INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER COURSE AND EXAM

COURSE GUIDE

What to Expect and How to Prepare for the Introductory Sommelier Course and Exam

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT:

To set expectations and provide preparation guidance for students taking the Introductory Sommelier Course and Examination. This document is split into three sections that will cover preparation for the course and exam, what to expect during the exam, and then assessment and results.

COURSE MISSION:

The Introductory Sommelier Course and Exam is an introduction to the Court of Master Sommeliers and the Sommelier profession. We endeavor to provide accessible and inclusive education and welcome all who want to learn about wine and the beverage industry.

PHILOSOPHY OF CURRICULUM:

All Court of Master Sommeliers, Americas education and examinations focus on our Philosophy of Curriculum and our four pillars of education and examination.

- Theory
- Tasting
- Hospitality and Service
- Business of the Sommelier

The Introductory Sommelier Course is an introduction to the Court of Master Sommeliers, the sommelier profession, and how these four pillars interrelate and inform each other for study.

With each wine region discussed, we will taste wines from that region to help connect knowledge of the place to how the grapes are grown and made. Additionally, we will learn how to provide knowledgeable descriptions of the aromas and flavors in the glass. We will then integrate that with wine service and food and wine pairing.
PART 1 – PREPARATION

TEXTS AND RESOURCES:

- **The Court of Master Sommeliers, Americas Introductory Sommelier Course Workbook**
  
  - Students will receive a PDF Copy of the workbook upon registration or may purchase a physical copy through Amazon to be received prior to the course at the following link: [https://www.amazon.com/dp/1733571906](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1733571906).
  
  - Purchasing through Amazon is optional. The workbook purchase cost will not be deducted from your course fee.
  
  - The Introductory Sommelier Course workbook contains:
    
    - An outline of all subjects covered throughout the course:
      
      - Learning Objectives
      - Wine Regions of the World
      - Maps
    
    - Service Standards
    - Tasting Journal
    - End of section quizzes (please see PDF of updated quizzes and answers)

- **GuildSomm.com**
  
  - A one-month trial membership is included as an educational resource upon registration.

- **Other resources**
  
  - There are many excellent and comprehensive resources, however, the Introductory Sommelier Course Workbook focuses on the scope of this course and should be the primary resource in preparing for the examination.
  

SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR CLASS:

- A copy of the Introductory Sommelier Workbook in printed or digital form on a device.

  - If using the digital version, a student must print the **Tasting Journal** at the following [Link](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1733571906) to use in class to record notes on the wines being tasted.

- Notepad or notebook to take notes.

- Pen

- #2 pencil for taking the exam
PART 2 – COURSE OBJECTIVES AND CURRICULUM

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

As a result of this course, a student should be able to:

- Have a general appreciation of the breadth of global beverage alcohol offerings.
- Identify historically and commercially important wine regions of the world and know their respective grape varieties and styles.
- Evaluate and describe 20 classic wines of the world.
- Understand the Deductive Tasting Method to build vocabulary and skills for objective evaluation and description of classic wines and major grape varieties.
- Recognize and explain climatic and winemaking effects on wine style.
- Receive an introduction to service and hospitality by observing the formal mechanical service of still and sparkling wine by the bottle.
- Learn the basic principles of food and beverage pairing and how to apply these principles to different styles of food and wine.
- Learn the fundamentals of beer, sake, spirits, and liqueurs.

IN-PERSON LEARNING

DAILY SCHEDULE:

Day 1:

- **7:45 AM:** Check-in.
  - Photo ID is required.
- **8:00 AM:** Course begins
- **12:30-1:30 PM:** Lunch Break (not provided by the CMS-A)
  - You will have one hour for lunch. You may pack lunch or do an online search to see if there are any preferable dining options available in close proximity to the venue.
- **6:00 PM:** End of Day 1

Day 2:

- **7:45 AM:** Check-in.
  - Check-in is required both days of the course.
- **8:00 AM:** Day 2 Begins
- **12:30-1:30 PM:** Lunch Break (not provided by the CMS-A)
  - You will have one hour for lunch. You may pack a lunch or do an online search to see if there are any preferable dining options available in close proximity to the venue.
- **4:00 PM:** Introductory Sommelier Examination
- **5:30 PM:** Results Reception
**INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER COURSE OUTLINE**

EACH SECTION HAS SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES, ASSOCIATED CHAPTERS IN THE WORKBOOK, AND SELF-QUIZZES

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## INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER COURSE OUTLINE

Each section has specific learning objectives, associated chapters in the workbook, and self quizzes.

