

Forbes

Dining

Underestimate The Consumer? Only At Your Own Risk, Especially When It Comes to Sparkling Wines

Cathy Huyghe | Aug 22, 2019

It had been few years since we'd last conducted a consumer tasting of Prosecco wines, where we brought together a dozen or so enthusiastic consumers and asked them for their candid opinions on a range of Prosecco bottles that our group blind-tasted together.

You can read the details for yourself (a bit of foreshadowing: the article is called "Is Expensive Prosecco Worth the Price?") but here's the bottom line: even without any formal training in analyzing wine, and even while tasting blind, the consumer group picked out the bottles of Prosecco that would generally be considered superior quality.



Whether they would pay upwards of \$40 to \$60 for those bottles is another question.

But my point today is that the consumers knew. Which is something I ought to have kept in mind as we chose the wines for an updated version of the tasting this past week.

"Let's change things up," we thought. "Let's include a few non-Prosecco sparkling wines in the line-up, and see how they fare." Particularly since this would also be a blind tasting, it seemed like a good opportunity to get an unbiased read on a few different examples of the sparkling category.

So we did. We included a sparkling wine from California (2013 vintage from Carneros) and another one from Italy (2010 vintage from Trento DOC), along with a set of Proseccos ranging from \$12 bottles you could find anywhere and \$30+ bottles classified as Prosecco Superiore D.O.C.G.

Pricing raised some curious questions, and even suspicion, particularly when Prosecco Superiore or D.O.C.G. wines cost \$25 or less. If the origin of the wine was that particular, and presumably that challenging to produce, how could they cost so little?

