

GUILD OF SOMMELIERS CERTIFIED SOMMELIER (US AND CANADA) PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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THE FULL VERSION STUDY GUIDE**

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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- 1. What is Durif commonly known as?**
 - A. Syrah
 - B. Petite Sirah
 - C. Grenache
 - D. Cabernet Franc

- 2. According to federal regulations, what percentage of grapes must be from the stated variety?**
 - A. 70%
 - B. 75%
 - C. 80%
 - D. 85%

- 3. What is 'tertiary flavor' in wine?**
 - A. Flavors contributed by the grape variety
 - B. Flavors that develop with age, such as leather, tobacco, or earthiness
 - C. Flavors resulting from fermentation
 - D. Flavors added during the aging process

- 4. What is the primary grape used in making Prosecco?**
 - A. Chenin Blanc
 - B. Sauvignon Blanc
 - C. Glera
 - D. Riesling

- 5. Which statement best describes the typical winemaking approach in the New World?**
 - A. Emphasizes terroir and vintage
 - B. Focuses on varietal characteristics and fruitiness
 - C. Prioritizes natural fermentation
 - D. Utilizes traditional aging methods

- 6. What is a key feature of the climate affecting Eastern Washington's viticulture?**
- A. Humidity
 - B. Rain shadow effect
 - C. Tropical storms
 - D. High annual rainfall
- 7. What are the five main styles of wine?**
- A. Red, White, Rosé, Sparkling, Sweet
 - B. Light, Medium, Full-bodied, Sweet, Dry
 - C. Traditional, Modern, Dessert, Fortified, Natural
 - D. Dry, Semi-dry, Aromatic, Crisp, Fruity
- 8. Which was the first recognized AVA in the United States?**
- A. Napa Valley
 - B. Sonoma Valley
 - C. Augusta
 - D. Oregon Coast
- 9. What type of wine is produced by the Meyer Family that is also mentioned for the Okanagan region?**
- A. Riesling
 - B. Pinot Noir
 - C. Cabernet Sauvignon
 - D. Syrah
- 10. What kind of food pairs well with sweet wines like Sauternes?**
- A. Grilled chicken
 - B. Foie gras or blue cheese
 - C. Vegetable stir-fry
 - D. Seafood dishes

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is Durif commonly known as?

- A. Syrah
- B. Petite Sirah**
- C. Grenache
- D. Cabernet Franc

Durif is commonly known as Petite Sirah, which is a varietal of red wine that is primarily grown in California. The name "Petite Sirah" can be somewhat misleading, as it does not refer to a smaller version of Syrah, but rather is a distinct grape variety that originated as a cross between Syrah and a lesser-known grape called Peloursin in the late 19th century. The use of "Petite" in its name refers more to the size of the grapes and their concentrated flavor rather than the wine itself being light or delicate. Petite Sirah is known for its bold flavors, deep color, and robust tannins, making it a popular choice for those who enjoy full-bodied wines. This wine often exhibits rich fruit flavors like blackberry and plum, coupled with peppery and spicy notes, resulting from its unique genetic makeup and the conditions under which it is grown. In contrast, the other options represent different grape varieties. Syrah is a parent of Durif but is a distinct varietal known primarily for its own profile. Grenache is another separate variety with its own characteristics. Cabernet Franc is an entirely different grape variety known for its lighter body and herbal notes. Thus, recognizing Durif as Petite Sir

2. According to federal regulations, what percentage of grapes must be from the stated variety?

- A. 70%
- B. 75%**
- C. 80%
- D. 85%

In the United States, federal regulations dictate that for a wine to be labeled with a specific grape variety, at least 75% of the grapes used in that wine must be from the stated variety. This requirement ensures that consumers can have a reasonable expectation regarding the primary characteristic and flavor profile of the wine they are purchasing. This percentage reflects a balance between maintaining authenticity in labeling while allowing some flexibility for winemakers to blend in smaller amounts of other varieties, which can enhance the wine's complexity without the proposed variety losing its presence. In contrast, many regions around the world have different laws, but in the U.S., the 75% rule is uniform across the board for varietal labeling.

