

WEINAKADEMIE ÖSTERREICH, Hauptstraße 31, 7071 Rust

**Wine's Background Story and It's Influence on Wine  
Sales in a Fine Dining Restaurant**

ABSTRACT

Unit 7 Thesis

**Slavomíra Raškovič**

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This thesis refers to a “wine's background story“, which is a common name for various factors that can be presented to the client and which influence the sales of the wines. It analyzes these factors in details and thanks to the research it answers what factors influence the sales of the wine the most.

In my professional career I have noticed that there are wines which are quite easily sold, but there are also wines that need a little nudge to be sold well or, on the other hand, there are wines that are not easy to sell at all. There are many questions, why is there such a phenomenon. This thesis points out how the particular „wine’s background“ influences its sales in a fine dining restaurant where wine pairing is one of the most common ways to drink wine among customers.

The theoretical part of the thesis is focused on explaining the „background story“ of the wine and particular factors that have an impact on it. We consider factors as the winery, vineyard location and terroir, winemaking process, grape variety and vintage, labels, membership in associations and organoleptic characteristics of the wine. The thesis discusses all the factors into the details as well as offers some interesting success stories.

In the research of this thesis I mainly used methods of qualitative survey. I did two independent qualitative surveys: the first survey comprised of guests of the fine dining restaurant called Gašperov mlyn (a fine dining restaurant in the village of Batizovce, a tourist area in the High Tatras, Slovakia) after wine pairing with a tasting menu. The customers’ answers to our questions led us to decode the factors which are the most important for the customers as for the background of the story.

Second qualitative survey was focused on sommeliers and wine sellers. Our aim was to find out which factors help them to sell wines easily and, on the other hand, which factors impeded them.

The results of both surveys brought some conclusions that could be helpful not only to the winemakers to make selling their wines more easily, but also to the sommeliers and wine sellers in order to make selling their wine best by using the „background story“.

The results practically showed that customers are impressed by wines with a remarkable wine's background story, as well as interesting label and

attractive varieties. The customers also pay much attention to organoleptic characteristics - when it comes to buying, the customer simply needs to know the taste of the wine. Also, the vast majority of customers claimed that the preceding introduction of the wine's story would convince them to buy the wine. It also means that the person selling the wine and wine's background story definitely have a strong impact on sales. The personal approach of a wine seller towards the wine is not a decisive factor when selling, though. Wine sellers also think that the wines towards which they have a positive personal approach are easier to sell and that wine's background story as well as its label are important, however, they need to be balanced with good organoleptic characteristics, anyway.

Nowadays, contemporary customers seek added value – customers want a really unique product. If it seems unique and, moreover, they find it attractive, they would buy it. The winemakers can do a lot to add a value to some wine. For example, they can try to provide the customers with as much information as possible. They can make a unique label by personalized graphic design referring to the winemakers. The winemakers could also mention their perks and specialties on the label or, at least, on their website: uniqueness of the terroir, location of the winery/vineyard, viticultural specialties (special soil, trellising system, slopes, age of the vines, etc.), highlights of the winemaking processes, reveal the philosophy in agriculture, mention the characteristics of the vintage, introduce used grape varieties (especially those that are less known).

The wine sellers should focus on retelling the background story to the client as much as possible, too. It not only helps to sell, but it also builds awareness about wineries/brands as well as about the wine as a historical and cultural alcoholic beverage.

In the end the chapter on wine's organoleptic characteristics would forever remain the most important. No matter how interesting each wine's background story is or how beautiful the label is, the smell and the taste of wine will probably remain the most important factor for sales. But, of course, if great wine is accompanied by a great story and nice packaging, the good selling results will be guaranteed.