



THEORY LEVEL COMPARISON - EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

This document is to illustrate examples of the progression, depth, type of questions, and knowledge needed to prepare for the Certified Sommelier and Advanced Sommelier Theory Exam. Notice the importance of having a strong foundational theory knowledge rooted in the basics to build upon. Also, how potential exam questions can involve many *Areas of Study* and draw from all pillars of CMS-A Education and Examination including Hospitality & Service, Tasting, and Business of the Sommelier.



ITALY

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

What is the predominant grape variety of the wine pictured below?

- a. Pinot Noir
- b. Grenache Noir
- c. Cabernet Sauvignon
- d. Sangiovese



CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

_____ is a producer located in Tuscany.

- a. Ca' del Bosco
- b. Sassicaia
- c. Zenato

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

What is the predominant grape variety used to produce this wine?

- a) Corvina
- b) Sangiovese
- c) Nebbiolo
- d) Aglianico



Please match the following DOCs to their region of origin:

- | | |
|------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Soave | a) Sicily |
| 2. Maremma | b) Umbria |
| 3. Orvieto | c) Veneto |
| 4. Collio | d) Basilicata |
| | e) Tuscany |
| | f) Friuli-Venezia Giulia |

BEER

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

What ingredient imparts the majority of bitterness to beer?

- a. Malt
- b. Water
- c. Yeast
- d. Hops

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

Which European country produces Lambic beer?

- a. France
- b. Germany
- c. Czech Republic
- d. Belgium

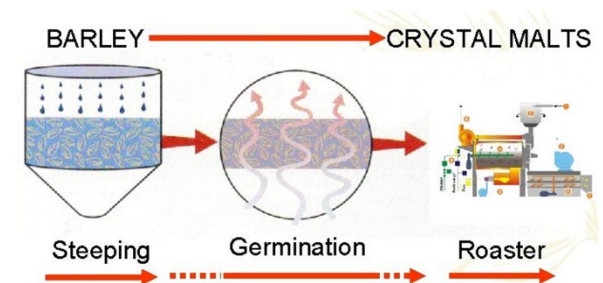
ADVANCED SOMMELIER

What portion of the beer brewing process is pictured below?

- a. Attenuation
- b. Filtering
- c. Malting
- d. Wet Hopping

IBU level generally refers to the _____ of a beer.

- a. Tartness
- b. Balance
- c. Sweetness
- d. Bitterness



In beer production, what is *mashing*?

Why is it performed? _____

SHERRY

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

Sherry DO wine is aged via the _____ method.

- a. Arrested fermentation
- b. Solera
- c. Late harvest
- d. Secondary fermentation

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

Which of the following factors most influence the taste profile of this wine?

- a. Late harvest
- b. Botrytis cinerea
- c. Fortification after fermentation
- d. Drying grapes prior to fermentation

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

Which of the following is integral to the existence of flor?

- a. High humidity levels
- b. Anaerobic environment
- c. 18% or higher alcohol by volume
- d. 12% or lower alcohol by volume

In regard to the production of Jerez DO, what is sobretablas?

What chief role does sobretablas play in the biologically aged Jerez DO?



BORDEAUX

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

Château Mouton-Rothschild is classified as a _____ per the 1855 Classification of the Médoc and Graves.

- a. Premier Grand Cru Classé 'A'
- b. Graves AOP
- c. Grand Cru AOP
- d. First Growth

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

Name one Saint-Estèphe Second Growth listed in the 1855 Classification of the Médoc:

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

List the commune and current level of classification for the following Châteaux:

- a. **Ch. Kirwan:**
 - Commune:
 - Level of Classification:
- b. **Ch. Guiraud:**
 - Commune:
 - Level of Classification:
- c. **Ch. Pavie:**
 - Commune:
 - Level of Classification:

Name the most planted grape variety in each of the following AOCs:

- a. Entre-Deux-Mers:
- b. Barsac:
- c. Fronsac:

What grape variety generally grows best in the cooler vineyards consisting of clay soils in the *Bordeaux AOC*?

SAKE

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

_____ is a primary determiner of quality in the production of all Sake.

- a. Trapping CO₂ from a secondary fermentation in bottle
- b. 2 years of aging in new French oak
- c. The addition of grape spirit to stop fermentation while there is residual sugar
- d. Percentage of rice polishing

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

What is the Japanese name for the *Aspergillus oryzae* mold used to ferment Sake?

Daiginjo sake must have a *semaibuai* of at least ____%.

