

Cantiga Wineworks

Wine Handling Guide

Thank you for your purchase of Cantiga wine! Following are some tips for the care and enjoyment of your "liquid asset."

How long should I wait to open a bottle after shipping or transporting?

This depends on how long it was in transit, but typically, it is best to let it rest for at least 2-3 weeks (preferably a month) if you have the facilities to store it properly. A wine can get "beaten up" from the trip, particularly on a multi-day trip or in high or low temperatures. It is best to give it some time to recover.

What is the best way to store wine?

Store wine bottles either on their side or with the cork down. Your wine cellar should ideally be between 55 and 60 degrees. If you don't have a cellar or a basement, an infrequently accessed closet can do the job. Temperature stability is key. If you cannot insulate the space, then consider covering your wine collection with a quilt or other insulating material.

When should I decant a bottle of wine?

Although not strictly necessary, with a mature wine, gentle decanting can often help volatile compounds blow off and open the wine up. Be careful not to splash or over-oxidize the wine. Aerators are NOT recommended for older wine. And particularly with young wine, decanting can help it open up so that its desirable characteristics present more vividly. As soon as you open the bottle, smell the cork, pour a taste of wine into your glass and smell and taste it immediately to detect any cork spoilage such as TCA (trichloroanisole), which has a musty or moldy smell. Decant the remainder of the wine, then allow it to sit for a half hour before drinking it.



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Wine Handling Guide (continued)

What are the crystal-like deposits or goo on the cork?

With age, some of the tartaric acid in the wine precipitates onto the cork in the form of crystals. These are safe and natural. You might also notice tartrates in the form of a cast on the inside of the bottle, or a sludge on the cork. These are simply signs that the wine is mature. If some of the residue becomes suspended, you can pour the wine through a fine stainless steel mesh or screen strainer to remove the particles. Be advised that the last mouthful from a bottle will most likely be gritty.

How can I tell if the wine is spoiled?

Sometimes a mature wine will take a while to "open up." If you suspect a spoilage, try decanting and waiting a bit. Often times, the volatile compounds will dissipate and the wine will be fantastic. Remember that mature wines often possess some subtle oxidative notes as part of their complexity. A slight brownish hue is also not uncommon. If the wine still tastes unpleasant by the next day, chances are it went through some sort of spoilage.

If I do not finish a bottle in one sitting, how do I preserve it for later?

The best way to keep a wine fresh after opening is to squirt an inert gas into the bottle and push the cork partway into the neck of the bottle. You can purchase bottles of gas marketed for this purpose, such as "Private Preserve" or "Bev Gas." Otherwise, an evacuator cork and pump that removes air from the bottle can also work. If you do not have any of these items, simply recork and refrigerate. Always store the opened bottle in your cellar or wine fridge. Regular kitchen refrigerators are okay for a few days, but their broader temperature cycle makes them unsuitable for longer storage.

If you have any questions we have not addressed here, please feel free to contact us! You can reach us at (530) 621-1696 or info@cantigawine.com.

Cheers, and enjoy!

Rich & Christine Rorden

Cantiga Wineworks
5980 Meyers Lane
Somerset, CA 95684
(530) 621-1696
www.cantigawine.com