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PART 3 - ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATION

ABOUT THE EXAM:

The Court of Master Sommeliers, Americas Introductory Sommelier Exam is a closed book exam consisting of 70 multiple-choice questions, with four answer options per question. A student must complete the exam in 45 minutes. Students will be given a Scantron answer sheet and instructions on properly filling it out.

Examination questions are based on the published learning objectives, The Introductory Sommelier Course Guide, and the study resources such as the Introductory Sommelier Course Workbook. These materials contain the information required to answer all questions.

Every course venue differs; therefore, each in-person exam room will be slightly different.

PASSING GRADE:

- A student must achieve 60% to pass the exam or answer 42 out of the 70 questions correctly.
- Each correct answer is worth one point.
- Students who pass the Introductory Sommelier Course Exam will receive a certificate, a lapel pin, and are eligible to take the Certified Sommelier Exam.

SCORES AND FEEDBACK:

- In-person students will receive their results after the exam at the end of course reception.
- Within one week of the exam date, students will receive their numerical score with feedback on the categories of questions that need improvement.
- Online Introductory Sommelier Course students receive their scores and feedback immediately after completing the online exam.

RETAKE POLICY:

- Students who score less than 60% are eligible to retake the Introductory Sommelier Examination online for a fee of $125. Students must wait at least 14 days from their last attempt before retaking. To register to retake the exam, please contact info@mastersommeliers.org.

- The CMS-A no longer requires that students take the Certified Sommelier Examination within three years of the Introductory Sommelier Examination. We encourage students to move to the next level when best prepared.
EXAM CONTENT

- Questions on the exam will focus on the following areas and are based on the subjects covered in class.

  o Wine law of important regions
    o Connecting grape varieties with specific places or appellations.
    o Connecting appellations with the style or styles of wines produced.

  o Wine production methods
    o Still
    o Sparkling Wine
    o Fortified Wine
    o Sweet Wine

  o Important historical figures in wine
    o Those mentioned in the book and/or lectures.
    o Examples:
      ▪ Agoston Haraszthy
      ▪ Robert Mondavi
      ▪ André Tchelistcheff
      ▪ David Lett
      ▪ Dr. Konstantine Frank

  o Wine and food pairing
    o Principles and interactions
    o Classic pairings

  o Map identification
    o Recognition of important world wine regions

  o Reading a wine label
    o Looking at a wine label and determining grape variety, color, and style of the wine.
    o Example: See questions 3 and 62 in the practice exam below.

  o Beverage service-related questions
    o Basics of wine service
    o Example: See question 15 in the practice exam below.
    o Note: No need to memorize service temperatures at this time

  o How wines and grape varieties look, smell, and taste
    o Focusing on wines tasted in class
    o Example: See question number 58 and 64 in the practice exam below.

  o Producer recognition in major wine regions
    o Examples:
      ▪ Bordeaux:
        • First Growth producers of the 1855 Classification of the Médoc
        • Saint-Émilion top producers: Château Cheval Blanc
        • Pomerol: Château Pétrus
o **Soil types**
  - Major regions only and only those with importance to the regions and the grape varieties grown there.
  - Examples:
    - Champagne
    - Chablis
    - Châteauneuf-du-Pape
    - Bordeaux Right and Left Bank
    - Mosel, Germany
    - Coonawarra, Australia

o **Beer Basics**
  - The main ingredients and what they contribute to beer
  - Examples of common styles

o **Sake Basics**
  - Sake ingredients
  - Quality scale and definitions

o **Spirits Basics**
  - Base-ingredients of common styles
  - Examples of common styles

**A student will NOT be tested on the following:**

- Wine tasting
- Performance of service elements
- Vintage memorization

**HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE IN-PERSON COURSE AND EXAM:**

Preparation and study ahead of time is essential to feel comfortable in class and for success on the exam.

At the *in-person* course, there is a lot of information discussed at a quick pace. A base knowledge of the subjects covered in the workbook will assist you during the session. The *in-person* session is a review of the materials from the workbook and reading materials and is not a comprehensive class.

