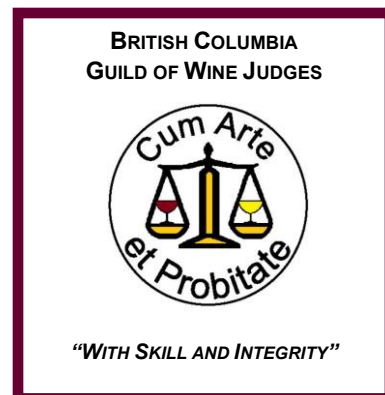


British Columbia Guild of Wine Judges Monthly Training Program



Personal Conduct at Competitions

Avoid perfume, scented soap, aftershave, perfumed lotions, and any other scented items.

Wine judging involves being able to detect subtle smells.

Aromas and perfumes on you or in your environment interfere with this process. Make sure you are freshly showered, because body odors are just as distracting as perfumes. It is acceptable judging etiquette to point out to others that they are carrying scents that interfere with your ability to judge wine but do it in a respectful and confidential manner.

Do not drink alcohol or eat food with lingering effects.

Avoiding alcohol before competitions should be obvious. Alcohol reduces your capabilities in many areas, including taste and smell. Food is a more difficult matter. You do not want to go into a competition hungry but try to avoid strongly flavored foods. Brush your teeth before judging.

Do not smoke-especially immediately before or during the judging period.

Smoking reduces general palatal and olfactory acuity. The presence of fresh smoke will also affect others around you.

Do not Judge when you are ill or on medication.

You cannot judge properly if you are suffering from a cold or similar ailment. Also, medications, especially ones that are taken on a short-term basis, have diverse and unpredictable effects on palatal and olfactory acuity.

Bring your own judging equipment.

All judges should have their own high-intensity penlight and a corkscrew. A spittoon and a small towel are necessary, as well as a pen or pencil. A calculator is helpful. A copper stir stick can resolve many questions about wine quality. The Acid Adjustment kit can be valuable for making recommendations if the wine needs more acid. Bring all applicable judging aids with you. Always come prepared to judge.

Review and Read Class Descriptions

Please read the CLASS DESCRIPTIONS carefully. These are the guidelines provided to the Competitors. If you are unsure about whether or not an entry is in the correct class, consult the Chief Steward. You may not disqualify an entry for being out of class without consulting the Chief Steward.

The Judging Environment

Chief Steward designates the Judges, the Stewards and the classes.

The order that the judges are listed on the judging schedule generally dictates who the lead Judge is and who the other judge(s) are. Stewards are also identified. Wine flights should be judged in the order that is identified on the Judging Schedule. ONLY the Chief steward can make changes to the roles, responsibilities. And flight order. If in doubt, check with the Chief Steward first.

Judge in an atmosphere that is free of odors.

Do not bring food items or drinks into the judging area.

Judge in good light, moderate temperatures, and relative quiet.

Always judge with good light. The room should be brightly lit, preferably with full spectrum lighting or daylight. The room temperature should be comfortable. Relative quiet is always an asset. Respect others by keeping the volume of your voice low during the judging process and minimize excessive talking.

Judging Protocol

Remember your personal likes and dislikes are not important

You will be called upon to judge many different classes and varieties of wines. Dessert wines may not be your favorites, or perhaps you do not like Sauvignon blanc. Your personal preferences are irrelevant. Your duty as a judge is to assess how successful a wine is for its class, not for your palate.

Drink as little as possible.

Professional wine judges swallow very little wine and use a spittoon for the rest. You may need to swallow a bit of wine to do your evaluations but all efforts should be made to minimize how much you consume and how often each wine is tasted.

Provide Intelligent and constructive comments on your score sheets.

Winemakers enter competitions in part to get constructive feedback on their wines. They want to know why their wines have scored as they have, particularly when the scores are low. Learn the descriptive vocabulary and practice using it. Pinpoint as accurately as you can why you have assigned the score you have, especially when the score is not very good. Provide constructive recommendations on how the wine could be improved.

Resolve significant judging differences through discussion or Chief Steward.

If one judge rates a wine at 16 and another at 12, something is wrong. This is too great a discrepancy, and an average of the scores will not do justice to the wine. Wine scores should only be averaged if you are both in the same Medal category. The goal should be to discuss the wine and try to come to an agreement on the score based on the wines quality. If this is not easily or quickly done then call the Chief steward over. Do not tell them your scores as this is considered influencing the Chief Steward. Simply let them know what varietal you are judging and ask them for a Holistic score. If one or more of you suspect a fault, warn the Chief Steward so they may be prepared, but do not tell them what fault you suspect as it may influence them. The Chiefs Steward decision is FINAL. No other opinions can be solicited.

Maintain a level of professionalism throughout.

Do nothing that might influence your judging partner. When you encounter an obnoxious wine, a wonderful wine, or a wine you think you recognize, don't react outwardly.

Instruct and involve the table steward appropriately. Keep in mind that they are also volunteering their time to help. Some stewards may be new at this so be patient and provide guidance and instruction on what they need to do. It is your duty as a Judge to mentor and help them succeed. Engage them in the judging process when possible and encourage the steward to taste typical, unusual, and flawed or faulted wines.

Complete your judging as quickly as possible commensurate with accurate assessment. There is no excuse for judging to be prolonged. It should typically take no longer than 5 minutes to judge a wine and complete the comment sheet.

It is appropriate to thank your judging partner for his/her insight and expertise and your steward for his/her assistance.