

20XX

Master Sommelier Diploma Theory Examination

Results & Feedback

Candidate Name



COURT OF
**MASTER
SOMMELIERS**
Americas

It is our honor to have administered your Master Sommelier Diploma Theory Examination.

We are inspired by your commitment to excellence, perseverance, courage, and talent.

The following Results and Feedback recognizes specific performance at your examination and provides suggestions as to what you should focus on moving forward.

Results

Theory

XX%

Candidates must score at least 75% in this portion of the examination to pass.

General Examination Information:

Overall, XX MS examiners with over XXX years of combined experience set, graded, and confirmed this examination.

- XX candidates sat.
- XX candidates passed for an overall pass rate of 5%.
- The average overall score was XX%.
 - The average passing score was XX%.
 - The average no-passing score was XX%.
- XX candidates scored between XX% and XX%.
- MS-level questions correctly answered: XX%
- ADV-level questions correctly answered: XX%

All balance of topics and difficulty levels – and their point weighting - were consistent with past efforts.

The CMS-A is fully confident in the fairness of your examination and veracity of your result. There is no opportunity to challenge an overall score/result or request a review of your specific scoring grid.

Feedback:

QUESTION TYPES

While facts are extremely important to have at the ready, it is our overall goal to test the comprehension of the beverage alcohol world. The ability to quickly access straightforward information AND synthesize via critical thought and extrapolation generally fall into four types of questions:

- Simple Short Answer: straightforward, direct, little-to-no extrapolation necessary.
 - *"What is the predominant grape variety used in the production of Sancerre?"*
 - *"List three producers of Cabernet Sauvignon in the Oakville AVA."*
 - *"Which of the following wines is sweet: Ribera del Duero, Brunello di Montalcino, or Quarts de Chaume?"*
- Extrapolation Simple Short Answer: layered with terms requiring added knowledge to understand intent, based upon supposition of advanced knowledge.
 - *"What is the ençépagement of the red wine of Château Haut-Brion?"*
- Complex Structure, Extrapolation Simple Short Answer: longer questions, usually with a qualifier, which remain straightforward, direct but with extrapolation required.
 - *"From 2007 to 2015, name the Mosel vintage which featured the most Goldkapsel Trockenbeerenauslese production:"*
 - *"Not including Porter, name two types of beer which use darker kilning to achieve their deeper color:"*
- Logical Reasoning: prompts for short explanation to illustrate understanding of a concept – with requisite extrapolation *and* factual knowledge to support it.
 - *"Why aren't Tokaji Aszú 'Escenzia' wines aged in oak barrels?"*
 - *"How does lowering pyrazine levels in Sancerre relate to the potential increased occurrence of botrytis cinerea?"*

CATEGORY AND TOPICS CHARTS

In the graph charts which follow, we have tracked the major categories of subject study for you to consider. As a general gauge, we suggest the following scores as indications of your level of preparation for the Master Sommelier Diploma Theory examination:

- **75% AND UP:** Masterful
- **70% TO 74%:** Strong – moderate focus needed
- **65% TO 69%:** Fair – strong focus needed
- **60% TO 65%:** Marginal – real focus and review of preparation strategy needed
- **BELOW 60%:** Weak - Wholesale review of standards and improvement of preparation strategy needed

NOTE: To the right of your performance percentage for each Country and Region is a %; this refers to how this topic performed for the entire group for the examination you sat.

Illustrative Examples:

