

HOW WINE FEATURES INFLUENCE CUSTOMERS CHOICE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Rezumat. *Moldova is internationally known for its wine, with its population having a strong passion for it. Based on this, we decided to find out what kind of wine is preferred by Moldovans, depending on its features. We made a form with 160 participants. Based on the received answers, we determined that 62.7% of them consume wine moderately, around one glass a week. The form showed that around 60% of the survey participants prefer the Cabernet-Sauvignon variety. We wanted to find out from where people buy wine and to what are they paying attention when choosing one. More than a third claimed that they buy wines from supermarkets, and 30% choose home wine producers. Most people are ready to pay up to 200MDL for a bottle. To study the preferred wine features of the locals, we chose 4 criteria to pay attention to: the "sweetness" quantity, acidity, alcohol percentage and boldness. We determined that 40% of the consumers prefer a wine that is not too sweet, with a moderate percentage of alcohol, a balanced boldness with a slightly lower acidity.*

Cuvinte cheie: *wine, statistics, criteria, alcohol, acidity*

One of the business cards of the Republic of Moldova is the wine industry, which is currently in continuous development and presents a branch with potential for the country's economy. In addition to the fact that wine is produced in the country, it is also consumed by the people directly, statistics from 2023 show that The Republic of Moldova ranks 54th in the world with a consumption of 7,4 of alcohol per capita per year [1]. So, today, together with my partner, finding this topic interesting, we decided to determine which wine people from our country prefer depending on its characteristics.

We carried out a questionnaire in which 160 people participated, mainly aged 18 to 25. Analysing the responses, we determined that more than half (62,7%) of them consume wine moderately, around one glass per week in small circles, such as with family or friends. From this, it appears that a large proportion consider drinking wine as a tradition more for socializing in a pleasant and restricted environment. Our statistics showed that most of them prefer red wines, with around 60% saying that Cabernet-Sauvignon is their favorite. In second place was rose wine.

At the other end of the scale was sparkling wine, which came last, with a fifth of respondents explaining that they did not like prosecco in particular. And similarly dissatisfied with white wines, especially Pinot Gris, almost 20% of people.

However, apart from the type of wine, it comes with specific characteristics, each having a taste and a specific bouquet that makes the difference between them.

For this we wanted to find out where people get their wine from and what makes them more likely to buy a bottle of wine. More than a third knew from supermarkets, and around 30% choose homemade wine producers because it is more affordable. However, if we discuss prices, most are ready to pay up to 200 lei for a bottle, which means that there is still a tight budget for the majority of consumers, but let's not forget that 90% of the responses were from students.

We also wanted to draw attention to the preferences regarding the characteristics of a wine, and we chose 4 simple criteria: sugar content, acidity, alcohol content and intensity of aroma of a wine to describe the perfect one. By analysing them, we determined that 40% of consumers prefer a wine that is not too sweet, but not too dry. Like wise if we discuss the alcohol content to be moderate, also a balanced body. However, they like wines with slightly lower acidity.

Having this data, we were also able to come to a small conclusion about the questionnaire. This being that the young population does not fully know what a tasty wine is due to a lack of knowledge of specific criteria. For this we have tried to determine a wine alternative that would fit all these criteria. Starting with the most loved red wine, we consider Pinot Noir from Purcari to be a perfect example, being a light and delicate red-purple wine with complex aromas of strawberry, violet and raspberry [2]. As well as tasting great, it is also available at an affordable price.

Next on the list are the rose wines and we think Gogu's Legenda Rose is a great choice, being a semi-dry wine with a refreshing, full of freshness, and berries. From the white wine category, we chose Echilibrum Sauvignon Blanc by Unicorn Estate, with a golden colour, fruit and wild flower aroma, also with a low acidity. The taste is fruity, predominantly citrus.

Of the sparkling wines we think Muscat by Aurelius will please. A sweet sparkling wine with aromas of yellow apple, orange and rose sweetness. And the taste being creamy with subtle hints of sweet apple tart.

Conclusion

We believe that wines are a symbol for our country which, although small geographically, can easily stand out internationally thanks to these quality products. However many people do not know about the characteristics of a wine, or about the valuable wines from us. So we recommend young consumers to enrich their knowledge, including the general culture about the diversity of wines. It is essential that they explore this variety in order to make an informed assessment of the qualities of wine according to their personal preferences.

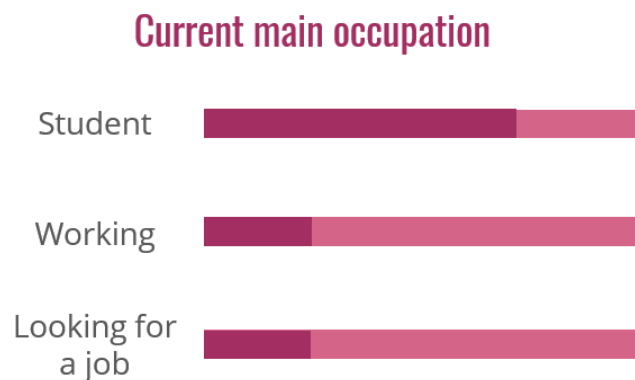


Figure 1. The participant's profile in the questionnaire

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- [1] "Republica Moldova, în topul statelor după consumul de alcool" [online]. 04.07.2023 [accesat 23.02.2024]. Disponibil : <https://realitatea.md/republica-moldova-in-topul-stator-dupa-consumul-de-alcool-pe-ce-loc-ne-am-clasat/>
- [2] A. Cibotaru, "50 de vinuri bune din Moldova". Chisinau, 2024.