

Someone without a background in chemistry is likely to find the chapters on individual flaws difficult reading. Goode does not hold back on the technical details or the use of long names of chemical compounds. Amusingly, though, after the challenging discussion of Brett, he realizes in the next chapter on oxidation that he has likely left some readers behind: “You probably won’t be pleased to hear that the mechanisms of chemical oxidation are really complicated. That’s the bad news. The good news is that I will try to explain them clearly in ways that won’t make you fall asleep, keeping the chemical jargon to a minimum” (pp. 47–48). He is successful only briefly before reverting to the jargon.

The intended audience for this book is unclear though there are some clues. In addition to his attempt to keep the lay audience awake, Goode also seems to be speaking directly to winemakers when he writes “depending on which country you are working in...” (p. 192). The emphasis on the detailed chemistry of the faults could be helpful to those involved in wine production. Oenophiles without the technical background will gain important insight into how their beverage of choice might be compromised and what signs of problems to look for when tasting.

Because of his scientific background and well-honed writing abilities, Goode serves as an able and dispassionate link to the experts and active researchers in the field of wine faults. *Flawless*, while not flawless itself, is an important contribution at whatever level of understanding a reader might require. I am certainly happy to have this reference to turn to now whenever I experience something unseemly in my glass.

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## Reference

Eastman, J. (2009). *#10 Story: The Other Smoky Taste*. McMinnville, OR: Oregon Wine Press, Available at <http://www.oregonwinepress.com/article?articleTitle=%2310-story-the-other-smoky-taste--1261159236-28--news>.

ED McCARTHY and MARY EWING-MULLIGAN: *Wine for Dummies*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, NJ, 2018, 432 pp., ISBN: 978-1119512738 (paperback), \$24.99.

In the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the definitions of dummy that could refer to a potential reader of this book are most unflattering: “a dumb person” and “a dolt, blockhead.” And yet, since the first book in the *For Dummies* series appeared in

1991, more than 200 million books with about 2,500 titles are in print. There is even a competing collection with a much more offensive name, *The Complete Idiot's Guides*. There must be a following that is not put off by the insulting titles since *Wine for Dummies* recently released a seventh edition.

Husband and wife, Ed McCarthy, a Certified Wine Educator, and Mary Ewing-Mulligan, the first American woman to earn a Master of Wine, unquestionably have the credentials to produce this guide ambitiously aimed at an audience well beyond dummies. In addition to someone who knows little about wine but wants to learn more, the book is pitched to those who “know something about wine... but want to understand it better, from the ground up” as well as to those who are “already very knowledgeable but realize that [he or she] can always discover more” (p. 3). The results are certainly competent but mixed.

The text consists of an Introduction and eight parts that are subdivided into chapters: “Getting Started with Wine” (five chapters), “Wine and You: Up Close and Personal” (four chapters), “Wine’s Classic Face: The ‘Old World’ of Wine” (three chapters), “Wine’s Modern Face: The ‘New World’ of Wine” (two chapters), “Wine’s Exotic Face” (two chapters), “When You’ve Caught the Bug” (three chapters), “The Part of Tens” (two chapters), and “Appendixes” (three appendixes). Icons in the margins are standard features in the *For Dummies* series. Six are used in this book: Real Deal denotes bargain wine; Remember highlights material that bears repeating; Technical Stuff, Tip, Warning, and Worth the Search are self-explanatory. Oddly, the icon for Tip is called a bull’s-eye despite being a light bulb.

Part 1 covers some of the fundamentals about wine. Chapter 1, “Wine 101,” charges through in 12 pages the basics on how wine is made and its colors and styles. Though the authors claim to incorporate recent changes in the wine world, there is no mention of orange wines, certainly a hot topic these days. They offer useful tips on how to taste, what to say when tasting, what the components of taste are, and how to identify good and bad wine. An overview of major and some less familiar grape varieties includes a nice concise discussion of personality traits versus performance factors. The lesson on how to read wine labels should be helpful to the uninitiated. Unfortunately, the authors maintain *terroir* has no fixed definition, ignoring the one given by the *Organisation Internationale de la Vigne et du Vin* (OIV). The section concludes with a short chapter entitled Winemaking Matters that touches on jargon, vine-growing, and turning grapes into wine.

The second part offers advice on purchasing wine to take home or to consume in a restaurant. Sometimes in an attempt to be helpful, the line to insulting is crossed by stating the obvious, for example: “The glass of wine that you order can be ordinary or finer, inexpensive or higher-priced, depending on the restaurant” (p. 93). A chapter on serving wine recommends cork removers including the Screwpull, the two-pronged Ah-So, and the waiter’s corkscrew. Curiously, the authors also mention The Durand, a high-priced combination corkscrew and Ah-So designed to extract a cork from a very old bottle without pushing it in or breaking it. While

I have had my share of adventures opening decades-old bottles, I have not felt compelled to purchase one of these. A novice would be better advised to spend the money on an interesting case of moderately-priced wines. The remainder of the chapter does do a fine job of describing all the facets of wine service at home. The second part concludes with a very short chapter on wine pairings that should provide some comfort to those with no experience.

