

# Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET) Level 3 Award in Wine Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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## **Questions**

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- 1. In Greece, what climatic factors can help enhance grape quality in vineyards?**
  - A. Low humidity**
  - B. Altitude and proximity to the sea**
  - C. Urban heat islands**
  - D. Consistent rainy weather**
- 2. Which of the following is true about "reserva" wines in Portugal?**
  - A. They must be produced from a blend of grape varieties**
  - B. They are non-vintage wines**
  - C. They must reflect the characteristics of the grape variety used**
  - D. They are aged only in stainless steel**
- 3. What are the two white grape varieties permissible in Saint-Joseph?**
  - A. Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc**
  - B. Marsanne and Roussanne**
  - C. Viognier and Chenin Blanc**
  - D. Gruner Veltliner and Muscat**
- 4. What are the four main grape varieties of Fitou AC?**
  - A. Sauvignon Blanc, Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre**
  - B. Carignan, Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre**
  - C. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Grenache, Mourvedre**
  - D. Malbec, Cabernet Franc, Syrah, Grenache**
- 5. What are the light styles of wine in the Rhone Valley typically produced with?**
  - A. Barrel aging**
  - B. Carbonic maceration**
  - C. Extended skin contact**
  - D. Open fermentation**

- 6. When harvesting for Tokaji, how do pickers categorize the grapes?**
- A. Healthy grapes, withered grapes, and dried grapes**
  - B. Aszú, Szamorodni, and healthy grapes**
  - C. Botrytis, non-botrytis, and overripe grapes**
  - D. Young grapes, ripe grapes, and rotten grapes**
- 7. Which wine regions are part of the Upper Ebro?**
- A. Rioja DOCa, Ribera del Duero, Priorat, Navarra DO**
  - B. Rioja DOCa, Navarra DO, Carinena, Calatayud**
  - C. Rioja DOCa, Jerez, Valencia, Carinena**
  - D. Barcelona, Grenache, Penedes, Calatayud**
- 8. Which grape variety is the most widely planted in the Pfalz?**
- A. Chardonnay**
  - B. Sauvignon Blanc**
  - C. Riesling**
  - D. Zinfandel**
- 9. What is a significant environmental concern in eastern Greece?**
- A. Soil erosion**
  - B. Flooding**
  - C. Drought**
  - D. Pest infestations**
- 10. Which Crus from Beaujolais is located furthest north?**
- A. Fleurie**
  - B. Moulin-a-Vent**
  - C. Saint-Amour**
  - D. Regnie**

## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. In Greece, what climatic factors can help enhance grape quality in vineyards?**

- A. Low humidity
- B. Altitude and proximity to the sea**
- C. Urban heat islands
- D. Consistent rainy weather

The enhancement of grape quality in Greek vineyards is significantly influenced by altitude and proximity to the sea. Altitude plays a crucial role as vineyards situated at higher elevations typically experience cooler temperatures, which can help preserve acidity in the grapes while allowing for a longer ripening period. This extended ripening phase can lead to better flavor development and complexity in the grapes. Proximity to the sea can moderate temperatures, reducing the extremes of heat and cold that can stress vines. Additionally, sea breezes can provide cooling effects during hot summer months, which helps to protect the grapes from excessive heat and can enhance the overall growing conditions. These factors together create an optimal environment for producing high-quality grapes, resulting in wines that reflect the unique terroir of the region. Low humidity can help reduce disease pressure in the vineyard, but it does not enhance grape quality on its own in the same way that altitude and sea proximity do. Urban heat islands generally raise night temperatures, which can hinder the diurnal temperature swings essential for grape quality. Consistent rainy weather typically poses challenges for grape growing as it may lead to issues like rot and disease, adversely affecting grape quality. Hence, altitude and proximity to the sea stand out as pivotal climatic factors that positively influence grape quality in Greek vineyards.

**2. Which of the following is true about "reserva" wines in Portugal?**

- A. They must be produced from a blend of grape varieties
- B. They are non-vintage wines
- C. They must reflect the characteristics of the grape variety used**
- D. They are aged only in stainless steel

The statement that "reserva" wines must reflect the characteristics of the grape variety used is accurate. In Portugal, the designation of "reserva" indicates a higher quality wine that must meet specific aging requirements and quality standards that align with the characteristics typical of the grape varieties involved. This expectation ensures that the wine showcases the distinctive flavors, aromas, and qualities of the grapes from which it is made, allowing consumers to appreciate the varietal traits and the terroir of the region. Regarding other options, while "reserva" wines can be blends, they are not required to be. Furthermore, "reserva" does not pertain to non-vintage wines; in fact, it often indicates specific vintage wines that have been aged longer. Additionally, "reserva" wines are typically aged in more traditional oak barrels rather than being confined to stainless steel, which can enhance their complexity and depth.

