

Australia Court of Master Sommeliers (CMS) Advanced Sommelier Certificate Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Questions

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- 1. Which winemaking process can soften a wine's acidity?**
 - A. Fermentation**
 - B. Malolactic fermentation**
 - C. Filtration**
 - D. Carbonic maceration**
- 2. Which of these is a GI located in Port Phillip?**
 - A. Henty GI**
 - B. Geelong GI**
 - C. Sunshine Coast GI**
 - D. Mount Benson GI**
- 3. In which year did Wine Australia authorize the multistate zone of South Eastern Australia?**
 - A. 1990**
 - B. 1992**
 - C. 1995**
 - D. 1996**
- 4. Which soil type is associated with McLaren Vale?**
 - A. Clay**
 - B. Sandy loam**
 - C. 7 Terranes**
 - D. Granite**
- 5. Which region is most famous for producing high-quality Riesling?**
 - A. Region of Bordeaux**
 - B. Region of Mosel**
 - C. Region of Chablis**
 - D. Region of Napa Valley**
- 6. What type of wine is typically served with dessert?**
 - A. Dry red wine**
 - B. Fortified wine**
 - C. Sweet wine**
 - D. Sparkling wine**

- 7. What is significant about Yarra Valley?**
- A. It has the oldest vineyard in Victoria**
 - B. It is known for its Shiraz**
 - C. It is a major producer of sparkling wine**
 - D. It is located in New South Wales**
- 8. What is the primary soil type in the region known as Rutherglen?**
- A. Silty clay**
 - B. Clay loam**
 - C. Fine sandy loam**
 - D. Gravel**
- 9. Which GI is not associated with the South Coast of Australia?**
- A. Southern Highlands GI**
 - B. Shoalhaven Coast GI**
 - C. Canberra District GI**
 - D. Hunter Valley GI**
- 10. Which of the following is a GI in the Limestone Coast?**
- A. Coonawarra**
 - B. Barossa Valley**
 - C. Margaret River**
 - D. Hunter Valley**

Answers

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- 1. B**
- 2. B**
- 3. D**
- 4. C**
- 5. B**
- 6. C**
- 7. A**
- 8. C**
- 9. D**
- 10. A**

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Explanations

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1. Which winemaking process can soften a wine's acidity?

- A. Fermentation**
- B. Malolactic fermentation**
- C. Filtration**
- D. Carbonic maceration**

Malolactic fermentation is the winemaking process that can soften a wine's acidity. This occurs when malic acid, which is naturally high in young wines (especially whites), is converted into lactic acid by specific bacteria. Lactic acid is gentler on the palate compared to malic acid and has a creamier mouthfeel, which contributes to a softer and rounder profile in the wine. This process is particularly common in the production of certain white wines, such as Chardonnay, as well as in some red wines, where a smoother texture and reduction in sharp acidity are desired. In contrast, fermentation generally increases the production of alcohol and can influence a wine's flavor profile but does not inherently soften acidity. Filtration is primarily a method used to clarify and stabilize wine before bottling, having negligible impact on acidity. Carbonic maceration is a fermentation technique used mainly with red grapes that enhances fruity characteristics and results in softer tannins, but it does not specifically target the reduction of acidity in the wine.

2. Which of these is a GI located in Port Phillip?

- A. Henty GI**
- B. Geelong GI**
- C. Sunshine Coast GI**
- D. Mount Benson GI**

Geelong GI is located within the Port Phillip region of Victoria, Australia. This region is known for its diverse climate and geographical features, which contribute to the production of high-quality wines. Geelong is particularly recognized for its cool-climate varietals such as Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. The area's proximity to the coast influences its temperature and rainfall, providing ideal conditions for grape growing. The Henty GI, while another notable region, is located in the far southwest of Victoria, not in Port Phillip. The Sunshine Coast GI is in Queensland, which is distinctly separate from the Port Phillip region. Mount Benson GI is located further south in South Australia, also outside the Port Phillip boundary. Understanding the geographical indications (GIs) and their locations is crucial for recognizing the unique characteristics of the wines produced in each area.