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

What do the following Sake terms indicate?

a. Koshu:

b. Genshu:

Explain the term kimoto in the production of Sake:

BURGUNDY

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

_____ is an example of an appellation in the Côte de Nuits.

- a. Morgon
- b. Pauillac
- c. Cornas
- d. Gevrey-Chambertin

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

What is the predominant soil type found in Chablis Grand Cru Les Clos?

- a. Chalk/Limestone
- b. Gravel
- c. Sand
- d. Slate

Which producer owns the La Tâche Grand Cru vineyard?

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

Name four producers who make a Chambertin-Clos de Bèze Grand Cru AOC:

Which river runs through the heart of Chablis AOC?

Order the listed AOCs from lowest allowable maximum yield to highest allowable maximum yield:

Bourgogne Passetoutgrains

Bonnes Mares

Nuits-Saint-Georges

Chambolle-Musigny Les Amoureuses 1er Cru

GREECE

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

X

Name the most prominent grape variety used in the production of PDO Santorini:

Which white wine PDO is renowned for the vine training pictured below?



List one DOP located in the Peloponnese:

Which Regional PGI encompasses the Amynteo, Goumenissa, and Slopes of Meliton PDOs?

GERMANY & AUSTRIA

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

The terms *Kabinett*, *Spätlese*, and *Auslese* on a label of German wine all refer to _____.

- a. Single vineyard source
- b. Alcohol levels of final wine
- c. Minimum periods of barrel aging
- d. Sugar level in grapes at harvest

The Wachau DAC is located in _____.

- a. Spain
- b. Germany
- c. Austria
- d. Portugal

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

What anbaugebiet features the *Prälat*, *Würzgarten*, and *Doctor* vineyards?

Which country's most prominent red wine grape varieties include *Blaufränkisch* and *Zweigelt*?

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

Name the river adjacent to each of the following vineyards:

- a. Graacher Domprobst:
- b. Erbacher Marcobrunn:
- c. Niersteiner Hipping:
- d. Ockfener Bockstein:

What is the principal difference between Chaptalization and Süssreserve?

Where must German *Süssreserve* be sourced from?

Which grape variety is the most widely planted by the members of Vinea Wachau?

The Nigl, Salomon, and Bründlmayer wineries are all located in

- a. Alto Adige-Südtirol
- b. Baden
- c. Kremstal
- d. Wachau

HISTORY & LORE

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

What is the chief reason for the multiple ownership of portions of single vineyards in Burgundy?

- a. Original AOP requirements
- b. Historic donations to the Cistercian Monks
- c. Large vineyard sizes
- d. Napoléonic Law of Inheritance

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

Which of the following winemakers most directly influenced winemaking in Napa Valley?

- a. Dr. Konstantin Frank
- b. David Lett
- c. André Tchelistcheff
- d. Max Schubert

What is currently embossed on bottles of Châteauneuf-du-Pape AOC to indicate estate-bottled?

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

Which Napa Valley producer rose to international fame as a result of winning the Cabernet Sauvignon portion of the Paris Tasting of 1976?

Who is largely credited with pioneering New Zealand's wine industry in the 19th century?

- a. Max Schubert
- b. Jan van Riebeeck
- c. Agoston Haraszthy
- d. James Busby

What major historical role did _____ play in the Côte d'Or?

- a. Duke Philip the Bold:
- b. Dr. Jules Lavalle:

SPIRITS & COCKTAILS

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

_____ is flavored with juniper.

- a. Rye
- b. Gin
- c. Bourbon
- d. Rum

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

Organize the following styles of Cognac from *least* to *most* amount of barrel aging utilized for production: *XO, Three Star, VSOP*.

(Least Amount of Barrel Aging)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

(Most Amount of Barrel Aging)

Circle all that apply to Single Malt Scotch Whisky:

- Made from mash of wheat and barley
- Distilled at a single distillery
- Pot Still distilled
- Aged in a single cask

What is Grappa?

- a. Wine produced from dried grapes
- b. Vermouth
- c. Dessert wine
- d. Pomace brandy

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

List four French Eaux-de-Vie AOCs, not including Cognac, Armagnac or Calvados:

In what country is Commandaria PDO produced?

How old is the youngest component of an Armagnac Hors d'Age?

What flavoring agent does the term Pechuga refer to in the production of Tequila and Mezcal?

Choose the Tequila-based cocktail(s):

Singapore Sling
Paloma
Corpse Reviver #2
Matador
Bullshot

VINTAGE KNOWLEDGE

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

X

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

Which is the least widely heralded vintage in Brunello di Montalcino DOCG from 2012 to 2015?

