

Hospitalitynews

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**REGIONAL
NEW PROJECTS
AND OPENINGS**

**Talking
to 2012's
TOP CHEF
WINNER**

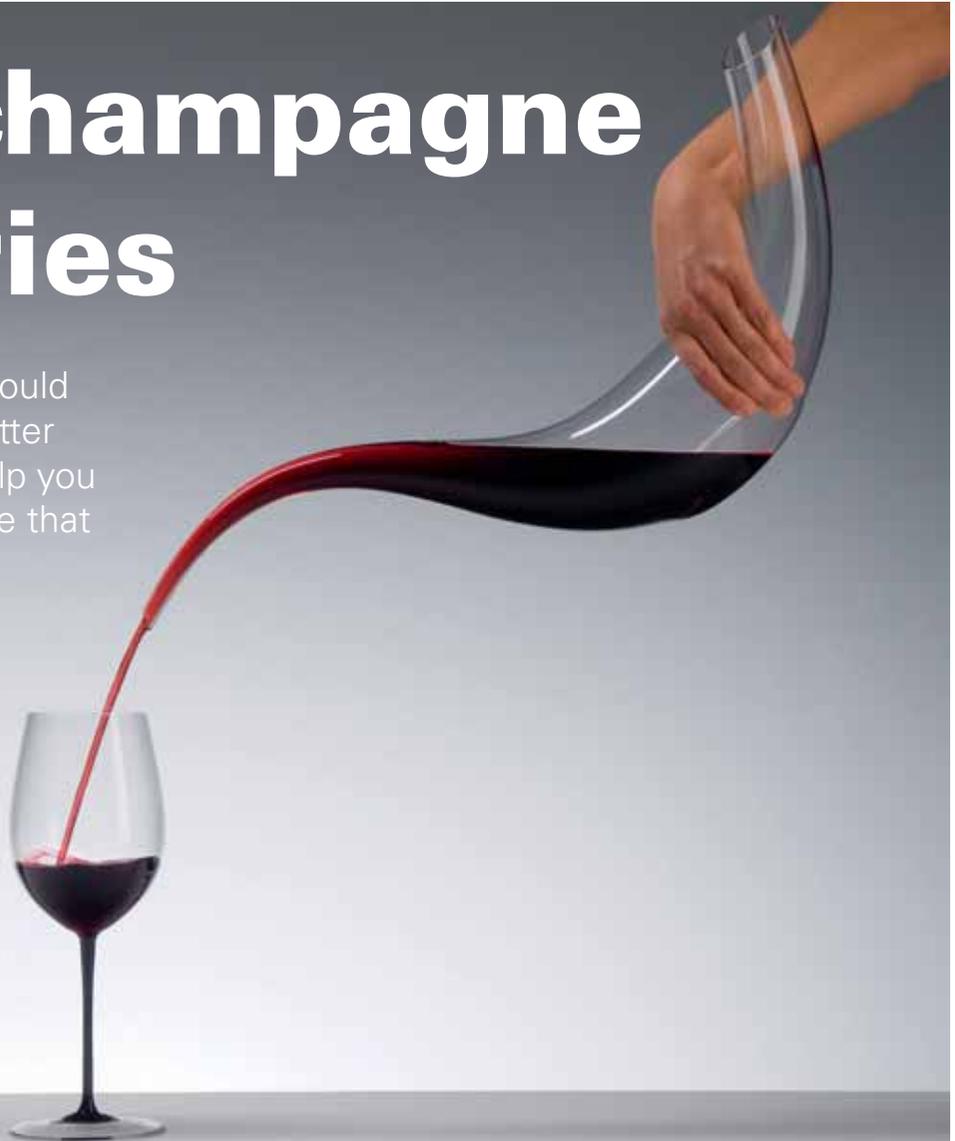
Latest
wine
accessories

**SECRETS OF
crisis management**

**YOUR GUIDE TO LARGE
KITCHEN
EQUIPMENT**

Wine & champagne accessories

Choosing the wrong accessory could result as background noise or clutter to your guest's experience. To help you choose wisely, we talked to those that live and breathe those blends



The Opener

"There are plenty of choices and accessories that you can find on the market nowadays. The wide array may confuse you from choosing what is appropriate to your needs. There are two items that are basic yet essential to a good wine experience, the wine



opener and decanter," says **Elie Nehme**, chef de salle at **La Posta** and head of the wine training team at **Medi Resto**

sal. Always have a decent bottle opener – it is the last component in the chain of drinking wine, other than the glass. Invest in an opener that works for you. "If ageing wines for longer periods, then a good opener is vital because the cork will be more fragile," says Nehme.