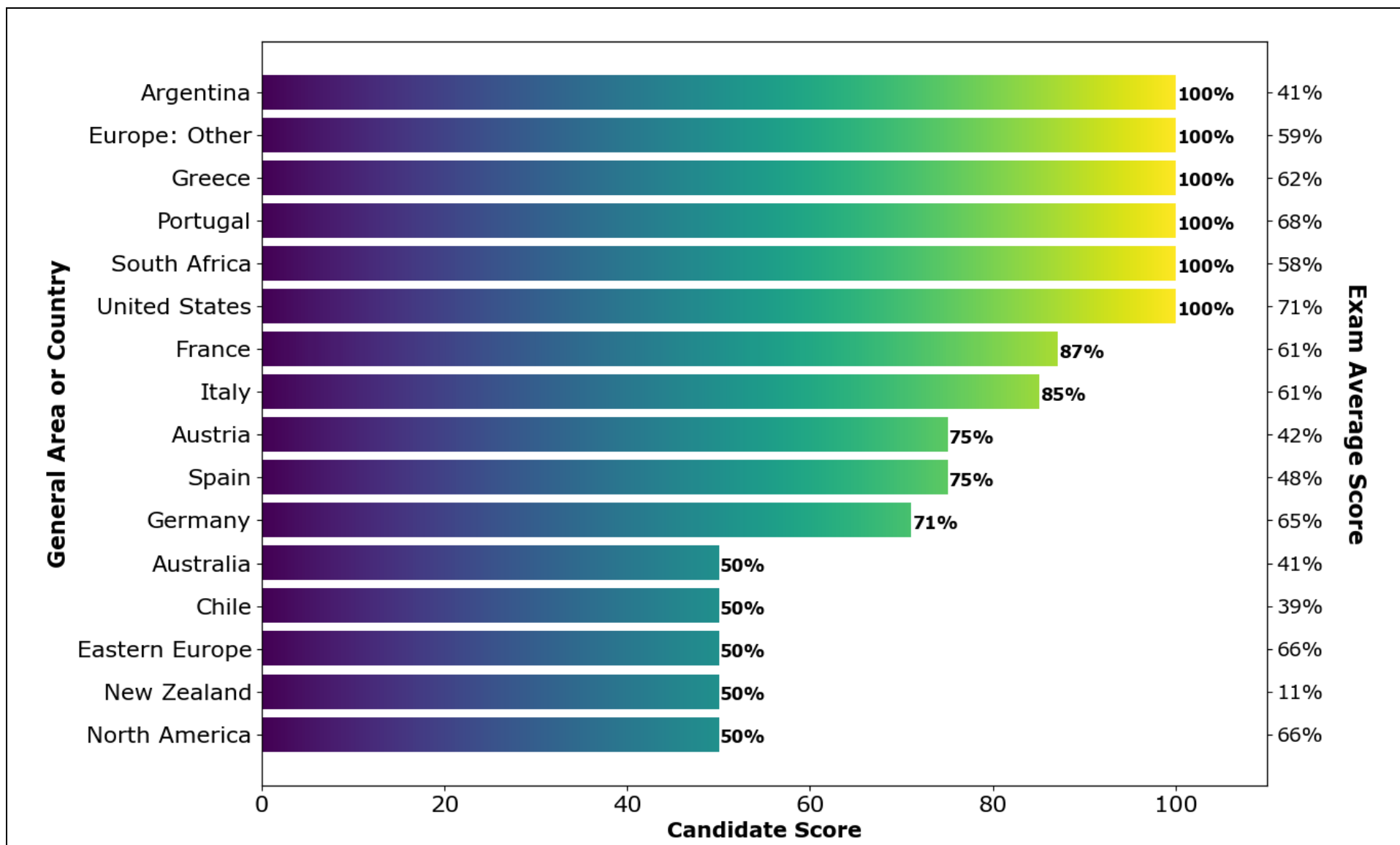
In conjunction with this Feedback report, we have added the Illustrative Examples document featuring a sample of questions from the 2024 Master Sommelier Diploma Theory examination. They aim to break down:

