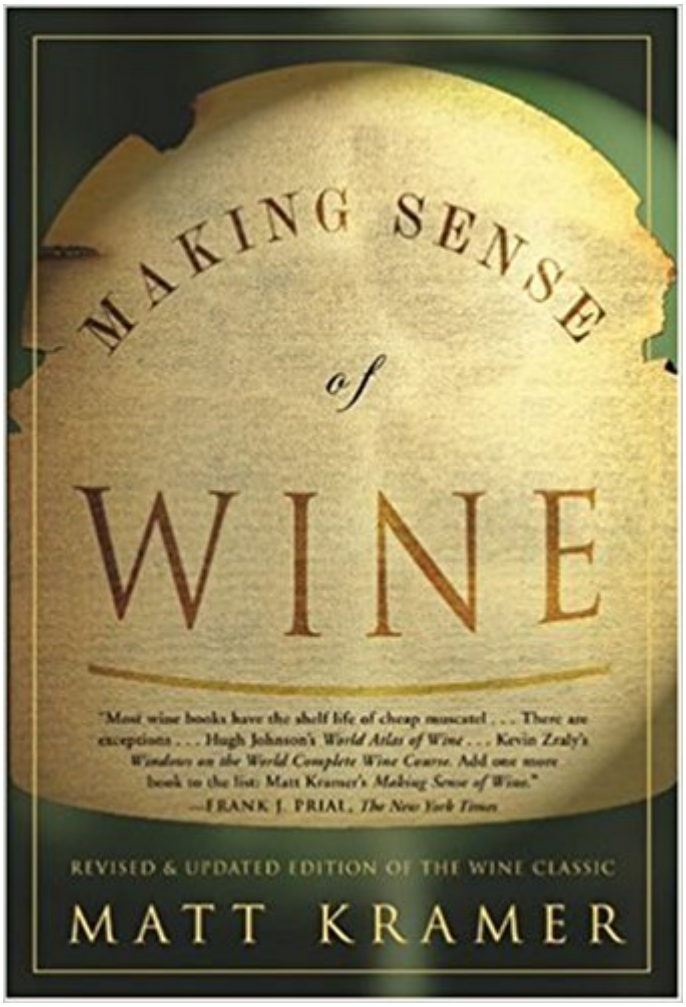
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Making Sense Of Wine



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Synopsis

The paperback edition of this highly praised wine classic includes a new preface and an all-new chapter that covers changes and advances in winemaking since the bookÃ¢â ¬â„¢s initial publication in 1989. Kramer explores connoisseurship through the practical devices of “thinking wineÃ¢â ¬Â• and “drinking wine,Ã¢â ¬Â• making for an engrossing journey through one of lifeÃ¢â ¬â„¢s great pleasures. WineÃ¢â ¬â„¢s complexities are often glossed over in favor of sound bites tailored to the novice. Kramer embraces and celebrates these complexities. The superbly written text covers the basics, from food and wine pairings to setting up a wine cellar.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Recommend Kramer’s book to cherished adult "children" who refuse to be weaned from the beer bottle--this book may do the trick of transforming wine drinking into a familiar pleasure. While much wine writing verges on pedantry, columnist Kramer brings a disciplined reporter’s ear to his job, along with wit and intelligence to spare. A relatively recent convert to wine, the author remembers how intimidating the drink can be, and seeks to tame it by solving the mysteries of its history, customs and manners. Why, for example, are many corks branded with their vineyard’s name and year? As a precaution and tool for identification, lest the bottle label deteriorate in a damp cellar, and the cook or host need to verify the contents. Kramer is also not afraid to say, in his blunt style, that the overly technical language often used to explain how champagne comes by its bubbles is "gobbledegook." And because he asserts that wine is meant to be imbibed with food--"without the context of food, wine is a eunuch"--his final chapter includes recipes for such delicacies as

blanc-manger and butternut squash soup. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The author, a widely published food and wine writer, discusses the fundamentals of wine, as well as its fine points, from a perspective that combines common sense with scientific fact. Topics such as wine storage, service, and matching wine with food are dealt with in a no-nonsense fashion. Perhaps more interesting is the opening discussion of connoisseurship and the social dimension of wine. Some recipes are offered in the section on wine with food. The point of view taken is refreshingly free of dogma. This is recommended reading for those interested in wine and is a useful supplement to such standards as Andre Simon’s Wines of the World , edited by Serena Sutcliffe (McGraw-Hill, 1981. 2d. ed.).- Bruce Hulse, Vanguard Technologies Corp., Washington, D.C.Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is an essential book for anyone with an interest, from casual to professional, in wine. If you’re looking for a book that applies meaningless rating systems and uses clumsy metaphors and flavour associations (*cough* Robert Parker *cough* James Halliday *cough*), then this isn’t the book for you. However, if you are interested in forming or complementing an understanding of wine as a historical and ongoing cultural and culinary product, then it is an essential addition to your library.

Great read!

An excellent read for those of us curious about wine and all of the ’mysterious’ gradations of it. A enjoyable read written by one well-versed in the subject and who has the ability and talent to express and convey some of that love to the reader.

Good

Always enjoyed Matt Kramer’s books. I have two of his other books. I first came across him in Wine Spectator and thought he was very frank in his opinion. He was in Italy before but I believe he is in Australia now or did he move to Aregentine? Ideally one has to live in a country and live like a native to report on the wines from that area.

An elegant book about an elegant subject. Learned a lot and was intellectually engaged. Not a thorough primer on wine or tasting but rather a thorough discourse on the important topics in wine today.

The title of the book is amusing given the numerous times the author refutes his own arguments on one point or another. Self-consistency, one imagines, is essential to "making sense."For instance, he waxes eloquent in his novelistic style about how critical maintaining the cork was to the evolution of the bottle shape: "...there couldn’t have been much laying down or cellaring of wines, at least to judge from the shape of the bottle...The bulbous base of the Globe and Spike made laying it sideways quite difficult and the long neck made it that much harder for the wine to neslte against a cork, keeping it moist and swollen, the seal intact." (p128)This is followed soon after by: "There is even serious doubt as to whether it is necessary to lay the bottles on their sides to keep the cork moist...I can attest from personal experience that the corks and the wines appear no different from old wines stored horizontally." (along with further arguments and examples, p139)So if we bought the book hoping to "make sense" of all this, should we infer that laying bottles on their side is better or not?The author, who doesn’t include a single illustration save one of himself, appears to be on a search for "truth in wine," which he argues in his first chapter is in fact reachable in the form of "standards." He then proceeds to demonstrate how such standards are indeed beyond the reach of objective truth in practice.Nonsense.However, I think everyone truly interested in wine should read this, if only to deepen the delicious enigma.

First off I would say that this is NOT a bad book. It is a reasonable guide to wine and will give you some basic facts. My main complaint is that while the book gives you a comprehensive overview of wine regions, storing wine, and pairing wine, it barely touches on grape varieties and actually tasting wine. It would be a very good book for an aspiring connoisseur, who wishes to go above and beyond simple tasting. For those who wish to receive a basic understanding of main grape/wine varieties and how to taste/classify wines, there are much better books available. The book has some very useful knowledge and discusses the intriguing topic of connoisseurship, but lacks the essential background information for anyone starting out in the wine world.

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