Decanting & oxygenating of the wine

A wine filter and a good decanter are also vital. Do not rely on fancy shaped decanters. "Get one that is solid and will take thorough

cleaning. Another vital investment in the case of aged wines," says Nehme.

So, once the wine is uncorked, should we rush to serve it in our glass and drink it directly? "On the contrary, our reflex for the first sip should be a questioning process:



what should we do with this wine for a more enjoyable experience? Should we decant, filter, chill or warm, and most

importantly, should we oxygenate smoothly or thoroughly?" says **Najib Moutran**, agro – economist & owner, **Terroirs Conseils**, who himself has designed wine cellars for such restaurants as Babel Bay, Zabad, & a wine display at Cozmo.

Whereas some wine accessories are very useful and do not affect the quality of wine, others might be specifically designed to interfere on the level of oxygenation in order to accelerate the aging of the wine, making it more drinkable at the moment. Some wines do not reveal their

best aromas unless kept for years in the cellar at appropriate temperature and humidity.

The wine key and oxygenator funnel are two such accessories that will accelerate the aging of wine by strides," explains Moutran. With the trend headed towards more bodied wines, and recent vintages that aren't so aged in the cellars or that have wooden impact aromas, wine needs more oxygenation. "But personally, I prefer to let the wine take its time," says Moutran.



The cellar

Storing and displaying wine is another art in and of itself. The key to a successful wine list will start with

its bottle varieties and varietals - the region of the grapes – to ultimately spec down to the most optimal conditions that maintain those bottles till serving time. This of course, has much to do with the cellar, which at Gaucho Beirut is a show cellar.

"We believe that wine should be displayed, since this gives more drama to the list. Our wine room needs to reflect the same care and attention that we give to the wine in our unseen cellars," says **Phil Crozier**, director of wines, **Gaucho**. He stresses that the wine experience begins with first caring for your cellar.

Moutran agrees and adds that "True, the cellar is a storage place but it's the first step in preparing the wine service. The thermometer completes this step by maintaining the proper temperature when using an ice bucket with a balance of water to ice cubes until the desired temperature is reached." The scale of temperature, and the use of the cellar and appropriate accessories is directly correlated to high and better wine sales, which will benefit the establishment and please the client.

The Phoenicia Hotel Beirut's Eau De Vie decorator, Martin Hulbert, gave its wine cellar a semi panoramic view where half of the cellar can be seen from inside the restaurant - a stainless steel made with big

glass windows. The temperature is digitally controlled at a constant 17°C for reds and 9°C for white. "We use an Oenomatic machine that displays a selection of wines for 'sample' or 'by the glass'.



The dispenser injects heavy

neutral gas back inside the bottle so that the wine doesn't oxidize. Wine can therefore be served after 3 weeks and remain

fresh," says **Christophe Pelaud**, head sommelier at **Eau De Vie**.

The Oenomatic machine fits well with the actual wine cellar, which is modern with both wood and metal, appropriately lit and space efficient. As accessories, they opted for Riedel glasses for their weight and clear transparency. "For 'price tag' wines we have a special selection of glasses that we like our guest to experience," explains Pelaud.

The prolongation

"Nowadays, the consumer is drinking less wine at any one time but is looking for a quality wine. The wine bar is the growing new trend worldwide and a wine dispenser allows the restaurateur



to offer a selection of quality wines by glass," explains **Fadi LeSidon**, wine consultant and faculty member at **La Sage University**. It vacuums air from the bottle to increase the shelf life, and is programmable to the exact quantity served by glass. Currently this dispenser is a costly investment, but due to its quality and price, payback is fast.

Similarly, the wine bottle vacuum maintains the characteristics of your open wine bottle for a number of days. It is easy to use as the accessory simply vacuums the air from the bottle. "Most wineries offer this vacuum free of charge in order for the restaurateur to keep their open bottle in prime condition for a few days," explains LeSidon.

"It is called the "Lever Model" the first was issued by Screwpull, a company that designs wine accessories. Now it has become a common and affordable tool, with China made replicates found on the market," explains Moutran. For caterers opening many bottles at a time, this method is fast and

reliable. Simply use a foil cutter to reveal the cork, and with two simple moves, you've extracted it.

