

# 2011 Court of Master Sommeliers Service Standards



- \* **These standards are used to grade candidates in Master Sommelier examinations**
- \* **Standards are required to evaluate service**
- \* **We accept that differences exist in real service settings**

## **Mise-En-Place**

- \* Wine lists are clean, correct, current and easy to read
- \* Glassware is clean, spotless and free of odor
- \* Glasses are polished with clean linen using a source of steam
- \* Serviettes are made of cotton (nylon repels water)
- \* Serviettes are folded and prepared before service
- \* Glass stemware is the only thing to touch the tablecloth – Bottles, decanters and corks are to be placed on an under-liner – Under-liners are to be cleaned and polished before service
- \* Wine opening tools are organized before service
- \* Wines are stored neatly and organized
- \* Wines are stored and served at the correct temperature
- \* Beverage service is always performed on the right side of the guest

## **Standard Service – These standards apply to all types of wine**

- \* The wine list is presented
- \* Assistance is offered
- \* The sommelier is prepared to answer questions on vintages, character of wine, food compatibility and quality
- \* The order is taken from the host's right and repeated by the sommelier to confirm the order
- \* Proper glassware for the wine is selected and brought to the table on a tray
- \* The glassware is to be placed to the right or directly above the knife
- \* Placement starts with the person to the host's left and continues clockwise to finish with the host
- \* Under-liners for the bottle and the cork are placed to the right of the host
- \* The sommelier presents the bottle and repeats the name and vintage to re-confirm the order
- \* The foil is cut at the second lip to prevent the wine from dripping behind the foil and 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 sommelier inserts a corkscrew or similar tool to remove the cork
- \* The cork is removed with minimal bottle movement and eased out without making a pop
- \* The top of the bottle is wiped with a clean serviette and the cork is presented to the host on an under-liner to the right of the host

- \* The sommelier holds the bottle with his right hand, label toward the host and pours the host an ounce or less so that he or she can taste the wine
- \* The sommelier steps back and waits for the host's approval
- \* After approval the sommelier serves the wine moving to the left (clockwise) of the host – Women first, men second - The host is always served last regardless of gender – If there is a guest of honor serve that person first then the women, the men and then the host – In parties of eight or more it is acceptable to pour everyone in a clockwise pattern regardless of gender
- \* The bottle is held with the right hand, label facing toward the guest
- \* The bottle is wiped with a clean cotton serviette after each pour
- \* The bottle is placed on an under-liner or in a bucket
- \* The sommelier asks the host if he or she may remove the cork

### Glassware Placement

- \* Glassware is the correct size and shape for the wine it holds
- \* Glass stemware is placed to the right of the guest and is keyed off the knife, either directly above it, just to the right or just to the left. There are many different placements that are acceptable, but it is important that glass placement is positioned the same for each guest. Water glasses can be placed either to the right or to the left of the stemware
- \* If a second bottle is ordered of the same wine, bring the host a fresh glass to taste with
- \* Ask the host if everyone else would like a fresh glasses
- \* Multiple glasses can be placed in a line, diagonal, diamond or cluster depending on the table space
- \* Glasses for additional new wine orders are placed in the original position to the right so that the sommelier is always pouring the glass to the right and not over the existing stemware