3. In which year did Wine Australia authorize the multistate zone of South Eastern Australia?

- A. 1990**
- B. 1992**
- C. 1995**
- D. 1996**

The designation of South Eastern Australia as a multistate zone was authorized by Wine Australia in 1996. This zone was established to encompass several key wine regions spanning multiple states, including New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia. The significance of this designation lies in its ability to represent a diverse range of climates and terroirs across these regions, providing winemakers with greater flexibility in sourcing grapes from a broader area. By creating such a multistate zone, this decision allowed for the promotion of Australian wines on a larger scale, facilitating better marketing opportunities both domestically and internationally. Understanding the history and developments in Australian wine regulation is vital for aspiring sommeliers, as it influences the characteristics and styles of wines produced under this designation, fostering a deeper appreciation for the country's wine culture and landscape.

4. Which soil type is associated with McLaren Vale?

- A. Clay**
- B. Sandy loam**
- C. 7 Terranes**
- D. Granite**

McLaren Vale is known for its diverse geology and soil types, which significantly influence the characteristics of the wines produced in the region. The term "7 Terranes" refers to the seven distinct geological formations found within the McLaren Vale region. These varied terranes include different soil compositions, such as clay, sandy loam, and shale, which contribute to the complexity of the wines. The presence of these different terranes means that vineyards can have access to a range of soil types that affect drainage, water retention, and mineral content, all of which play a crucial role in vine growth and grape development. For instance, some vineyards might benefit from the well-draining properties of sandy loam, while others could thrive in clay soils that retain moisture. Understanding the significance of the "7 Terranes" helps appreciate how the geographical and geological diversity in McLaren Vale shapes the region's winemaking potential. This foundational knowledge is essential when discussing wine characteristics from McLaren Vale and explaining the unique terroir of the area.

5. Which region is most famous for producing high-quality Riesling?

- A. Region of Bordeaux**
- B. Region of Mosel**
- C. Region of Chablis**
- D. Region of Napa Valley**

The Mosel region in Germany is renowned for producing high-quality Riesling, a grape variety that thrives in this cool climate with its unique slate soil. The Mosel River's influence moderates temperatures, allowing the grapes to ripen slowly and develop complex flavors. Riesling from this area is celebrated for its balance between sweetness and acidity, resulting in wines that are not only aromatic and vibrant but also capable of aging beautifully. In contrast, Bordeaux is primarily known for its blends, particularly involving Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Chablis is recognized for its Chardonnay, characterized by mineral-driven and high-acid profiles, while Napa Valley is famous for its robust Cabernet Sauvignon and other varietals. Therefore, the Mosel's distinct terroir and dedication to Riesling production firmly establish it as the preeminent region for high-quality Riesling wines.

6. What type of wine is typically served with dessert?

- A. Dry red wine**
- B. Fortified wine**
- C. Sweet wine**
- D. Sparkling wine**

Serving sweet wine with dessert is a well-established pairing in culinary practices, primarily because sweet wines complement the flavors and sweetness of many desserts. The residual sugar in sweet wines, such as Sauternes, Tokaji, or late harvest Riesling, enhances the dessert experience by providing a harmonious balance between the dish and the wine. This pairing creates a delightful progression of flavors on the palate, often enhancing the enjoyment of both the wine and the dessert. In contrast, dry red wines, while enjoyable on their own or with certain savory dishes, typically lack the necessary sweetness to complement dessert flavors adequately. Similarly, although fortified wines like Port can work well with certain desserts, they are not exclusively categorized as sweet wines. Sparkling wines can sometimes be paired with desserts, particularly if they are sweet varieties like Moscato d'Asti, but their versatility often lends them to a broader range of pairings beyond just desserts.