### **3. What are the two white grape varieties permissible in Saint-Joseph?**

- A. Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc**
- B. Marsanne and Roussanne**
- C. Viognier and Chenin Blanc**
- D. Gruner Veltliner and Muscat**

The two white grape varieties permissible in Saint-Joseph are Marsanne and Roussanne. This region, located in the northern Rhône Valley of France, is known for its production of both red and white wines, but the white wines are primarily made from these two grape varieties. Marsanne is known for producing wines that are rich and full-bodied, often exhibiting flavors of stone fruits, nuts, and honey. Roussanne, on the other hand, typically adds acidity and elegance to the blend, with aromatic notes that can include floral and herbal nuances. Together, they create a balanced profile in the wines of Saint-Joseph, showcasing the terroir of the region. Other options do not apply to Saint-Joseph: Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc are more associated with other French wine regions, particularly Bordeaux and the Loire Valley. Viognier and Chenin Blanc, while popular grapes, do not fit the regulations for Saint-Joseph, and Grüner Veltliner and Muscat are not characteristic of this Rhône appellation. Thus, the combination of Marsanne and Roussanne is key to understanding the identity of white wines from Saint-Joseph.

### **4. What are the four main grape varieties of Fitou AOC?**

- A. Sauvignon Blanc, Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre**
- B. Carignan, Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre**
- C. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Grenache, Mourvedre**
- D. Malbec, Cabernet Franc, Syrah, Grenache**

The four main grape varieties of Fitou AOC (Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée) are indeed Carignan, Grenache, Syrah, and Mourvèdre. These varieties are well-suited to the warm, dry climate of the Languedoc region in southern France, where Fitou is located. Carignan is a traditional grape in this region and contributes acidity and structure to the wine. Grenache adds softness, fruitiness, and sweetness, while Syrah provides color and tannins, often bringing a spicy and aromatic complexity to the blend. Mourvèdre is valued for its ability to add depth and aging potential. The combination of these grapes allows for the production of full-bodied, complex red wines typical of Fitou. Each of these varieties plays a significant role in achieving the intended style of the wine from this appellation, demonstrating a classic representation of the red blends produced in the region.

**5. What are the light styles of wine in the Rhone Valley typically produced with?**

- A. Barrel aging**
- B. Carbonic maceration**
- C. Extended skin contact**
- D. Open fermentation**

The light styles of wine produced in the Rhône Valley are often made using carbonic maceration. This technique involves fermenting whole grapes in a carbon dioxide-rich environment, which encourages an intracellular fermentation. As a result, the grapes produce aromatic, fruit-filled wines that are often lower in tannins and have a lighter body compared to wines made using conventional fermentation methods. Carbonic maceration is particularly effective for creating wines that are meant to be consumed young, showcasing vibrant fruit flavors and freshness, which is characteristic of many light Rosé and some red wines from regions within the Rhône Valley, such as Beaujolais (although technically outside the Rhône proper, it is often associated with the same terroir influence). In contrast, barrel aging, extended skin contact, and open fermentation are methods more commonly associated with producing richer, more concentrated wines that feature prominent tannins and complexity, which would be more typical of fuller-bodied styles found in the Rhône. These techniques do not align with the light and fruit-forward profile sought after in carbonic maceration.

**6. When harvesting for Tokaji, how do pickers categorize the grapes?**

- A. Healthy grapes, withered grapes, and dried grapes**
- B. Aszú, Szamorodni, and healthy grapes**
- C. Botrytis, non-botrytis, and overripe grapes**
- D. Young grapes, ripe grapes, and rotten grapes**

The classification of grapes during the harvest for Tokaji is particularly focused on the style of the wine being produced. The correct answer highlights the specific categories used in the Tokaji wine-making process: Aszú, Szamorodni, and healthy grapes. Aszú refers to the grapes that have been affected by noble rot (*Botrytis cinerea*), which is essential for producing the renowned sweet wines of the Tokaj region. These grapes are typically harvested meticulously and can be used to create the iconic Tokaji Aszú wines, characterized by their rich sweetness and complexity. Szamorodni, on the other hand, translates to "as is." This category includes grapes that may include both noble rot-affected and healthy grapes, allowing for a more varied flavor profile in the resulting wine. It can be made in both sweet and dry styles, reflecting the unique terroir of Tokaji. Healthy grapes are essential for ensuring balanced acidity and flavor in the final wine, especially when producing styles that do not rely solely on the influence of noble rot. This structured approach to categorizing the grapes is critical for Tokaji winemakers as they seek to exploit the unique conditions of the region, enabling them to craft wines with distinct characteristics based on the level of