### Sparkling Wine Service

**1<sup>st</sup> Method** – Present the bottle in the air and open in the air

**2<sup>nd</sup> Method** – Present the bottle in the air and open in a bucket and stand

- \* Prepare glassware, ice bucket and two serviettes – Make sure the bottle is properly chilled
- \* Position glassware in front of each guest and position the cork under-liner to the host's right
- \* Place the bucket and stand to the hosts right with a clean serviette on top
- \* Present the bottle to the host and re-confirm the order
- \* Cut the foil at the bottom of the cage – Using the tab is allowed but not preferred
- \* Remove the foil and place in the sommeliers pocket
- \* Place a clean serviette over the cage with the sommelier's thumb or hand over the cork
- \* Maintain control at all times – **always point the cork away from the guests**
- \* Untwist the wire cage and loosen for removal later – **Always** keep the hand or thumb over the cork
- \* Firm up your grip on the cork and twist the bottle away from the cork holding the bottle at a 45 degree angle – this is done in the air or against the bucket but never against the body
- \* Gently release the cork **with little or no noise** – Hold the bottle at the 45 degree angle until the gas dissipates
- \* Remove the cage from the cork and place in the sommelier's pocket
- \* Place the cork on the under-liner to the host's right
- \* Tulips or Flutes are the correct glassware – Glasses are filled 3/4 full
- \* Pours are done in a single stream – Two pours are allowed if necessary
- \* The bottle is held as in standard service or by the punt – two fingers under the neck for support is acceptable
- \* After pouring the bottle is placed

**1<sup>st</sup> Method** - in a bucket and stand to the host's right

**2<sup>nd</sup> Method** – in a cooler or under-liner on the table

### **White Wine Service**

**1<sup>st</sup> Method** – Open on a gueridon next to or close by to the table preferably to the host's right and placed in a bucket and stand next to the table to the host's right

**2<sup>nd</sup> Method** – Open in a bucket and stand to the host's right and return to the bucket

**3<sup>rd</sup> Method** – Open on a side table or stand and return to a bucket and stand to the host's right or to a cooler or under-liner on the table to the host's right

**4<sup>th</sup> Method** – Open in the air and return to a bucket and stand to the host's right or to a cooler or under-liner on the table to the host's right

\* Glasses are to be filled ½ to 1/3 full depending on the size of the stemware

### **Young Red Wine Service**

**1<sup>st</sup> Method** – Open on a gueridon next to or close by to the table preferably to the host's right and place on under-liner on the table to the host's right

**2<sup>nd</sup> Method** – Open on a side table or stand and place on under-liner on the table to the host's right

**3<sup>rd</sup> Method** – Open in the air and place on under-liner on the table to the host's right

\* Glasses are to be filled 1/2 to 1/3 full depending on the size of the stemware

### **Old Red Wine Service**

\* Proper glassware is placed on the table

\* A gueridon is indispensable for decanting – All materials are to be placed on it before rolling to tableside – Items needed are a clean decanter, candle, matches, ashtray, cork removal tools, multiple clean serviettes, decanting basket and under-liners for the cork, bottle and decanter

\* The decanting basket is lined with a clean serviette and brought to the cellar - The bottle is placed in the basket carefully as not to disturb the sediment – The bottle is then brought carefully to the gueridon

\* The candle is lit away from the table and the gueridon is rolled to the table preferably to the host's right.

\* Gently bring the bottle from the gueridon and present to the host in the decanting basket

\* Gently bring the bottle in the decanting basket back to the gueridon and position it for service - If the decanting basket angle is too low, prop it up with an under-liner or serviette

\* Remove the foil at the second lip – Removal of the whole foil is acceptable but not preferred

\* Carefully clean the top of the cork with a clean serviette

\* Carefully remove the cork with whatever instrument is necessary to complete the task cleanly

\* Carefully clean the lip and top of the bottle

\* Carefully lift the bottle from the basket and pour into the decanter in one smooth movement, using the light of the candle to look for sediment – Avoid touching the bottle to the decanter

\* Wipe down and clean the bottle with a clean serviette

\* Present the cork on an under-liner and place the under-liners for the bottle and decanter on the table

\* Bring the bottle and decanter to the table - Place the empty bottle on an under-liner and pour the host a taste from the decanter and wait for approval

\* Pour the guests in the standard manner - After finishing place the decanter on the remaining under-liner

\* Ask the host if he or she would like the cork removed

\* Ask the host if he or she would like the bottle removed

## Stelvin Closures

- \* Present the bottle in the standard manner
- \* Remove the screw cap and place in the sommelier's pocket – **The screw cap is not presented**
- \* Wipe the lip of the bottle with a clean serviette
- \* Continue with standard service including pouring a taste for the host