7. What is significant about Yarra Valley?

- A. It has the oldest vineyard in Victoria**
- B. It is known for its Shiraz**
- C. It is a major producer of sparkling wine**
- D. It is located in New South Wales**

While the Yarra Valley does feature historic vineyards and is a crucial winemaking region in Victoria, the correct emphasis here is the valley's status as a major producer of sparkling wine. Yarra Valley has gained notable acclaim for its high-quality sparkling wines, rivalling traditional regions such as Champagne in France. The cool climate, along with the unique combination of altitudes and soils, supports the cultivation of grape varieties, particularly Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, that excel in sparkling wine production. Understanding its significance in sparkling wine production helps to appreciate the evolving wine landscape of Australia, where regions like the Yarra Valley have carved out reputations distinct from other varietals traditionally associated with Australian wine, such as Shiraz. This focus on sparkling wines contributes greatly to the Yarra Valley's identity and global recognition in the wine industry.

8. What is the primary soil type in the region known as Rutherglen?

- A. Silty clay**
- B. Clay loam**
- C. Fine sandy loam**
- D. Gravel**

The primary soil type in the Rutherglen region is characterized by fine sandy loam, which plays a crucial role in defining the terroir of this notable wine-producing area in Australia. Fine sandy loam provides a balanced structure that retains moisture while allowing for good drainage—ideal for viticulture. This specific soil type contributes to the production of high-quality wines, particularly fortified styles, as well as a range of table wines. Fine sandy loam also supports healthy vine roots and promotes the expression of the grape varieties cultivated in Rutherglen, enhancing their flavor and complexity. Other soil types, such as silty clay, clay loam, or gravel, may be present in different Australian wine regions or specific areas within Rutherglen, but they do not dominate the landscape or play the same role in the region's viticultural heritage as fine sandy loam does.

9. Which GI is not associated with the South Coast of Australia?

- A. Southern Highlands GI**
- B. Shoalhaven Coast GI**
- C. Canberra District GI**
- D. Hunter Valley GI**

The Hunter Valley GI is not associated with the South Coast of Australia because it is located in a different geographical area. The Hunter Valley is situated in New South Wales, but it is primarily known for its proximity to the Great Dividing Range rather than the coastal regions of the South Coast. In contrast, the Southern Highlands, Shoalhaven Coast, and Canberra District GIs are all part of the South Coast region or closely associated with it. The Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven Coast are both recognized for their cooler climate, which allows for the cultivation of a range of varieties, including those that thrive in a maritime or elevated environment, typical of the South Coast area's diverse conditions. The Canberra District is also frequently considered part of the broader South Coast viticultural landscape, due to its proximity and similar climatic influences. Therefore, the Hunter Valley, with its distinct profile and geographical orientation moving inland from the coast, clearly marks it as separate from the GIs that are more closely tied to the South Coast region.

10. Which of the following is a GI in the Limestone Coast?

- A. Coonawarra**
- B. Barossa Valley**
- C. Margaret River**
- D. Hunter Valley**

Coonawarra is recognized as a Geographical Indication (GI) within the Limestone Coast region of South Australia. GIs are designated areas known for producing particular varieties of wine, reflecting the unique terroir and climatic conditions of the region. Coonawarra is especially famous for its terra rossa soil, which is rich in minerals and ideal for growing premium grapes, particularly Cabernet Sauvignon. The distinct climate created by the surrounding limestone ridges also plays a crucial role in producing high-quality wines. In contrast, Barossa Valley, Margaret River, and Hunter Valley are all significant wine regions in their own right, but they are not part of the Limestone Coast GI. Barossa Valley is known for its Shiraz and rich, full-bodied wines, while Margaret River is celebrated for its diverse range of varieties, particularly Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay. Hunter Valley is one of Australia's oldest wine regions and is known for its Semillon and Shiraz. Each of these regions has its own GI designation but does not overlap with the Limestone Coast classification.