Part 3, the longest, takes the reader to Europe with extended visits to France and Italy and quick trips to Spain, Portugal, Germany, Austria, Greece, Hungary, Croatia, and Slovenia. The chapters on France and Italy offer a good though not exhaustive overview of the wine regions in both countries. Each has its own separate volume in the *For Dummies* series for which I can offer no opinion, but neither are up-to-date. Likely for the benefit of more knowledgeable readers, there is more discussion in these chapters of high-end wines than what might be expected for mere dummies. In contrast, the brief summaries of the wine scenes in the other countries should be enough to whet the appetites of the uninitiated but leave the cognoscenti thirsty for more. Missing are suggestions for low- and moderately-price wines from the Eastern European countries cited as well as some others, for example, Bulgaria, from which great value bottles are appearing in the United States.

The wine scenes in the United States, which gets its own chapter, Australia, New Zealand, Chile, Argentina, and South Africa are described in Part 4. With 18 pages, California, of course, claims the most ink in the chapter entitled “America, America.” The reader looking for more is referred to the authors’ *California Wine for Dummies*, released in 2009, which I have not read. Oregon, Washington State, and New York are each discussed in under five pages. Covering the countries in three continents, the 20-page chapter on the Southern Hemisphere concludes the part, making no mention of Uruguay, which produces moderately-priced wines that should appeal to those looking for good value.

Two chapters comprise Part 5, one on Champagne and other sparkling wines and a second on fortified and dessert wines. Both are very well done and provide a broad if somewhat shallow overview. A plug for McCarthy’s *Champagne for Dummies*, released in 1999, of course, is included.

If you began reading this book uncertain if you are a “dummy for wine” and discover that you are, Part 6 provides advice on buying and collecting wine, learning more about your new favorite adult beverage, and describing and rating it. The recommendations are well presented and sound. The lists of books, magazines, newsletters, and online resources (pp. 354–360) are particularly good.

On the other hand, Part 7 could have been entirely left out. “The Ten Common Questions about Wine” and “Ten Wine Myths” repeat some of the information contained in earlier chapters for no apparent reason and with no obvious benefit.

The three appendixes in Part 8 are a useful pronunciation guide and a glossary of wine terms, and a less useful, incomplete vintage chart with ratings of wines from a few regions produced from 1996 to 2015, but curiously missing 2003 to 2005. A two-column, 18-page index facilitates locating even minor topics in the text.

Despite the impressive credentials of the authors, occasional inaccuracies and imprecisions crept in. For instance, the Muscadet grape is referred to (p. 167) but it is not the name of the grape but the name of the region where the Melon de Bourgogne grape produces a wine that is sometimes called Muscadet. Another example, Hillcrest Vineyard was established in 1961, not 1962, as the first post-Prohibition winery, not the first, in Oregon (p. 252). The French were adulterating clarets with Syrah in the 19<sup>th</sup> century making the claim that Australia invented the “completely original formula” of Shiraz with Cabernet Sauvignon (p. 264) open to question.

Ironically, the one major problem with this book is that its intended audience is broader than the title suggests. In their attempt to be all things to readers of all levels of wine expertise, the authors have produced a work that covers too much and too little. A guide for the novice learning about wine should be more focused on the basics and include many recommendations that are not expensive. Is a dummy going to pay more than \$25 for a bottle of wine or three figures for a cork extractor? It should also be portable so it can be consulted in a shop or restaurant. This gangly volume is certainly *no vade mecum*.

Untypically, the book’s dedication “to all who have the courage to buy a book called *Wine for Dummies*” (p. 430) appears almost as an afterthought at the end of the book on an unnumbered page. The reader is praised as “intelligent, not dummies, because you have the wisdom to realize that in the complex world of wine, everyone has something more to learn” (p. 430). True enough. Admittedly, I did learn a few things reading this book. But unless you are on the less knowledgeable end of the wine wisdom scale, consulting specialized references would be more enlightening.

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TIM PATTERSON and JOHN BUECHSENSTEIN: *Wine and Place: A Terroir Reader*. University of California Press, Oakland, CA, 2018, 329 pp., ISBN 9780520277007 (hardcover), \$39.95.

*Wine and Place* is best described by its sub-title: *A Terroir Reader*. It is a reference *par excellence*. Every library and serious wine aficionado should have a copy of this lively