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

Name the coolest, wettest vintage in Paarl WO from 2013 to 2018:

Regarding the 2012-2017 vintages for red wines from Ribera del Duero DO, list the following:

The two highest in overall quality:
_____ & _____

The lowest in overall quality:

ITALY #2

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

Which of the following wine regions is located in Central Italy?

- a. Barbaresco
- b. Valpolicella
- c. Brunello di Montalcino
- d. Etna

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

Circle the correct color and sweetness level for this wine:

Color:

- White
- Red
- Rosé

Sweetness Level:

- Dry
- Off-Dry
- Medium-Sweet
- Sweet



ADVANCED SOMMELIER

What is the key production difference between Valtellina Superiore DOCG and Sforzato di Valtellina DOCG?

In which region of Italy are the Bassa Atesina, Bolzano, and Isarco Valley zones located?

What does the MGA (acronym for Menzioni Geografiche Aggiuntive) refer to in Barolo?

In what DOC/DOCG would you find the following single vineyards?

Nerina:

Montosoli:

LOIRE VALLEY

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

What is the primary grape variety used to produce Sancerre AOP?

- a. Pinot Gris
- b. Chardonnay
- c. Sauvignon Blanc
- d. Riesling

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

Name three AOCs in the Central Vineyards of the Loire Valley which make Sauvignon Blanc-based wines:

In what major region of France are the AOCs of Menetou-Salon, Savennières, and Bonnezeaux *all* located? *Examples of "major region" include Bordeaux, Burgundy, and Champagne, etc.*

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

In which AOC is the village of Chavignol located?

- **What is the principal soil type found in this AOC?**

Within which red wine-only AOC do Domaine de la Guilloterie, Clos Rougeard, and Domaine des Roches Neuves all produce wine?

- **What is the predominant grape variety used in these wines?**

What type of body of water does the term Grandlieu refer to in the Muscadet-Côtes de Grandlieu AOC?

- a. Bay
- b. Ocean
- c. River
- d. Lake

CHAMPAGNE

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

Which of the following categories of Champagne AOP is the driest?

- a. Doux
- b. Brut
- c. Demi-Sec
- d. Brut Nature

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

Champagne AOP features predominantly _____ soils.

- a. Schist
- b. Slate
- c. Gravel
- d. Limestone / Chalk

List two ingredients found in the Liqueur de Tirage used in the production of Champagne:

At what specific point in the production of Champagne does *dosage* occur?

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

List the predominant soil type for each of the following Crus in Champagne AOC:

Cuisles :

Avize :

What is the permitted range of residual sugar allowed for an Extra Brut Champagne?

- a. 0-6 g/l
- b. 0-15 g/l
- c. 12-17 g/l
- d. 14-38 g/l

VITICULTURE & VINIFICATION

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

Winemakers wanting increased butter flavor and creamier, rounder texture in white wines promote

- a. Extended skin contact
- b. Malolactic fermentation
- c. Wild yeast fermentation
- d. Carbonic maceration

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

What is the name of the most damaging vine disease transmitted by the Glassy-winged Sharpshooter?

Briefly define "punch down":

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

Briefly explain the following viticultural terms:

Brix:

Oidium :

List three principal reasons for *post-fermentation lees stirring* in the production of white wine:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Briefly explain the following winemaking terms:

Aerobic:

Cold Stabilization:

What unit of measurement is used in UC Davis's *Heat Summation* method?

CHILE & ARGENTINA

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

What is the principal physical reason Chile has little-to-no phylloxera in its vineyards?

- a. Geographic isolation has prevented louse spread from other countries' vineyards
- b. Warm growing season kills louse eggs
- c. Wind blows louse away
- d. Strong UV rays at high altitude kills adult louse

_____ is most commonly associated with white wine production in Argentina.

- a. Alvarinho
- b. Carricante
- c. Torrontés
- d. Verdejo

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

Which mountain range most affects the vineyards of the *Uco Valley*?

Which of the following regions contains the highest altitude vineyards?

- a. Stellenbosch
- b. La Salta
- c. Howell Mountain
- d. Martinborough

What country contains the Maipo, Maule, and Cachapoal regions?

The Central Valley of Chile is located between the _____ and _____ mountain ranges.

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

Above and beyond general wine law, what two aspects of production are legally defined for wines labeled Gran Reserva in Argentina?

What is the average altitude at which the majority of vineyards in *Mendoza* are planted?

List two sub-regions of the Aconcagua DO where Sauvignon Blanc is currently planted:

What is the most planted grape variety in *Maipo*?