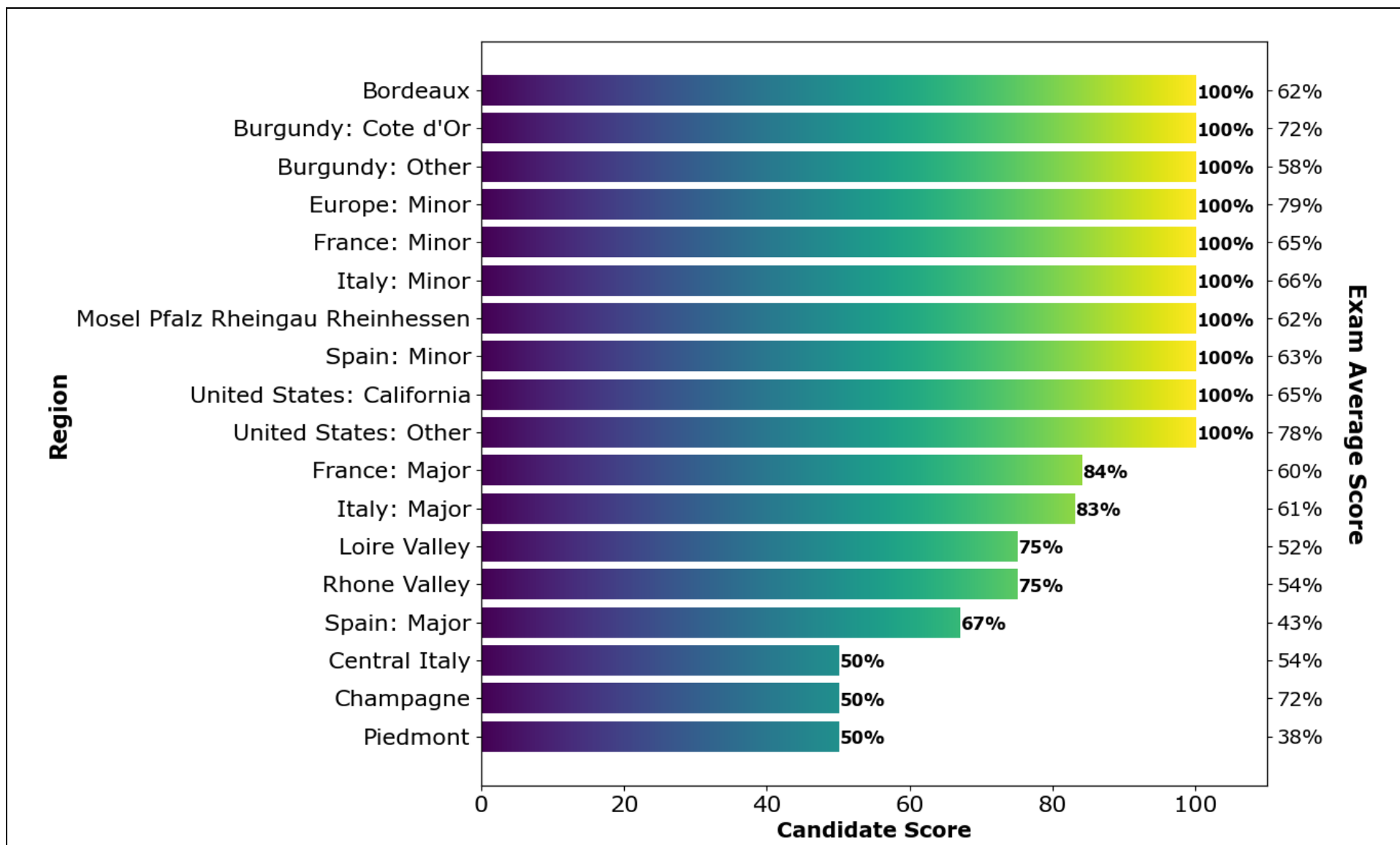
- **Difficulty Level – Advanced v. Master Sommelier**
- **Answers Expected – with reason**
- **Topics Broached**
- **Appropriateness to the CMS Curriculum**

It is our hope that this will further aid your focus on preparation within the framework provided by our Resources, this report, and the examination itself.



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TOPICS

For any beverage alcohol, there are numerous topics of consideration. Usually, there are multiple topics working in conjunction with each other.

Topics can be considered key to either a) Cause & Effect - why a specific beverage tastes the way it does - or b) Tableside Hospitality; some of them overlap. All are important to every pillar of our certifications. Theory and Tasting portions of the examination test more Cause & Effect aspects, whereas Business of the Sommelier and Hospitality & Service portions test more Tableside aspects.

- Cause & Effect: Climate, Geography: Appellation & Location, Geography: Aspect, Climate, & Physical Feature, Grape Growing & Vineyard Management, Grape Variety, Non-Wine: Base Material, Non-Wine: Law, Non-Wine: Production, Soil: Type & Name, Style: Type, Color, & Sweetness Level, Vintage: Climate & Style, Wine Law: Grape Growing & Production, Wine Law: Label Term & Style, Winemaking
- Tableside: Classification & Regional Hierarchy, General Term, History & Lore: Other, History & Lore: People, Producer, & Proprietary Brand, Label Term, Named Vineyards, Price, Producer - Proprietary Brand, Vintage: Price & Reputation
- Overlap: As guests become more knowledgeable about all aspects of Cause & Effect, many of them are now expected Tableside! Terminology used may be less officious or technical, but the concepts are more frequently broached by guests in the dining room.
- Other: Apéritifs, Digestifs, & Aromatized, Beer, Cider & Sake, Spirits

As you read your Topics performance chart: most single questions are designed to examine your comprehension of multiple Topics.

