



MONTICELLO VINEYARDS

Ageing Wine

How LONG TO AGE A WINE

Knowing how long to age a wine can seem difficult. There are many types of grapes, many methods of production, a great variety of storage conditions and an overwhelming number of personal preferences. Each of these factors has an impact on how long a wine should be held onto. In general, wines gain complexity and lose fruitiness as they age. Highly tannic red wines will also begin to mellow and soften as they age. A wine can eventually plateau once it reaches maturity and then begin to go downhill. Each varietal will make a wine with a different aging profile. For example, most Cabernet Sauvignons will age for longer periods than most Merlots.

Of all the wines produced, more than 90% are designed to be consumed within a couple years after they are produced. It is just as possible to age a wine for too long as it is to age one for too little time.

In general, more expensive wines are usually designed to become better with age. Most inexpensive wines do not benefit from aging. Each of these suggestions is based on proper storage conditions of the aging wines. Also, the suggested aging is based on the vintage date of the wine.

The best approach to aging is to buy multiple bottles of the particular wine you would like



to age. When you reach the most likely age of drinkability, try a bottle. Depending on the results, either drink the bottles or pick another date in the future to sample another bottle. You will slowly learn about the development of the wines and your personal preferences of an aged wine. And you will be able to judge for yourself how much longer a wine will need to age to approach your standards of drinkability.

More than 90% of all wine is produced to be consumed within a few years. However, many of us produce wines that age well for 10 and 20 or more years.



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Age-Ability

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

- 1980's Drink Now
- 1980-82 Clearly well-aged wine but if stored properly still enjoyable
- 1983-86 Well-aged and standing the test of time
- 1987-89 Aged and showing beautifully
- 1990's Enjoyable with more years to age (but you can't lose drinking now)
- 1990-93 Retaining fruit but clearly showing the complexity of age
- 1994-97 Maintaining fruit while showing the enjoyable complexity of age
- 1998-99 Just 10 years old and showing their youth
- 2000's Enjoyable with more years to age

CHARDONNAY

3-5 years

PINOT NOIR

5-8 years

SYRAH AND CABERNET FRANC

7 - 10 years



MERLOT

10-12 years

PROPRIETARY RED WINE

12-15 years

Drink now or later or much later -
But drink it and enjoy it.