Australia / New Zealand

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

Which of the following grape varieties produces wine in both Barossa Valley GI and Hermitage AOP?

- a. Pinot Noir
- b. Sauvignon Blanc
- c. Syrah
- d. Chardonnay

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

_____ is largely credited as the winery which established Central Otago as a leading region for the production of Pinot Noir.

- a. Penfolds
- b. Stag's Leap Wine Cellars
- c. Felton Road
- d. Klein Constantia

What is the most prominent red grape variety used to produce wine in the Yarra Valley GI?

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

On which island of New Zealand is the Kumeu River winery located?

What is the predominant soil type in Margaret River GI?

What sub-region does "BOX A" in the map below point to?



MISC

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

X

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

X

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

Which country uses the Controliran - also known as DGO - classification?

What body of water most influences the climate of the Pelee Island region?

What is the most planted vitis vinifera grape variety in China?

In what country are each of the following wine regions found?

Goriška Brda:

Villány:

Bekaa Valley is located in.

- a. England
- b. China
- c. Lebanon
- d. Israel

SOUTH AFRICA

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

_____ is located in South Africa.

- a. Hawke's Bay
- b. Stellenbosch
- c. Walla Walla Valley
- d. Oakville

_____ uses the Wine of Origin System to define geographic designations.

- a. United States
- b. South Africa
- c. Australia
- d. New Zealand

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

Which ocean current is largely responsible for cooling the Coastal Region WO?

Swartland is an appellation in which country?

- a. United States
- b. South Africa
- c. Australia
- d. New Zealand

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

List two WO Districts which border the ocean in the Cape South Coast region:

In which District are the following Wards located?

Elim:

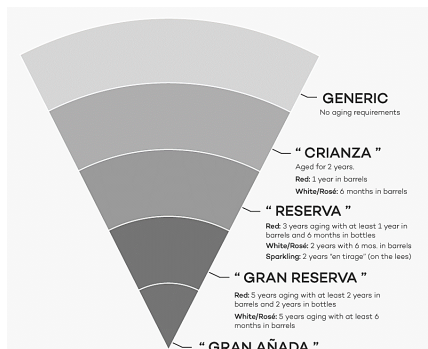
Constantia:

SPAIN

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

What region does the graphic below apply to?

- a. Mendoza, Argentina
- b. Dão, Portugal
- c. Rioja, Spain
- d. Maipo, Chile



CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

In which DOCa are the López de Heredia, Marqués de Riscal and Marqués de Murrieta producers ALL located?

How long must a Ribera del Duero "Reserva" age in total between barrel and bottle prior to release?

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

What type of wine do Corpinnat members produce? Ex: Still, Sparkling, Fortified, etc.

- In which country does Corpinnat aim to distinguish itself for this style of wine?

Choose the sub-region located in the Rías Baixas DO:

- a. O' Rosal
- b. Gratallops
- c. Sanlúcar de Barrameda
- d. Alavesa

In which area of Spain are each of the following regions located? *Example: Galicia, Castilla y León, Catalunya, etc.*

Rueda
Jumilla

NORTH AMERICA

INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER

Which of the following AVAs is located within the Napa Valley?

- a. Finger Lakes
- b. Carneros
- c. Willamette Valley
- d. Oakville

CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

Name three AVAs which are at least partially located within the Columbia Valley AVA:

For Napa Valley AVA wine, a minimum of _____ must come from the vintage stated on the label

The Valle de Guadalupe is a wine region located in which country _____.

The Okanagan Valley GI is located in which country?

- a. New Zealand
- b. Canada
- c. The United States
- d. Australia

Niagara Peninsula is a main viticultural area in which province of Canada?

- a. Québec
- b. British Columbia
- c. Ontario
- d. Nova Scotia

ADVANCED SOMMELIER

Which of the following grape varieties is most commonly found in Red Mountain AVA?

- a. Zinfandel
- b. Pinot Noir
- c. Cabernet Sauvignon
- d. Gamay Noir

What percentage of grapes must come from a single vineyard stated on a VQA wine label?

What helps prevent phylloxera in the vineyards of the Valle de Guadalupe?

Match the following single vineyards with their AVA:

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| a) Eisele: | 1) Ribbon Ridge |
| b) Beaux Frères: | 2) Red Mountain |
| c) Klipsun: | 3) Calistoga |
| d) Bien Nacido: | 4) Santa Maria |
| | 5) Chehalem Mountains |
| | 6) Walla Walla Valley |