

Young People Take to Port

...and we don't mean the sea. It seems millennials have decided they love port wines. In fact, port, as a category, is now even marketing itself to younger drinkers.

What is Port?

Port is a Portuguese fortified wine which dates back to the 17th century. It's a very sweet wine that comes from the Douro Valley in Portugal.

While you can find many types of port wines, they are all essentially made the same way. The red grapes for ports are picked after they've ripened completely. These grapes are then fermented, and right before the sugars turn to alcohol, the process is stopped when grape spirits are added. You're left with a sweet wine that has an 18 to 20 percent alcohol percentage.

Typically, we enjoy port wines as an after dinner drink, but it can also be enjoyed with meals. Port is also offered as an aperitif to complement cheeses and nuts.

Why Port?

As craft cocktails surge in popularity, millennials are checking out the rest of the drinks menu—looking for new experiences, and they're finding those new experiences in port wines.

Traditionally, port has been looked upon as a 'mature' drink, something older people enjoy after dinner. And while that is true, older people do enjoy a good port after a great meal, younger drinkers are joining their party.

Port is a high quality wine which is known for its class and versatility, and mixologists know it and are steering millennials towards it.

Not sure about port? Here are some hints and tricks for ordering, and enjoying, the wine in front of your friends, colleagues, and family (anyone you might want to impress!):

Ordering Port

If you dine out, you'll probably see only port wine listed on the menu. Maybe not, depends upon the type of establishment. If there is more than one port wine offered, it may be that the restaurant or bar different types of port, like these:

White Port

White port is different from the traditional port, as it is made from white grapes. These port wines will range in flavor from sweet to off-dry, where traditional port wines are sweet. You'll want to drink white port right away, rather than let it sit and breathe.

Ruby Port

Ruby port is dark red and it's a blend of a number of different vintages of port wines which are aged in oak barrels for 3 years. These types of port wines are usually fruit-forward, easy to drink, and found nearly everywhere. You can let it breathe, or drink it right away.

Tawny Port

Tawny port is very sweet; probably what you're used to if you've had a traditional Port. It's barrel-aged and has a nutty, caramel flavor. You can let this one breathe.

Rosé Port

Rosé port is a newer style of port wine. It is similar to rosé wine as it has flavors of strawberry, violets and caramel. Again, this type of port can be enjoyed immediately.

Enjoying Port

With port, feel free to drink it straight. It should not be chilled. It's best to drink port with sweeter foods—a dessert after dinner or with cheeses and nuts prior to the meal. You want your wine to be sweeter than its accompaniment, in order to really enjoy the wine's full flavor.

You can also have port mixed into a cocktail, which is typically how millennials are introduced to it. Mixologists enjoy experimenting with ingredients, and lately one of those ingredients is port. Port is delicious as part of a blend, especially paired with different fruits.

Or, you can cook with it! Port can be used in chocolate desserts, like cakes and chocolate sauces poured over ice cream, and can be used as reductions for steaks. Port can also be used as a glaze for hams. Get creative; anywhere a sweet sauce might complement a dish, try port!

How do you enjoy port? Let us know. Never tried it? Try it!

Bonus Tip: As port demand increases, so does the price of vintage port. Those who collect port wines are seeing prices rise.