Examples:

- "Name the grape variety used in the production of most *Sancerre AOC*." This tests:
 - Grape Variety: the answer being Sauvignon Blanc
 - Geography: Appellation & Location - recognizing *Sancerre AOC*
 - Wine Law: Grape Growing & Production: per *Sancerre AOC* laws
 - Style: Type, Color, & Sweetness Level: understanding that most Sancerre is white. And, the grape variety used is Sauvignon Blanc. Also, that Sancerre is one of the most established Sauvignon Blanc-based wines in the world.



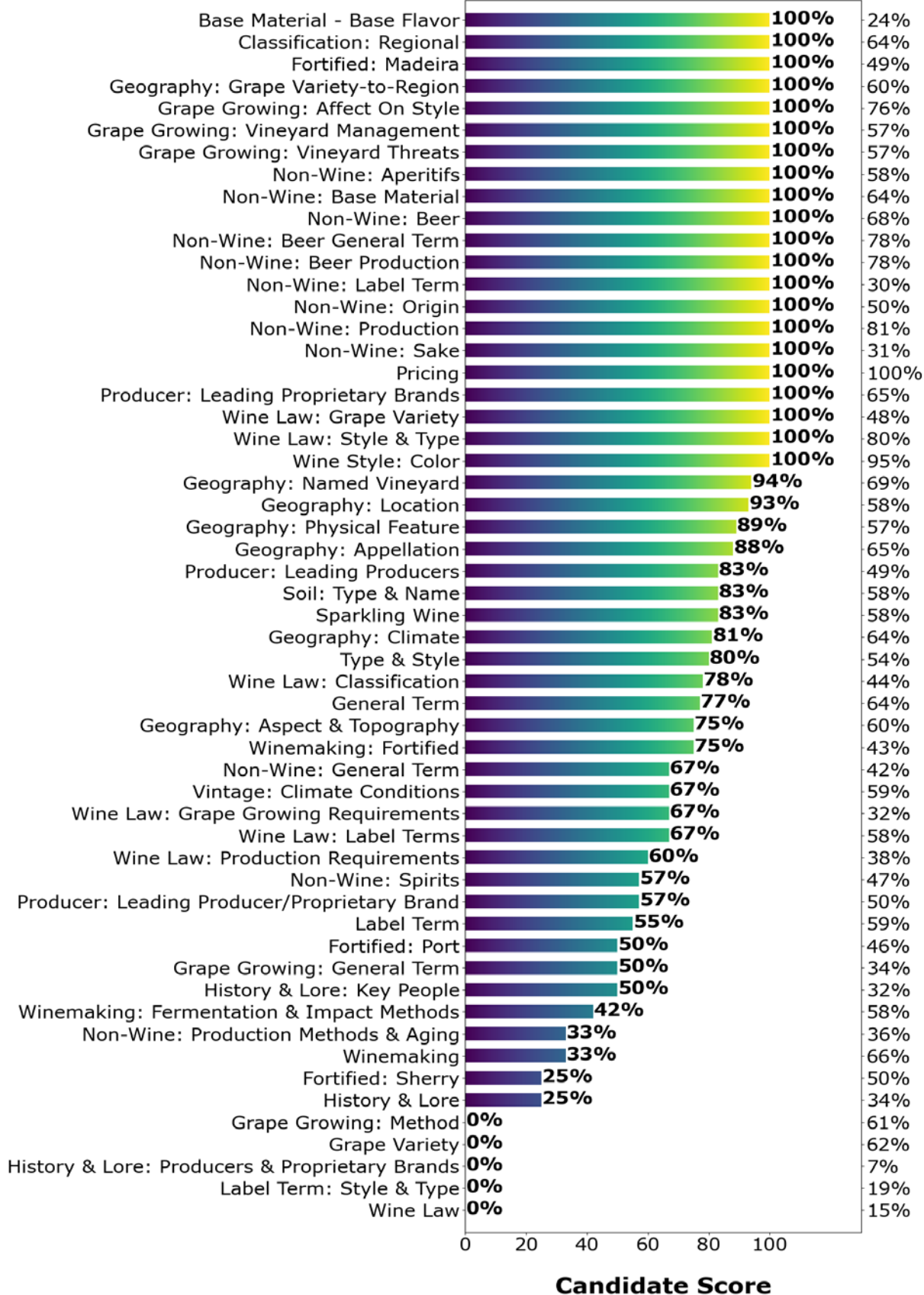
- “Which one of the following is produced via the *Méthode Traditionnelle*?” followed by four labels of different propriety wines to choose from, with one of them being Lucien Albrecht's *Crémant d'Alsace Rosé*. This tests:
 - General Term: *Méthode Traditionnelle*'s meaning as related to sparkling wines
 - Label Term: *Méthode Traditionnelle* can often appear on labels
 - Winemaking: understanding sparkling wine production, how *Méthode Traditionnelle* differs from other methods
 - Wine Law: Grape Growing & Production: winemaking laws associated with *Crémant*
 - Style: Type, Color, & Sweetness Level: sparkling wine types worldwide
 - Producer - Proprietary Brand: recognizing Lucien Albrecht as a leading Alsace & *Crémant d'Alsace* producer