## Cigar Service

- \* A gueridon is indispensable for cigar service – All materials are to be placed on it before rolling to tableside – Items needed are the humidor, two to three ashtrays, non-sulfur matches or odorless lighter, cedar strips, serviettes, cigar cutters and plates for trash and to cut over
- \* Assistance is offered
- \* The sommelier is prepared to answer questions on cigar types, sizes, colors and countries of origin
- \* Wheel the gueridon to the table preferably to the left of the host
- \* Place an ashtray on the table to the left of the guest
- \* Offer the humidor to the host from the left
- \* After the guest make a selection bring his selection and the humidor back to the gueridon
- \* If in a wrapper, remove the cellophane by gently squeezing it out – Never touch the head – Leave the band on
- \* Place the cellophane in a pocket or trash plate
- \* Ask the guest what kind of a draw they would prefer – Light, medium or full
- \* Cut accordingly over a plate and tap gently to remove the excess
- \* Present the cigar on a clean plate to the guest from the left
- \* Offer to light the cigar with the non-sulfur matches, odorless lighter or cedar strips – The light should be two inches below the tip

## Cordial, Port and Brandy Service

- \* A gueridon is indispensable for after dinner drink service – All materials are to be placed on it before rolling to tableside – Items needed are measuring jiggers, silver tray, serviettes, beverage selections and a correct assortment of glassware (snifters, port glasses, cordial glasses etc.)
  - \* Assistance is offered
  - \* The sommelier is prepared to answer questions on beverage styles, types, countries of origins and specific pairings with desserts, cheeses and cigars
  - \* After the guest has made a selection pour and serve the selection
- 1<sup>st</sup> Method** – Measure the proper amount with a measurement jigger and pour into the correct glass on the gueridon – Place the beverage on a tray and present to the guest from the right
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Method** – Bring the correct glassware to the table on a tray and position to the right of the guest – Bring the bottle and clean serviette to the table and free pour the beverage from the right

## Storage

**The proper service of wine begins when you take delivery of the bottles**  
**Wines must be stored correctly if they are to show their best**

### **Always**

- \* Store wines at a constant temperature – 50-55° F, 10-13° C is ideal for long term storage
- \* Store wines where they can be reached easily - In an organized manner
- \* Store wines away from unpleasant smells – They can penetrate the corks
- \* Store wines away from insect and rodent pests – They can damage labels, corks and boxes
- \* Store wines and ports lying down – The moisture keeps the corks intact
- \* Store spirits and sherries standing up – The alcohol can erode the corks

### **Never**

- \* Store wine in strong light – It will prematurely age the wine and fade the labels
- \* Store wine in damp conditions – moisture will destroy the labels and develop mold on the corks
- \* Store wine where there is vibration – It will prematurely age the wine
- \* Store wine upright for more than a few weeks – The corks will dry out and let in air
- \* Expose wine to excessive heat – The wines will be permanently damaged

### **Purchasing Older Wines**

- \* Inquire how the bottles were stored
- \* Inquire when the bottle was shipped from the wineries cellar
- \* Inquire how many times the bottle has been sold or shipped
- \* Inspect the bottles for label damage, leakage and ullage

## Serving Temperatures

**Different styles of beverages require different serving temperatures**

Mineral Water – 43-47° F, 6-8° C

Sweet White Wines – 43-47° F, 6-8° C

Dry Sherry and Dry Madeira – 43-47° F, 6-8° C

Champagne and Sparkling Wines – 43-50° F, 6-10° C

Light White Wines and Rose – 45-50° F, 7-10° C

Draught and Bottled Lager Beer – 48-52° F, 9-11° C

Heavy Whites and Light Reds – 50-55° F, 10-13° C

Draught Bitter Beers and Bottled Light Ales – 54-57° F, 12-14° C

Tawny Port and Sweet Sherries – 54-61° F, 12-16° C

Medium Bodied Reds – 55° F, 13° C

Full Bodied and Aged Reds – 59-64° F, 15-18° C

Brown Ales and Stouts – 59-64° F, 15-18° C

Sweet Madiera and Vintage Port – 64-68° F, 18-20° C