening in the air is common practice at banqueting functions, but less elegant in normal service.
- ◆ Wine service is completed as for standard service.



ADDITIONAL POINTS FOR YOUNG RED WINE SERVICE

- ◆ **1st method** – Open on a guéridon next to, or close to the table. Preferably to the host's right. Place the bottle on an underliner/coaster on the table.
- ◆ **2nd method** – Open on a side table or stand and place on an underliner/coaster on the table after pouring.
- ◆ **3rd method**- Open on the guests table, on an underliner or coaster. (if there is sufficient room)
- ◆ **4th method**- Open in the air to the right of the host and place on an underliner/coaster on the table to after pouring.
- ◆ Wine service is completed as for standard service.



- ◆ Place the correct glassware for the wine on the table and two underliners/coasters.
- ◆ A guéridon is indispensable for decanting- all equipment should be placed on it before positioning it alongside the table. Do not light candle yet.
- ◆ **Equipment needed: decanter, candle, matches, corkscrew, service cloth, underliner.**
- ◆ If a guéridon is not available, a small table may be placed by the guest's table. The decanting equipment should be placed on this table.
- ◆ Line the decanting basket with a clean serviette and take it to the cellar to obtain the selected bottle.
- ◆ Place the bottle in the basket carefully, label upwards so as not to disturb the sediment. Return the bottle and basket to the guéridon.
- ◆ Strike the match carefully, causing a minimum amount of smoke, and light the candle.



- ◆ Present the bottle in the basket, to the host and announce the vintage, producer and vineyard verbally.
- ◆ Return the basket and bottle to the guéridon and position for opening. If the decanting basket angle is too low, prop with an underliner.
- ◆ An underliner should be placed under the bottle neck to catch any debris.
- ◆ Cut the foil below the second lip & remove. (Removal of the whole foil cap is acceptable). Wipe the lip with a clean serviette.
- ◆ Use the corkscrew to carefully remove the cork without moving the bottle.
- ◆ Carefully wipe the lip again. *At this stage you can taste the wine (house policy rules).*
- ◆ Carefully lift the bottle from the basket.
- ◆ **Pick up the decanter in the other hand and position yourself so that you can see the light of the candle through the glass of the bottle neck.**

- ◆ **Pour the wine slowly and steadily into the decanter in a single pour, without stopping avoid touching the neck of the bottle on the neck of the decanter.**
- ◆ **Pour steadily until the sediment appears in the neck but does not enter the decanter.** Careful pouring will minimise the amount of wine remaining in the bottle.
- ◆ Present the cork on a separate underliner, or beside the bottle on its underliner.
- ◆ Wipe the bottle on a clean serviette and place on the under-liner on the table. Do not leave the bottle in the basket.
- ◆ Wine is served from the decanter for the host to taste. Place the decanter on the second underliner/coaster on the table. Ask the host if the cork may be removed.
- ◆ Extinguish candle gently (with used match) and clear down guéridon.
- ◆ Wine service is completed as for standard service.



DECANTING — OLD RED WINE SERVICE

SCREWCAP CLOSURES

- ◆ Present the bottle in the standard manner.
- ◆ Remove the screw cap. Sommelier to place in pocket (screw cap is not presented.)
- ◆ Wipe lip of the bottle with a clean service cloth.
- ◆ Wine service is completed as for standard service.



CIGAR SERVICE

- ◆ A guéridon is indispensable for cigar service – all materials should be placed on it before commencing service.
- ◆ Items required: humidor, 2-3 ashtrays, non-sulphurous matches or a butane lighter, cedar strips, serviettes, cigar cutters (straight & V) side plate for waste.
- ◆ Place a side plate on the table to the left of the host.
- ◆ Offer the humidor from the left and offer recommendations as required.
- ◆ After guest(s) has selected cigar take this to the guéridon with the humidor.
- ◆ If the cigar is in a cellophane wrapper, remove it by gently squeezing out and placing the cellophane in the pocket or on the waste plate.
- ◆ Never touch the head of the cigar and do not remove the band.



- ◆ Ask the guest(s) what kind of draw they would prefer, light, medium or full.
- ◆ Hold the cigar carefully and cut accordingly over the waste plate. Tap the cigar gently to remove any loose pieces.
- ◆ Present the cigar on a clean plate to the guest's left.
- ◆ Offer to light the cigar with the matches, or cedar strips, which are the preferred methods. A butane lighter is also acceptable.
- ◆ The light should be held 2 inches (5cm) below the tip of the cigar in the hottest part of the blue flame.
- ◆ The cigar should be rolled gently to ensure an even burn around the entire tip.

NOTE: Few restaurants now permit smoking and this is no longer tested in our examinations.



- ◆ A printed list should be available to guests, clearly stating pouring measure and price.
- ◆ A guéridon is indispensable for after dinner drink service, all materials should be placed on it before commencing service.
- ◆ Service items required: measures, (25/50ml) service tray, serviettes, beverage selection, correct glassware assortment. Ice may be required for liqueurs.
- ◆ Assistance is often required to describe beverages and qualities of products offered. Sommelier should be prepared to answer questions on the origins, flavours and pairings with desserts, cheese etc.
- ◆ After the guest(s) has made the selection – pour and serve. If there is a guest of honour, he or she should be served first, followed by ladies and then gentlemen and finally the host.

