By Dawn Stanyon, Professional Image Consultant

Wine is a wonderful host gift – if you know your host enjoys wine. Do you feel overwhelmed by wine selection? This wine article offers some simple advice on how to select a nice vino. In a nutshell:

Know your host. Does she prefer sweet wines? Consider a sweet German Riesling or a dessert wine. Dry wines? Consider a California Chardonnay for a white or an Australian Shiraz for a red. Did she spend a month in Italy? Then get her an Italian wine. And if she's a beer girl, bring a local brew instead!

Ask experts. Go to a beverage warehouse or wine shop. You can just ask the professionals to recommend. This will take the stress out of the selection process.

$$$ does not necessarily equal excellence. If you find a bottle of wine that is recommended and you feel is perfect but costs $9.99, don't fret. It's all about the quality and the thought not the price.

If you don't know your host and have no idea what to buy, again, go to a wine shop or buy a moderately priced wine. A Pinot Noir is a safe choice- a red that is tasty and subtle but not too full of tannins (tannins make your mouth water).

As far as etiquette goes…Don't expect your host to serve your wine that night; he or she may

have selected specific wines to pair with the appetizers, meal and dessert. Do put the bottle in a gift bag with an attached card because they may receive a few bottles. Consider sharing why you bought that specific bottle of wine on the card: “I know you love *Gewürztraminer. I hope you enjoy this as much as I enjoy your company. Happy Holidays. Bob”*

And don’t forget to take the price tag off. There is no shame in giving an inexpensive bottle of wine, but you don’t need to advertise it.

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