

What Makes a Successful Wine Hostess

PRIOR TO THE EVENT

*** Learn Important Wine Details.

Your goal is to connect the customer 'personally' to the wine, to educate them. DO YOUR RESEARCH. Go to the Rainier Wine website. You can click on the brand you are representing to find specific wine information.

- Read the tasting notes for flavor details and the character of each varietal
- National Accolades—read them and refer to them. Find on our websites:
www.rainierwine.com and www.besitoswinery.com and www.diversionwine.com

***Call ahead. Confirm.

A few days prior to an event, make a call to the Distributor Rep. assigned to the store. Introduce yourself and make certain he/she is aware of the event schedule and that you will be there. Confirm that there is sufficient stock of wine at the store to successfully support the tasting. **Be sure to also call the store manager** to confirm with her/him that you will be there. **If this is a tasting event, ask the rep if there will be cups on site and who will supply the samples for pouring.**

- Introduce yourself
- Confirm event date/time
- Confirm there is sufficient stock of wine
- If a tasting, ask about cups and wine samples for pouring

***Store Demo Set-Up.

Ask the Distributor Rep if s/he will be setting up the table for the event. If so, ask if the demo and wine cases are in an IDEAL LOCATION. If a tasting, request that they chill the wine. In the event the Distributor Rep is unavailable to assist, often the Wine or Store Manager is willing to assist.

- Confirm table location
- If tasting, chill the white and pink wines

*** Make friends with Key Players.

Upon arriving at your event store, greet the Wine Manager and thank them for allowing you to represent "[name of wine brand]" Wine at their store. It is your job to make to get to know and build relationships with key players---store manager, distributor rep, customers, etc. Be easy going and sincere so that they feel you are not just business partners. Be helpful.

***Extra Touches.

Kindly ask the Wine Manager to do a Bullet Blast email (if they have this) to their wine club members announcing your upcoming tasting at their store. Also ask that any POS (posters, signage, etc) be put in a prominent place in the store announcing when the next tasting will be. This should help attendance, hence sales.

TIME TO SELL

*** Store Event Announcement.

Have the Store Manager announce the event over the intercom that you are here conducting a wine tasting or hand sell in the Wine & Spirits Department. Encourage this announcement to take place every 15, 20 or 30 minutes. Or if staff is not willing to make the announcement, kindly ask if they wouldn't mind that you yourself make the announcement.

-Store event announcement over the PA

-Advertise: ask the spirits manager or store manager if they have an email list.

Have them send an email blast announcing your wine event.

*** Cross Marketing Opportunities.

The day before the event, ask the store manager if they would like to do a food pairing from their deli with the wine tasting. They can either have their own cheese expert set up near you to sample assorted cheeses, or you can set a cheese display on your table. The can draw more people to your area.

***Give the Customers Ideas.

Let customers know that your wine brand is a great gift idea. You can package it in a theme basket with other items, if it is Besitos i.e. chocolates, cosmetics, flowers, etc. and if it is Diversion, i.e. items from Washington like salmon, gourmet chocolate, WA cheese, and other local products. Compare the cost of the wine purchase to a few cups of coffee or a few Hallmark cards.

****Give Aways, Mail in Rebates and Up-Selling.

Customers love this. Think of creative ways to hand out giveaways as there is a limited supply. One idea is to use the more expensive giveaway to "Up-sell". For example, tell customers that if they buy 3 bottles they get a free t-shirt with the mail in rebate (if you don't have shirts on-site, the form is available on our website, just need proof of purchase).

*** Talk to All Customers.

Invite each and every customer walking by to experience a great wine. Sometimes customers are in their own world and they do not see you, so you have to verbally bring your presence to their attention inviting them to join you. Customers are smart and they pick up on your body language, so give them your sincere self. Tell them you like their blouse or their necklace...and 'mean it'. People love it when you talk about them and compliment them. Talk to their baby or small child, and find out what their name is. Relationship building is so essential when you are selling a product. If the weather is gloomy and customers are bleak ... be funny... say something as they are walking by like, "Pull up a chair and join my party." It breaks the ice and makes them laugh and want to see what you have going on. Shout out---"come try an award winning wine" or "I have Cab, Merlot, Char". The key is to not let anyone walk past without trying the wine—everyone.

***Share Stories.

Make things fun for customers as you pour/sell and encourage them to buy. Tell stories about other customers who have purchased the wine.

*****Your Placement.**

Don't be afraid to bring yourself from behind a table. Feel free to stand in front of the table. This creates interactive body language. Don't be afraid to walk away from the table to engage people.

***** Make a Crowd.**

Try to gather a crowd. People love crowds and want to see what all the excitement is all about. Hold up the bottle of Cabernet, for example, as you point to the label and describe the notes of ripe cherries, mint, mocha, with a hint of vanilla and spice.

Make it fun. Use endearing words. Charm the children with mom (tootsie rolls, candy, etc. can be given out)—it can keep the kids occupied while you work at making a sale.

*****Offer to Sign Bottles.**

This is specific to Besitos:

★TAKE A SHARPIE PEN, silver or gold pen color is best. If you don't have a Sharpie, see if the Manager does. This personalizes the sale. Offer to sign bottles, "love and kisses" or "xoxoxo" or place your own personal lip smack on the label. Customers love it!

*****Great Wine, Low Cost.**

When on sale, always talk up the sale price compared to the original price and even when it is not on sale, still brag up the great price. Tell the customer that our wine has everything going for it...a great label, at a low price point and the taste is FABULOUS.

-Promote the great price (don't ever call it "cheap", use "great value" etc.)

*****Clean Up.**

At the end of your event make sure that everything is cleaned up so that nothing is left for the store staff to take care of. Afterward, display the wine as dynamically as you can. **Thank the Wine Manager.**

*****Thank Yous.**

This is an extra step, and can help build solid relationships between you and the store. Send a Thank You note for their support to the Wine Manager via postal mail. You can even get creative with the card--one idea is to put "thank you" confetti inside the note so the "thank you's" come pouring out upon opening. Very memorable.