Using the provided resource texts such as the syllabus, this guide, the workbook, end-of-section quizzes, and the provided practice exam are the resources needed and an excellent guide for any student.

Additionally, resources are always available via email at info@mastersommelier.org. You may also speak to a Master Sommelier before you take your exam if you have any questions or concerns.
INTRODUCTORY SOMMELIER COURSE
PRACTICE EXAMINATION
Introductory Sommelier Course Practice Examination

LAST NAME: ____________________________
FIRST NAME: ____________________________

1) The Pays Nantais, Touraine, and Anjou-Saumur regions are all located in ___________.
   a. The Loire Valley
   b. Champagne
   c. Burgundy
   d. The Rhône Valley

2) ____________ is a grape species.
   a. Cabernet Sauvignon
   b. Vitis vinifera
   c. Brettanomyces
   d. Quercus suber

3) What is the predominant grape variety of the wine pictured below?
   a. Pinot Noir
   b. Grenache Noir
   c. Cabernet Sauvignon
   d. Malbec

4) The ____________ Mountains create a rain shadow effect for the vineyards of the Mendoza IG.
   a. Sierra Cantabria
   b. Santa Cruz
   c. Andes
   d. Coastal
5) The __________ label term indicates a traditional, theoretically superior vineyard area within a DOC or DOCG.
   a. Frizzante
   b. Dolce
   c. Secco
   d. Classico

6) Cooler climates generally produce wines with __________.
   a. Elevated acidity
   b. Higher residual sugar
   c. Elevated alcohol
   d. Lower tannins

7) Winemakers wanting increased butter flavor and creamier texture in white wines promote __.
   a. Carbonic maceration
   b. Acidification
   c. Malolactic fermentation
   d. Chaptalization

8) The primary grape variety of the Rheingau is ____________.
   a. Grüner Veltliner
   b. Riesling
   c. Spätburgunder
   d. Müller-Thurgau

9) Which of the following grape varieties produces wine with intense aromas of bell pepper and blackcurrant?
   a. Syrah
   b. Nebbiolo
   c. Cabernet Sauvignon
   d. Merlot

10) Amongst the following California AVAs, ____________ is most renowned for producing sparkling wine.
    a. Calistoga
    b. Dry Creek
    c. Paso Robles
    d. Anderson Valley
11) A wine labeled SGN (or Sélection de Grains Nobles) is a ___________ wine.
a. Sweet
b. Sparking
c. Fortified
d. Dry Red

12) Carmenère is most commonly associated with wine produced in ____________.
a. Chile
b. United States
c. New Zealand
d. South Africa

13) A ____________-style beer is produced via top-fermenting yeasts in warmer temperatures.
a. Pilsner
b. Pale Ale
c. Bock
d. Oktoberfest

14) Which of the following regions has the coolest climate?
a. Châteauneuf-du-Pape
b. Barossa Valley
c. Mosel
d. Napa Valley

15) Bottles, decanters, and corks should always be placed ____________.
a. On an underliner on the guests' table
b. At a side station away from the guest
c. On an underliner at a side station away from the guest
d. Directly on the guests' table without an underliner

16) The aromas of TCA (or "corked wine") are generally described as smelling like ____________.
a. Spoiled egg and/or struck matchstick
b. Moldy cardboard and/or must
c. Band-Aid and/or barnyard
d. Vinegar and/or nail polish remover

17) The ____________ DOP in Portugal is most associated with the ____________ grape variety.
a. Vinho Verde / Alvarinho
b. Maule / Tempranillo
c. Rueda / Verdejo
d. Mendoza / Garnacha
18) Château Cheval Blanc is classified as a ____________ per the Saint-Émilion Classification of 2012.
   a. Vin Ordinaire  
   b. Gran Reserva  
   c. Premier Grand Cru Classé ‘A’  
   d. Kabinett

19) In which century did Australia establish itself as a major wine exporter?
   a. 17th  
   b. 18th  
   c. 19th  
   d. 20th

20) Alcoholic fermentation requires the interaction of ___________ and ___________.
   a. Oak barrels / Dead yeast cells  
   b. Water / Alcoholic spirit  
   c. Sugar / Yeast  
   d. Carbon dioxide / Oxygen