- ◆ **1st method:** The correct amount is measured with a measure into the correct glass on the guéridon. Place the glass on a tray and present to the guest from the right.
- ◆ **2nd method:** The correct glassware, measures and bottles are taken to the table on a small hand held tray, or a large one positioned on a tray stand. The selected liquor is measured or free poured from the bottle and the lip is wiped with a clean serviette.
- ◆ **3rd method :** The correct glassware, measures and bottles are taken to the table on a tray and positioned on the table to the right of the guest. The selected liquor is measured or free poured from the bottle and the lip is wiped with a clean serviette.

Note: In the UK only Gin, Rum, Vodka & Whisky need to be poured from specific measures (25 or 35 mls or multiples of the stated measure).



ALWAYS STORE WINES:

- ◆ At a constant temperature 10-13°C – ideal for long term storage.
- ◆ Where they can be easily reached in an organised manner.
- ◆ Away from unpleasant smells which could penetrate corks.
- ◆ Away from insect & rodent pests. – Damage to labels, corks & boxes
- ◆ Lying down, label up – moisture keeps corks intact. Label up, easier for stocktaking and to know where sediment is laid.
- ◆ Store spirits standing up.

NEVER STORE WINES

- ◆ In strong light, it will prematurely age wine & fade labels.
- ◆ In damp conditions moisture, will destroy labels and develop mould on corks.
- ◆ Where there is vibration. This can cause premature ageing of wine.
- ◆ Upright for more than a few weeks (except wines with twist off closures) as corks will dry out, shrink and let in air thus oxidising wines.
- ◆ Exposed to excessive heat- wines will be permanently damaged

PURCHASING OLDER WINES

- ◆ Enquire how bottles have been stored previously.
- ◆ Enquire when the bottles were shipped from the winery cellar.
- ◆ Inspect the bottles for label damage, leakage & ullage.

SERVING TEMPERATURES

Sweet white wines.	6-8°C	
Dry Sherry, Dry Madeira.	6-9°C	
Mineral water.	6-8°C	
Champagne & Sparkling wines.	6-12°C	Cooler for NV warmer from Vintage
Light white & rosé wines.	7-10°C	
Heavy white wines.	10-13°C	Usually barrel aged, MLF style wines.
Light red wines.	10-13°C	Thin skinned, high acid eg. Gamay
Tawny Port, Sweet Sherry, Sweet Madeira.	12-16°C	
Medium bodied red wines.	15-18°C	
Full bodied & aged red wines.	15-18°C	

TASTING THE WINE?

In some restaurants, the Sommelier will check the wine to ensure it is in good condition and not faulty; also, to improve their knowledge about the selected wine.

Giving an accurate recommendation of wine from your list can only be done if you have previously tasted it. It is a courtesy paid by one customer to the next customer via the Sommelier so that they can receive better service and recommendations.

But it may be polite to ask the guest's permission before tasting the wine and take a reasonable amount- around 30ml is suggested. Pour and taste the wine in front of the guest so they can see the amount tasted. House policy on tasting wine may differ in each restaurant.

CREATING THEATRE

Decanting should be a theatrical performance where many eyes are drawn to the process, and the host and his guests are being made to feel special. The guéridon is placed in a position where all guests at the table can see it; all equipment placed in an organised manner upon it; then the wine is presented. Lastly, the candle is lit, and the show begins.

Sommeliers should utilise the whole space available and work calmly and confidently while engaging with guests and answering their questions. Decanting is tested at the Advanced level and Master Sommelier level- where it should be flawless.

SEASONING THE DECANTER?

Some Sommeliers may wish to 'season' the decanter, adding a small amount of wine and gently swirling to coat the inside. This can add to the decantation process's theatrics but is optional for our exams.

At Advanced and Master level, candidates should also be familiar with -

GLASSWARE

- Globally recognised quality brands such as Riedel, Spiegelau, Zalto, Baccarat, Lucaris, Lalique, Waterford Crystal, Schott Zwiesel, Orrefors, Moser, Saint-Louis and Steuben.
- Recognise general glass shapes and understand why and how shapes and sizes can aid wine service, e.g. a champagne flute, white and red Burgundy glasses, white wine glass, Cabernet/Syrah glass, dessert/fortified wine glass.
- Be able to instruct others on safe glass polishing, handling and storage methods.
- To understand and manage inventory levels.

WINE PRESERVATION SYSTEMS

- Systems such as Coravin, Vacu Vin and Enomatic.
- Basic operations and principles of preservation behind each one. e.g. Vacuum systems or Argon based.

LARGE FORMAT BOTTLES

- The historic names and sizes of all bottles.
- The best methods to use for the service of large format bottles.



HOW TO APPLY

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