Consider how your weaker Topics inform your overall comprehension of Theory in the context of all four pillars.

NOTE: To the right of your performance percentage for each Topic is a %: this refers to how this topic performed for the entire group for the examination you sat.



Topic



Exam Average Score

MOVING FORWARD

The following assumes that you have been preparing towards Practical & Tasting in conjunction with Theory. It is highly recommended that any changes you make before sitting P&T this year are small – foundational shifts so close to the examination are likely to result in lower confidence and poorer performance.

PRACTICAL PREPARATION SUGGESTIONS

- Continue to learn and/or reinforce how Theory affects Hospitality & Service and Business of the Sommelier.
 - Continue beverage program tasting exercises which force assessment of style, flavor, type, pricing, value within a category, appropriateness to restaurant theme, marketing, delicious tableside description, etc.
 - Continue Hospitality & Service exercises which force answering Theory Questions: perhaps you have the most inquisitive guests in the world?
 - Continue Business of the Sommelier exercises which require staff training of theoretical understanding – what would their quiz be? How would you teach them?
- Continue to taste the beverages – ALL kinds, not just wine - you have mastered in Theory, both blind and not. Continue to link the theory to the flavors and structure in the glass.
- Assess your strongest areas: what about these percentage scores and graph charts lands with you? Why do you understand some things and not others? How can you focus your energy, and leverage your strengths to lift your weaknesses as they apply to tableside hospitality and program management?
- Continue to employ a mechanics grid for Sparkling and Decanting; use it to check that you hit every standard in “mock” or “practice” sessions (w/ others or self-recorded).
- Practice CMS mechanics standards as often as possible – ask, “Why does this standard exist?”
- Study classic regional dishes of the world – and their beverage pairings.
- Ask, “What will a guest likely want to know about a beverage?”
- Ask, “What is the Service standard for this beverage...and, why?”



TASTING PREPARATION SUGGESTIONS

- Back to the Basics: break down the grid, box by box. Ask *why* the topics are considered. If you recognize a grape variety, fill out the entire grid for it every time – with full descriptors and where they come from to link to theory and force yourself to flesh out your sensory evaluation.
- Taste less obvious wines – both blind and knowing what they are.
- Include Theory, Hospitality & Service, and Business of the Sommelier in your tasting exercises.
 - Theory: if tasting blind, force yourself to give any possible reason(s) for a specific sensory evaluation – then, when revealed, confirm that you considered everything and whether or not you were correct.
 - Theory: taste the beverages you are studying as you are studying – make the sensory link to the cause and effect.
 - Hospitality & Service: ask yourself how you would serve it (stemware, temperatures, decant or no), what you would pair with it (classic dishes or no), list 5 other classic/established producers, how you might describe it to sound delicious, etc.
 - Business of the Sommelier: upon conclusion and/or reveal, determine how much a wine list with a certain COGS goal might charge for a bottle, how you would train your staff to describe it in one sentence, etc.
- Continue to taste aged wines, dessert wines, sparkling wines, beer, spirits, sake in Deductive Tasting Method. Don't get mired in "6 in 25".



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Examination Status:

XXXXX

In closing, we hope your experience at the Master Sommelier Diploma Theory examination was positive and invigorating. We remain honored you sat, and hope it helps you focus on your professional and Court of Master Sommeliers certification goals.

Yours in service,

The Court of Master Sommeliers, Americas