**7. Which wine regions are part of the Upper Ebro?**

- A. Rioja DOCa, Ribera del Duero, Priorat, Navarra DO**
- B. Rioja DOCa, Navarra DO, Carinena, Calatayud**
- C. Rioja DOCa, Jerez, Valencia, Carinena**
- D. Barcelona, Grenache, Penedes, Calatayud**

The Upper Ebro is primarily known for its major wine regions that include Rioja DOCa and Navarra DO. Both of these regions focus on high-quality wine production and are situated along the Ebro River, which is crucial to their terroir and climate. In Rioja DOCa, the production of both red and white wines using grape varieties like Tempranillo and Garnacha plays a significant role in Spain's wine identity. Navarra DO complements this with its diverse range of grape varieties and wine styles, including both traditional Spanish grapes and international varieties. Carinena and Calatayud are also part of the broader region that falls under the influence of the Ebro River, contributing to the winemaking landscape with their unique characteristics. Carinena is recognized for its old vines and the predominantly Garnacha and Tempranillo grape varieties, while Calatayud is known for its high-altitude vineyards producing excellent Garnacha wines. In summary, this choice accurately encompasses significant wine regions that are geographically and culturally linked to the Upper Ebro, reflecting a diverse representation of the Spanish wine production landscape.

**8. Which grape variety is the most widely planted in the Pfalz?**

- A. Chardonnay**
- B. Sauvignon Blanc**
- C. Riesling**
- D. Zinfandel**

The most widely planted grape variety in the Pfalz region of Germany is Riesling. This varietal thrives in the unique terroir of Pfalz, which features a warm climate and diverse soil types, allowing it to produce a variety of wine styles ranging from dry to sweet. Riesling is renowned for its aromatic profile, high acidity, and ability to express terroir, making it a beloved choice for wine producers in the region. Chardonnay, while popular in many wine-producing areas, does not dominate the plantings in Pfalz in the same way as Riesling. Sauvignon Blanc also does not have the same level of prevalence, especially in northern wine regions like Pfalz, which are more suited for varieties like Riesling. Zinfandel, on the other hand, is primarily associated with California and is not typically grown in Germany, making it an unlikely candidate for being widely planted in the Pfalz. Understanding the grape varieties that thrive in specific regions is essential for appreciating the local wine culture.

**9. What is a significant environmental concern in eastern Greece?**

- A. Soil erosion**
- B. Flooding**
- C. Drought**
- D. Pest infestations**

Drought is a significant environmental concern in eastern Greece due to its Mediterranean climate, characterized by hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters. The region experiences very limited rainfall during the growing season, which can severely impact agricultural practices and water resources. Drought conditions can lead to reduced crop yields, increased irrigation demands, and stress on both soil and vine health. This is particularly critical in viticulture, where water availability is crucial for vine growth and grape quality. While other environmental issues such as soil erosion, flooding, and pest infestations can occur in various parts of Greece, they do not pose the same level of persistent threat as drought, especially in eastern regions where water scarcity is a frequent issue. The climate trends and agricultural practices in these areas highlight drought's prominence as a concern for sustainable farming and wine production.

**10. Which Crus from Beaujolais is located furthest north?**

- A. Fleurie**
- B. Moulin-a-Vent**
- C. Saint-Amour**
- D. Regnie**

The Crus of Beaujolais are well-defined areas that produce some of the highest quality wines in the region, each with its distinct characteristics and terroirs. Among the options provided, Saint-Amour is the cru that is located furthest north. Saint-Amour is situated at the northern end of the Beaujolais Crus, making it the northernmost in terms of geography. This positioning influences the climate, which tends to be slightly cooler than other Crus. As a result, the wines from Saint-Amour can exhibit a unique profile, often characterized by floral notes and red fruit flavors, alongside a certain freshness due to the cooler temperatures. Moulin-à-Vent, Fleurie, and Régnié, while notable Crus, are positioned further south compared to Saint-Amour. Each of these regions has its distinctive style influenced by their respective locations, but none of them reaches the northernmost point of the Beaujolais Crus like Saint-Amour does.