3. What is 'tertiary flavor' in wine?

- A. Flavors contributed by the grape variety
- B. Flavors that develop with age, such as leather, tobacco, or earthiness**
- C. Flavors resulting from fermentation
- D. Flavors added during the aging process

Tertiary flavors in wine refer to the complex and nuanced flavors that develop as wine ages. These flavors emerge after the primary flavors (which come directly from the grape variety) and secondary flavors (which are a result of fermentation and winemaking processes) have been established. Tertiary flavors can include characteristics such as leather, tobacco, earthiness, and various spices, which typically develop over time as the wine interacts with oxygen and undergoes chemical transformations. Understanding tertiary flavors is crucial for appreciating the depth and evolution of a wine's profile, particularly in fine wines that benefit from proper aging. These flavors can add complexity and richness to the wine, making it more intriguing and enjoyable as it matures. The other options focus on different aspects of flavor development in wine: the flavors from the grape variety represent primary flavors, fermentation results in secondary flavors, and any additional flavors added during aging relate to other processes. However, none of those options capture the essence of what tertiary flavors are, which are inherently tied to the aging process itself.

4. What is the primary grape used in making Prosecco?

- A. Chenin Blanc
- B. Sauvignon Blanc
- C. Glera**
- D. Riesling

The primary grape used in making Prosecco is Glera. This grape variety is native to the Veneto region in northeastern Italy, where Prosecco is traditionally produced. Glera grapes are recognized for their bright acidity and aromatic qualities, which contribute to the characteristic profile of Prosecco, including its fruity and floral notes. Unlike the other grape varieties listed, Glera is specifically cultivated for sparkling wine production within this region, making it central to the identity of Prosecco. Chenin Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc, and Riesling are not used in significant quantities for Prosecco; they are associated with different wine styles and regions, primarily noted for their unique characteristics in still wines and other sparkling wines rather than the signature style of Prosecco.

5. Which statement best describes the typical winemaking approach in the New World?

- A. Emphasizes terroir and vintage
- B. Focuses on varietal characteristics and fruitiness**
- C. Prioritizes natural fermentation
- D. Utilizes traditional aging methods

The statement that best describes the typical winemaking approach in the New World is that it focuses on varietal characteristics and fruitiness. New World wines, which are produced in regions such as the United States, Australia, and South America, often emphasize the specific grape variety used in the wine. This approach results in wines that are crafted to highlight the distinct flavors and aromas attributed to the grape itself rather than the influence of terroir or traditional methods. This focus on varietal characteristics is significant because it appeals to consumers who appreciate clear, expressive flavors that are easy to identify. The warm climates found in many New World wine regions contribute to ripe fruit flavors, leading to wines that are typically rich and fruit-forward. This style contrasts with many Old World wines, which often prioritize the influence of terroir—the unique combination of soil, climate, and geography—and may have a more restrained fruit expression. In summary, the emphasis on varietal characteristics and fruitiness in New World winemaking is a defining trait that attracts a broad audience of wine drinkers and distinguishes it from Old World practices.

6. What is a key feature of the climate affecting Eastern Washington's viticulture?

- A. Humidity
- B. Rain shadow effect**
- C. Tropical storms
- D. High annual rainfall

The key feature of the climate affecting Eastern Washington's viticulture is the rain shadow effect. This phenomenon occurs due to the presence of the Cascade Mountain Range, which acts as a barrier to moisture-laden winds coming from the Pacific Ocean. As these winds ascend over the mountains, they cool and lose moisture in the form of precipitation on the windward side. By the time the air descends on the leeward side, which includes Eastern Washington, it becomes significantly drier. This results in a semi-arid climate that is characterized by low annual rainfall, which is quite advantageous for grape growing. The rain shadow effect creates ideal conditions for viticulture in Eastern Washington, enabling the production of high-quality wines by reducing the risk of diseases associated with excessive humidity and allowing growers to manage irrigation effectively. Additionally, the region benefits from warm summer temperatures, which are essential for grape ripening. This unique climate helps to distinguish Eastern Washington as a prominent wine-producing area, contributing to its reputation for producing excellent varietals such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Syrah.