Keeping the bubbles

Champagne accessories are often set aside and not spoken of. The bubbles are so fragile that they truly need the right accessories to be taken care of. "But champagne is more than just bubbles. We drink fine sparkling wines for the delicate aromas that define them.



and wine consultant.

What we need is a tool that preserves bubbles as much as flavors," explains **Salim Heleiwa**, a freelance restaurants

The most important champagne tool is the champagne bottle stopper. "It's the tool that makes the most sense to me as it manages the one element that champagne has a love-hate relationship with: oxygen," says Heleiwa. Experience has shown him that champagne bottle stopper preserves it for 3 to 4 days.

There's the better option of champagne bottle stoppers that use 100% argon gas and are

sold with argon gas cartridges. Argon is a colorless, odorless, non-flammable, non-reactive, inert gas used in all refined wine-preserving products to stop it from oxidizing without harming or influencing it in any way, as it is colorless and odorless.

"My experience with these tools showed that we can keep a bottle for 14 days and still drink a perfect champagne. Unfortunately, I never managed to keep a bottle of champagne for 14 days without drinking it," jokes Heleiwa. In Beirut, you can easily find regular champagne bottle stoppers in wine shops such as Vintage, Enoteca or La Cave Robuchon but devices with argon gas are not that common yet, and one might need to look abroad for more access to them.

Usually, champagne is opened without any tool. "The champagne bottle opener is rarely used – almost never – especially, at restaurants. I find that regrettable because it is elegant and ensures you the most secure way of opening that bottle," says Heleiwa. His favorite brand is Laguiole en Abrac for its champagne saber and is found at Convivio. Another brand, Brandani has a champagne opener also available at Convivio.



Looking for durable, affordable & dishwasher safe glasses for your business? Riedel, the world's most sought after glasses are now available exclusively for your hotel, restaurant & winery starting from USD3.75/-



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The experts favorite's

Elie Nehme - on what to decant

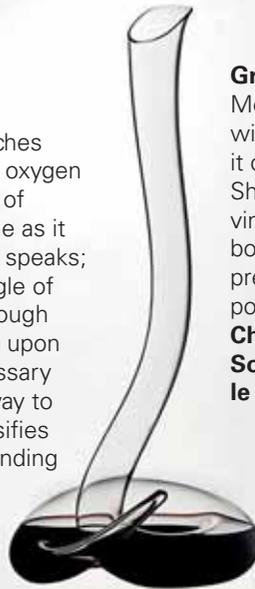
Decanter is used in two cases:

- When a varietal or appellation is still of a young vintage, the tannins are still green and the bottle needs to be in direct contact with air to give roundness and smoothness to the wine. For that, we use a wide bottom decanter that allows an important quantity of oxygen to enter the wine.
- When we are dealing with old wines, decanting helps us get rid of the unpleasant aromas that an old wine may have developed. For that, we don't need a wide contact area with oxygen, we only need to make it breathe and loosen up its unwanted aromas, therefore we use the small bottom decanter.

Eve Decanter

Height: 505mm
Capacity: 1370ccm
Tall silhouette of almost 20 inches
Allows for maximum effect of oxygen on young tannins and aromas of the wine. Double decants wine as it flows through coiled shape. It speaks; emits a sound akin to the gurgle of King Cobra as wine seeps through coiled glass. Allows for drama upon serving the wine as it is necessary to turn the vessel a specific way to pour. Liberates aromas, intensifies fruitiness of mid-palate by rounding out texture.

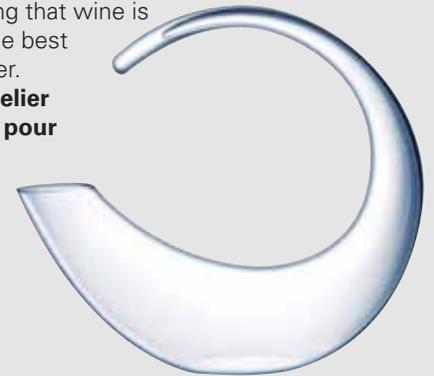
**Riedel
Solea**



Grand Finale

Mouth Blown Decanter designed specifically with classic wines in mind. Chef & Sommelier, it comes with a unique drop control technology. Shape is not just aesthetic, but designed to allow vintage wines to adequately breathe. Retains the bouquet insuring that wine is presented in the best possible manner.