21) Which of the following spirits can be distilled from corn, potatoes, wheat and/or rice?
   a. Vodka  
   b. Rum  
   c. Brandy  
   d. Tequila

22) Which of the following countries features the Southern Alps mountain range?
   a. Chile  
   b. South Africa  
   c. New Zealand  
   d. Argentina

23) ___________ refers to a white Champagne made from Pinot Noir and/or Meunier.
   a. Demi-sec  
   b. Monopole  
   c. Tête du Cuvée  
   d. Blanc de Noirs

24) Which of the following aspects of wine will make meats and cheeses feel less rich and fatty?
   a. Moderately high tannin  
   b. Bone dry  
   c. Low acid  
   d. Ripe fruit
25) The primary color (or colors) of Wachau DAC wine is/are ___________.
   a. White
   b. White and Rosé
   c. Rosé and Red
   d. Red

26) The closure pictured below is used for a ___________ wine produced via the ___________ method.
   a. Fortified / Arrested Fermentation
   b. Sparkling / Traditional
   c. Dessert / Carbonation
   d. Sparkling / Tank

27) ___________ on a bottle of Rioja DOCa indicates the longest amount of aging prior to release.
   a. Denominación de Origen Calificada
   b. Vino
   c. Gran Reserva
   d. Tinto

28) Schist, marl, and silt are types of ___________.
   a. Vine clones
   b. Trellising
   c. Fertilizer
   d. Soil
29) Relative to the general harvest timing in Bordeaux, grapes used in the production of Sauternes AOP are picked ____________.
   a. Early
   b. At the same time
   c. Late
   d. When frozen

30) ____________ is located in South Africa.
   a. Marlborough
   b. Stellenbosch
   c. Margaret River
   d. Russian River Valley

31) Which of the following descriptions most indicates the extended barrel and bottle aging of a white wine?
   a. Golden color
   b. Primary, fresh fruit flavors
   c. Short finish
   d. High acid

32) The Morgon, Moulin-à-Vent, and Brouilly AOPs are all located in ____________.
   a. Chablis
   b. Côte d’Or
   c. Beaujolais
   d. Côte Chalonnaise

33) The climate of the Columbia Valley AVA can best be categorized as ____________.
   a. Subtropical
   b. Mediterranean
   c. Maritime
   d. Continental

34) Which of the following is NEVER a consideration in defining an AOP?
   a. Geographic boundaries
   b. Production methods
   c. Price per bottle
   d. Grape variety

35) The label term ____________ indicates that a sake is unpasteurized.
   a. Daiginjo
   b. Nigori
   c. Ginjo
   d. Namazake
36) Alto Adige is most known for producing _______ wines.
   a. Sweet, still red
   b. Dry, still white
   c. Sweet, sparkling white
   d. Fortified, aromatized red

37) Which of the following AOPs features the greatest percentage of steep hillside vineyards?
   a. Côte-Rôtie
   b. Pauillac
   c. Puligny-Montrachet
   d. Champagne

38) Which of the following wines is a classic pairing with fresh goat cheese?
   a. Barolo
   b. 10-Year Tawny Port
   c. Sancerre
   d. Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

39) To which fortified wine does the below diagram illustrating Running the Scales apply?
   a. Port
   b. Muscat de Beaumes-de-Venise
   c. Madeira
   d. Sherry

40) ____________ is most commonly associated with white wine production in Argentina.
   a. Albariño
   b. Torrontés
   c. Verdejo
   d. Carricante
41) ____________ is the removing of unwanted items and damaged fruit from desired grape bunches arriving at the winery after picking.
   a. Maceration  
   b. Fermentation  
   c. Crushing  
   d. Sorting

42) What are the primary grape varieties grown in the Priorat DOCa?
   a. Garnacha / Cariñena  
   b. Torrontés / Verdejo  
   c. Tempranillo / Albariño  
   d. Cabernet Sauvignon / Tempranillo

43) What is the minimum number of months of lees aging required in the production of Champagne AOP?
   a. 6  
   b. 9  
   c. 12  
   d. 36

44) What region is depicted in the map below?
   a. Veneto  
   b. Tuscany  
   c. Sicily  
   d. Piedmont
45) Tokaji Aszú is a sweet, white wine from which country?
   a. Italy
   b. United States
   c. Canada
   d. Hungary

