

LifeStyle[★] 品味生活

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A Chinese Consumer's Guide to Becoming a Certified Wine Geek (Part II)

I now continue with my suggestions for all aspiring Chinese wine geeks. If you completely consumed Parts I & II, you are ready for Part III, Steps One to Three. Graduation is in sight. Practice, practice, practice. And enjoy.

Step One: Creating & Building a "Wine Library"

No self-respecting Certified Chinese Wine Geek would ever admit to lacking a serious "wine library". So, you need to understand what it is, why it's important, how to start one and how to constantly build it.

A wine library is a collection of notes, magazines, pictures, books, CD's and any other recorded content that relates to wine that you feel is worth collecting and preserving. It is important, because it is a thorough record of your "wine path" or in other words, your "wine journey" from your first step along the way and every measurable step that followed. It is a chronological record of everyone and everything that helped you learn about wine and explore the wonderful world of wine passion. Without a wine library we would quickly forget how our understanding of the world of wine has evolved along with our wine palate; what we liked, when we began, bears little resemblance to what we consider ideal and deliciously

complex over time. It is a treasury of what has influenced our thinking as our palates have evolved or "matured".

Where to Begin

Find a special place where you dwell that is safe from all forms of harm to the materials from which your library is made; where paper, books, CD's, pictures and whatever is protected from the sunlight, extremes of temperature and also high humidity. This is where you will store your wine library. As it

grows, you may need to relocate it, but such is the case with any collection as it outgrows its existing space.

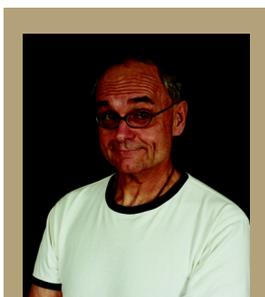
Just as I advised you to start your wine cellar as your budget permits, the same applies for your wine library. Begin if you must with tasting notes as you begin to explore the world of wine. When you can afford a wine CD or a magazine or a book that you want to read to advance your wine education, buy it and add it to your library. The Internet is an unlimited resource of wine education and much of it is free. Some websites charge a subscription and course fees to benefit from their wine education; others do not.

If money is no object, go to a good book store, find the wine section and go for it. If are on a very tight budget, go to the Internet often; print-out informative wine articles and insightful wine Blogs. You can borrow magazines or books from a wine friend or the local library. Over time you will be amazed at how nicely your wine library will grow; even if it is all tasting notes and print-outs from the Internet. It matters not: The key is that it is meaningful for you and it has been an important part of your wine education. Of course, organization is very important with any collection, because the larger it grows, the more difficult it becomes to find anything unless you have systematically organized each type of medium to itself and within each medium, you have established a system for locating everything.

As the years roll by and you move again and again, you will have to decide what is no longer important to your wine library to preserve your wine path story, so either toss those items or if they may have value for others, gift them to someone special. In this way, your share some of your library with others and this is a very good use of materials you no longer want in your collection. But never, never stop collecting: It becomes part of you. And it is the only true record of your wine discovery adventure.

Live from China, I am **Red Fred**. Red as the love that is the love of my life.

To be Continued... ★



Fred Tibitts Jr. is a global wine consultant based in New York. He assists some of the top hotel and restaurant chains in the U.S. and Asia Pacific developing their wine by the glass programs, leading educational trips to wine producing countries and hosting VIP industry dinners at New York and across Asia.