**Chef & Sommelier
Société Kebbi pour
le commerce**



Najib Moutran - the simplest accessories are the essentials

The oxygenator funnel splits the wine into thinner nozzles in order for it to mix better with oxygen, thus also affecting the structure of the tannins. The funnel should have a sieve with an intricate mesh, or blotting paper similar to that used in filter coffee.

It serves a similar function to:

- Some old regular fun nets used to serve to separate the wine from its drag - the deposit at the bottom of the bottle that by pouring normally and directly from the bottle might mix again with the wine and make unpleasant and bitter tastes
- The old decanting technique using a candle addressing vintage bottles, once served the purpose of separating wine from drag
- Twirling wine in the glass; a simple oxygenation technique that could benefit the wine

Thermomètre à vin

Wine Thermometer. Temperature in degrees Celsius. Height: 195 mm. Diameter: 40 mm. Stainless steel. Directions: Insert Wine Thermometer inside bottle, ensuring that the end of the stem is in the liquid. Read temperature indicated by pointer.

**L'Atelier du Vin
Solea**



Verseur aérateur souple

Soft aerating pourer. SpePatented innovation. Soft aerating pourer adapts to neck of any bottle. Specific material thinness enables clear cut of flow, ensuring no stains on table cloth. Gently oxygenates wine and releases aromas through functional pins. Enhances wine's color, thanks to its transparency. Easy care and flat storage. Made with food grade plastic and ink.

**L'Atelier du Vin
Solea**

Fadi LeSidon - keep your cork intact

Never have a broken cork with the ideal "Lever Model" wine opener for a non-connoisseur.

- Very easy to handle, no need to be a connoisseur
- No risk to brake cork

Product Corkscrew – LM 350

Specifications Unique "trigger-grip" handle. Comfortable and easy to use. Can be placed onto the bottle with one hand. Automatically adjusts to bottle neck size. Grips and holds bottle securely.

**Screwpull
Enoteca**



Bucket and thermometer

The subtlest and cheapest, yet the most important investment, these two items remain the most delicate to use.

- There is no good wine service apart from a proper temperature, hence the use of wine cellar/cabinets or coolers
- Knowing when to remove the bottle and when to put it back, while avoiding over-chilled or -warm wines is key to a good wine experience
- Temperature affects the acidity, alcohol and mostly the tannins perception by the palate



Champagne cooler
Design Ettore Sottsass
**Alessi
Sel & Poivre**

Salim Helewi - on the fragility of champagne

Champagne bottle openers usually come in two different shapes, nippers or pliers, and cork adapters/removers

- They guarantee an easy elegant opening
- No noise or inadvertent flying from your hand to smack a guest on a nearby table.

Champagne Opener & nut craker

Made of stainless steel with a very modern design, it can also be used as a nut craker for a perfect paring with champagne.

**Brandani
Convivio**



Glasses specific to grape varietals

Much taste is lost through mismatching a glass shape to a grape varietal. Five different glasses cater to optimise the taste of their respective wine varietals – Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon



Each wine requires a specific attack on the mouth that is unique to the angle at which it first hits the tongue, the volume and shape of the glass, the diameter and roundness of the rim and whether it is cut and polished or a rolled edge, along with the thickness of the crystal itself.

The specificity of the glass to the varietal of the wine is key to a successful tasting by your guest. We've simplified wine glasses into 5 major categories that any restaurateur will need to invest in, as the cherry on top for a satisfied guest's palate.

50 years ago professor Claus J. Riedel was the first designer to recognize that the bouquet of notes, taste of the wine, balance of the body to air ratio (1/3 body: 2/3 air) and the finish of the wines are affected by the shape of the glass from which they are experienced. And so the stemware that would match and complement different wines and spirits was delicately worked out following the Bauhaus design philosophy meaning that form should follow function and not just provide adornment.

Vinum XL/ Cabernet Sauvignon

The full body of a Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot or Cabernet Franc is experienced through a vertically oval yet



wide elongated glass, one that is popular amongst such wine blends.

- **Height:** 265mm
- **Capacity:** 1060ccm
- **Varietal:** Bordeaux (red), Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Rioja, and Tempranillo
- Flawless blending of aromas and flavors
- Brings to light brilliant concentration while harmonizing intense sweet dark red fruit
- Integrates tannins and masks alcohol.

