

## Chapter 2

### Styles of Wine

Old versus new world, wine technology, adjusting wine styles to suit the customer and classic wine basics. Where on earth do we start? Is there a difference? Countries such as South Africa, Chile and the USA have been producing wines for hundreds of years, so why are these still called New World Wines? In this chapter, I will explain the various styles of wines made today and the differences that might exist, their compositions, alcohol levels, and fruit contents among other things.

In order to fully understand the development of wine styles today it can behoove us to recognize the roles, both positive and negative, that business marketing is playing in regard to wine and its style. Market segmentation, the marketing mix (product, price, package...) and volume-driven wines have become the driving force for the majority of large producers. Typical classic styles are being drowned by the many “Coca Cola Wines” of mass, overripe, high alcohol as well as by adjusted wines (sucrose, glucose, citric and tartaric acid and even tannin).

As discussed earlier in this book, good fruit is of utmost importance if good wine is to be made. Science has



*Fig. 2.2. From another wine-tasting session in Bordeaux. An evaluation of the wine's residual sugar, body, fruitiness and acid content is noted and reflections made on the wine's ability to be cellared.*



*Fig. 2.1. Old world style wine tasting. Note the use of the aroma caps.*

intervened, both for the good and the bad. The winemaker, financial director, marketing department as well as the vineyard and the climate conditions together determine whether the wine produced will be an overfruitiness (very ripe / picked late), high alcohol (high sugar level at harvest), full-bodied (extended fermentation with long oak maturation) wine or more tart (acidic) and flowery with less astringency (tannin). All the above factors have a direct impact on the basic cost structure for each bottle produced and subsequently for the intended target group of customers and volumes expected. Wine after all is a business too.

Apart from all of that, there are four major differences in wines produced today: Old World, New World, fruit-driven and style-driven. This does not take fortified, Champagne (sparkling wine) and sweet wines into consideration but mainly focuses on red and white wines.