46) The base material in the production of rum is __________.
   a. Grain
   b. Grapes
   c. Blue Agave
   d. Sugarcane

47) Riesling generally produces wines with elevated __________.
   a. Alcohol
   b. Color
   c. Acidity
   d. Tannins

48) __________ is the local name for the most renowned soil of the Coonawarra GI of Australia.
   a. Terra Rossa
   b. Galets
   c. Silex
   d. Galestro

49) What is the primary grape variety used in the production of Chinon AOP?
   a. Cabernet Franc
   b. Pinot Noir
   c. Syrah
   d. Gamay Noir

50) Quinta is best defined as ____________.
   a. Vintage
   b. Variety
   c. Vineyard
   d. Country

51) At 10 years of age, which of the following red wines would most likely require decanting due to sediment?
   a. Beaujolais-Villages (based on Gamay Noir)
   b. Rioja (based on Tempranillo)
   c. Chianti (based on Sangiovese)
   d. Hermitage (based on Syrah)
52) What color is Vintage Port when bottled?
   a. White
   b. Pink
   c. Purple
   d. Brown

53) The Maipo Valley DO is located in _____________.
   a. Chile
   b. Spain
   c. Argentina
   d. Portugal

54) The climate of the Champagne AOP can best be categorized as _____________.
   a. Subtropical
   b. Mediterranean
   c. Maritime
   d. Continental

55) Which of the following physical features most affects the vineyards of Pauillac AOP in Bordeaux?
   a. Vosges Mountains
   b. Gironde Estuary
   c. Rhône River
   d. Limousin Forest

56) Which of the following Italian terms refers to the fog which rolls off the Alps into Piedmont vineyards?
   a. Riserva
   b. Nebbia
   c. Spumante
   d. Appassimento

57) The Kamptal and Kremstal regions are located in ____________.
   a. Germany
   b. France
   c. Italy
   d. Austria

58) Alcohol in wine is perceived as ____________ in the mouth, throat, and chest.
   a. Astringency
   b. Tartness
   c. Fruitiness
   d. Heat
59) Which of the following spirits is most likely to age in oak barrels?
   a. Gin
   b. Cognac
   c. Tequila
   d. Vodka

60) ____________ is a prominent sub-region of the Hawke's Bay GI in New Zealand.
   a. Gimblett Gravels
   b. McLaren Vale
   c. Marlborough
   d. Paarl

61) The predominant soil type found in the Mosel is ____________ .
   a. Volcanic basalt
   b. Slate
   c. Gravel
   d. Limestone / Chalk

62) What is the most likely grape variety used to produce the wine with the below label?
   a. Pinot Noir
   b. Zinfandel
   c. Cabernet Sauvignon
   d. Merlot
63) Le Musigny is classified as a ___________.
   a. Village
   b. First Growth
   c. Vin de Table
   d. Grand Cru

64) ___________ generally produces wine with aromas of ripe yellow apple and pineapple, butter, and baking spice.
   a. Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc
   b. Alsace Gewurztraminer
   c. Friuli Pinot Grigio
   d. Sonoma Valley Chardonnay

65) The majority of Alsace Grand Cru AOP wines are made from ___________.
   a. A blend of white grape varieties
   b. A single white grape variety
   c. A blend of red wine grape varieties
   d. A single red grape variety

66) The Rías Baixas DO produces mostly ___________ wines.
   a. Sweet, still red
   b. Dry, still white
   c. Sweet, sparkling white
   d. Fortified, aromatized red

67) Sugar in food will make wine taste more ___________.
   a. Tart and/or Bitter
   b. Fruity
   c. Aged
   d. Oaky

68) Which of the following people is largely considered the "Father of Modern Napa Valley"?
   a. Robert Mondavi
   b. Baron Le Roy
   c. Piero Antinori
   d. David Lett
69) Which of the following grape varieties produces wine in both Stellenbosch WO and Vouvray AOP?
   a. Riesling
   b. Pinot Gris
   c. Chenin Blanc
   d. Chardonnay

70) Which of the following regions is most likely to feature the gravel topsoil pictured below?
   a. Douro
   b. Pauillac
   c. Mosel
   d. Priorat
## Introductory Sommelier Course Practice Examination

### ANSWER KEY

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