7. What are the five main styles of wine?

- A. Red, White, Rosé, Sparkling, Sweet**
- B. Light, Medium, Full-bodied, Sweet, Dry
- C. Traditional, Modern, Dessert, Fortified, Natural
- D. Dry, Semi-dry, Aromatic, Crisp, Fruity

The five main styles of wine encompass the broad categories that highlight the essential characteristics of wine. Red, white, rosé, sparkling, and sweet each represent distinct classifications based on factors such as production methods, grape types, and flavor profiles. Red wines are made from dark-skinned grape varieties and typically contain tannins, contributing to their structure and complexity. White wines are produced from green or yellowish grapes and can range from crisp and acidic to rich and creamy depending on the vinification process. Rosé wines are created by allowing limited contact between the grape skins and juice or by blending red and white wines, resulting in a pink-colored beverage that carries elements of both red and white. Sparkling wines can be made from any grape variety and are characterized by the presence of bubbles due to carbonation, often achieved through a secondary fermentation process. Finally, sweet wines are typically produced from grapes that have high sugar content, and they can be made using various techniques, often resulting in rich and dessert-like characteristics. The other choices present classifications and descriptions that do not comprehensively cover the standardized styles recognized in wine education and industry. For instance, light, medium, full-bodied, sweet, and dry refer more to the weight or taste profile of wines rather than distinct

8. Which was the first recognized AVA in the United States?

- A. Napa Valley
- B. Sonoma Valley
- C. Augusta**
- D. Oregon Coast

The first recognized American Viticultural Area (AVA) in the United States is Augusta. Approved in 1980, Augusta AVA is located in Missouri and was the original designation that set a precedent for the establishment of AVAs across the country. The significance of Augusta lies not only in its historical context but also in its contribution to the development of winemaking in regions beyond California. While Napa Valley and Sonoma Valley are well-known areas that produce high-quality wines and were instrumental in the growth of the California wine industry, they were designated as AVAs later, with Napa Valley recognized in 1981 and Sonoma Valley in 1982. The Oregon Coast, while also an important wine region, was established as an AVA much later than Augusta. Thus, Augusta holds the distinction of being the pioneer in AVA designations in the U.S., marking a critical point in the recognition of the country's diverse wine regions.

9. What type of wine is produced by the Meyer Family that is also mentioned for the Okanagan region?

- A. Riesling
- B. Pinot Noir**
- C. Cabernet Sauvignon
- D. Syrah

The Meyer Family's wines are notably recognized for their production of Pinot Noir, particularly in the context of the Okanagan region, which is known for its diverse climate and terroir that can effectively support the cultivation of this variety. Pinot Noir thrives in cooler climates, and the Okanagan Valley provides ideal conditions for this grape, leading to the creation of wines that often exhibit vibrant fruit flavors, balanced acidity, and nuanced terroir characteristics. Pinot Noir is celebrated for its ability to reflect the nuances of its growing environment, making it a fitting representation of both the Meyer Family's winemaking philosophy and the unique terroir of the Okanagan. This focus on quality Pinot Noir also aligns with broader trends in the region, where producers are increasingly gaining recognition for their exceptional Burgundian-style wines. As such, the prominence of Pinot Noir is a key aspect of the Meyer Family's identity and contribution to the Okanagan's wine scene.

10. What kind of food pairs well with sweet wines like Sauternes?

- A. Grilled chicken
- B. Foie gras or blue cheese**
- C. Vegetable stir-fry
- D. Seafood dishes

Sweet wines such as Sauternes are known for their rich, luscious character, often exhibiting notes of honey, apricot, and botrytis. They naturally enhance and complement food with similar strong flavors or textures. Foie gras, with its luxurious, fatty profile, pairs beautifully with the sweetness of Sauternes, creating a harmonious balance between richness and sweetness. The wine's acidity cuts through the richness of the foie gras, while the wine's sweetness complements and elevates its flavors. Similarly, blue cheese, which is often pungent and salty, contrasts nicely with the sweetness of Sauternes. The saltiness of the cheese can make the wine taste even sweeter, enhancing both the wine and food experience. This pairing is cherished in culinary traditions, particularly in French cuisine, emphasizing the synergy between sweet wines and rich or strong-flavored foods. Grilled chicken and vegetable stir-fry do not typically have the bold flavors necessary to compete with or complement the sweetness of Sauternes as effectively. Seafood dishes often pair well with white wines but may not have the richness to make a satisfying pairing with a sweet wine. Thus, options focusing on richer, umami-driven foods are far more fitting companions for sweet wines like Sauternes.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

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We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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