Vinum/Shiraz/Syrah The Syrah

Glass is similar to a Cabernet Sauvignon glass, thinner at the tip and slightly wider at the bottom, and is made to house wines less common to the Levant and more common to Western Europe like the Grenache, Malbec, Tempranillo, Syrah, and Mourvedr.

- **Height:** 236mm
- **Capacity:** 650ccm
- **Varietal:** Syrah, Amarone, Blaufrankisch, Chateauf-neuf-du-Pape, Grenache, Hermitage Rouge, Malbec, Mourvedre, Pinotage, and Shiraz.
- Nose resembles intense, rich blackberry aromas.
- Flavors on palate show mouth-filling fruit, massive structure and long sweet finish.



- Highlights tannins, offering a perfect balance with the overwhelmingly concentrated fruit.

6416/67/Vinum XL/Pinot Noir

The subtle and soft Pinot Noir notes are picked up throughout the flared lip of the tip and through the diameter of the rim, tulip shaped volume of the glass, as well as its finish.

- **Height:** 240ccm
- **Capacity:** 800ccm
- **Varietal:** Pinot Noir, Barbaresco, Barbera, Barolo, Gamay, Nebbiolo
- Shape clearly shows fresh compact fruit of North West Pinot Noir
- Highlights irresistible sweetness, whilst balancing acidity and phasing alcohol to create a perfect picture of the wine.



Vinum XL/Riesling Grand Cru

The Riesling or Sauvignon Blanc glass is for white wines that are fresh and acidic. A long thin vertical shape, the glass allows the taster to tip their head back while tasting the wine, thus



giving a sharper attack on the tongue – the only red wine that is good in the Riesling glass is the Italian Sangiovese.

- **Height:** 235mm
- **Capacity:** 405ccm
- **Varietal:** Sauvignon Blanc, Chianti, Zinfandel, Dolcetto, Montepulciano, Nebbiolo, Sangiovese, Bardolino
- Perfects the perception of fruit, minerality, acidity, texture and aromatics to optimize impression
- Guides flavors to a fresh finish.

Vinum XL/Montrachet

The buttery smoothness that one would feel in a chardonnay glass is lost in a thinner glass that would constrict the aroma and freedom of such a rich and creamy texture.

- **Height:** 205mm
- **Capacity:** 552ccm
- **Varietal:** Montrachet and Chardonnay
- Offers a larger volume
- Reveals intensity and wine's layers of buttery notes
- Size of bowl enables a rich bouquet to develop diverse range of aromas
- Emphasizes finesse while minimizing risk of becoming over-concentrated



CARING FOR YOUR CELLAR

Gaicho's Phil Crozier thinks out loud and comes up with the following pointers

Humidity

There must be some degree of humidity in your cellar – this is to ensure that the corks do not dry out when stored.

Lay down your bottle

Always store your wine lying down. This means that the wine is in contact with the cork, and so the cork does not dry out. This is especially true when storing your wines for longer periods of time.

Darkness

Ensure that there is as little light as possible. For a show cellar, there should be low lighting. For a storage cellar, no light should be on the wines for any long period of time. Ultraviolet light can degrade and spoil your bottle. Wines in clear glass bottles should be consumed quickly.

Temperature

It should be between 16°C – 19°C. However, the most important factor is that the temperature is stable. Sudden movements in temperature will expand and contract the cork, thus leading to oxidization of the wine in the bottle. Think of letting the wine rest in peace, like it is going to hibernate, and you get the idea.

Document your dates

Make sure you record the date on which the wine came in. If you do not have much shelving, then allow the wine to remain in the box, so that it is not subject to light. Keep a list of the wines with dates in and dates out. This gives a useful record of the wine's evolution.

Good glasses

Whatever the shape and size you choose, they must have a cut rim. Glued rims on cheaper glasses trap dirt and lipstick, and so will not inspire confidence in your guest. Make sure your glasses are spotlessly clean.

Maintain packaging and hygiene standards

Keep the bottles and your cellar clean. Dirty cellars lead invariably to dirty wines. It might be perceived that dusty bottles with spoiled labels give credibility to

aged wines, but the truth is that a dirty label being presented to a guest does not lead to confidence when the wine is sold. If the wine is wrapped in paper, then keep the paper on the bottle to protect against this.



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