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Not So Essential Wine Accessories

By Ken Finnigan

As a follow up to my last article, "Essential Wine Accessories" I thought it would be interesting to touch on a few accessories that may not be quite so essential but are fun or handy to have regardless.

Wine pourers are traditionally made from clear plastic and fit into the neck of a bottle of wine. The pouring surface is designed to prevent dripping when pouring, for those with an unsteady hand, by returning any excess wine back to the bottle. This can be very handy for those interested in preventing red wine stains on any item of furniture that is not already red in color!

Decanters allow red wine to breathe, enhancing flavor and bouquet. Typically created from glass or crystal, decanters have a narrow neck, which leads to a very wide base. This wide base allows more of the wine to come in contact with the air, letting it breathe before consumption. Decanters are not a necessity but are a practical addition for those interested in enhancing the flavor of their red wine.

A bottle tote is also a practical accessory to have when going out on a picnic or to bring a cold bottle of wine to a dinner party. Usually made from neoprene (the same material diving wetsuits are made from), bottle totes can keep a bottle cool for hours, something handy if you are going to be out and don't want that nice chilled bottle of Sauvignon Blanc to warm up before you have had a chance to drink it.

How many times have you been at a dinner party and have had to juggle your plate and your glass? Mingling plates are the perfect solution for those dinner or cocktail parties when a third hand is essential. With a slot and hole on the side of the plate, a wine glass stem can be inserted so that the glass is resting on the side of the plate. This leaves your hand free to eat without needing to balance a glass in your hand or setting it down on a table.

My personal favorite not so essential accessory is a wine chiller or wine refrigerator. Wine chillers can come in a variety of colors, finishes and capacities to fit your desires. Usually they are small enough to fit on or under a kitchen counter and most have gauges, which allow you to set the chilling temperature according to the type of wine being chilled. That way if you are using your wine refrigerator to store and chill red wine (because red wine should best be served at a temperature of 60 degrees Fahrenheit),

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the temperature can be adjusted so that bottles are not chilled as if they were white!

The list of wine accessories can appear to be endless, and to write about them all in this article would take too long and bore you to death. So I hope that the few I have touched upon are helpful in deciding which not so necessary wine accessories are more necessary than others.

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Wine Accessories At Kitchen Junkie

By Debbie Dragon

Wine is more than an alcoholic beverage. It's almost a way of life! There are more wine accessories available than you could even imagine. From the necessities like corkscrews and glasses, to the not so necessary yet entertaining accessories like decanters, ice buckets, and pourers— there is more to wine than just drinking it.

Corkscrews & Openers While there are hundreds of varieties of corkscrews, they all work in basically the same fashion. You screw one end directly into the center of the wine's cork, and use a handle to life the cork out of the bottle in order to enjoy your bottle of wine.

If you want something other than a corkscrew, you can find another style of opener that uses cartridges to "pop" the cork out of the bottle. The pop style openers tend to be a little more expensive than the traditional corkscrew, but image is everything when it comes to wine, and a specialty opener may be just the extra accessory you need for your dinner parties or restaurant atmosphere.

Decanters Decanters are glass bottles with special shapes designed to encourage the heightening of wine flavors when you store your open wine in them. They also make for a nice presentation when you place the decanter on the table.

There are literally countless different shapes and styles that decanters come in. Many resemble a glass flower vase. Certain wines should be placed in specific shapes of wine decanters in order to enhance the flavor of the wine to the fullest extent. Others can be stored in any of the fancy decanters.

For an incredible display, you could find a decanter with it's own base unit. These are highly stylish, and often hold the decanter at an angle, and suspended over the table.

Some decanters come with glass ball stoppers to be placed on the opening of the bottle in order to keep the freshness in when the wine is stored. Air can have damaging effects to the properties of wine,

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and so it's usually best to keep open wine in an airtight container.

Additionally, some decanters are able to remove sediments from older wine and aerate younger wines to further enhance their flavors.

Decanters are certainly not necessary to drinking wine (you can place the cork back in the bottle of a wine to keep the air out when you're not pouring the wine) but they certainly make for a nicer presentation and can actually help the overall flavor of the wine.

Wine Racks Where do you store your wine bottles? If you're like most people, you keep them in one of your kitchen cabinets until you're ready to use them, or maybe in the basement. If you drink wine often, however, you would probably enjoy having an elegant and functional wine rack in the kitchen or dining room that is designed to display and hold your wine bottles, glasses, and accessories.

Some wine racks are mounted to overhead cabinet space, so that the bottles are placed lying down inside them, while the glasses hang from their stems. These are perfect for kitchens with decent space

under their overhead cabinets. If you don't have the room for this style of wine rack, there are wine racks that sit directly on the counter, and hold the bottles at arms reach.

If your kitchen simply doesn't have the space on the counter top or under the overhead cabinets for these styles, you can enjoy a wine rack that stands alone. These often have small base units, sometimes refrigerated, as well as space for glasses and accessories. They take up more floor space, but can really dress up a dining area.

This article has been provided courtesy of Kitchen Junkie,

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