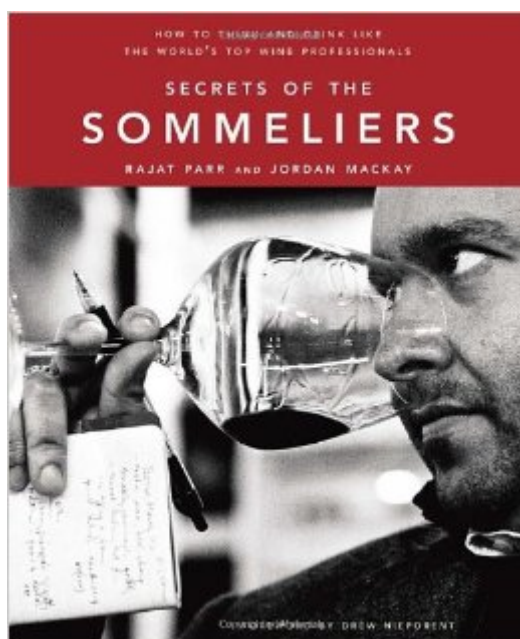


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Secrets Of The Sommeliers: How To Think And Drink Like The World's Top Wine Professionals



Synopsis

A fascinating exploration of the inside world of sommeliers, sharing their unique perspectives, extensive expertise, and best stories. Rajat Parr's profound knowledge of wines, deep relationships with producers, and renowned tasting abilities have made him a legend in the business. As wine director for the Mina Group, Parr presides over the lists at some of the country's top restaurants. In *Secrets of the Sommeliers*, Parr and journalist Jordan Mackay present a fascinating portrait of the world's top wine professionals and their trade. The authors interviewed the elite of the sommelier community, and their colleagues' insights, recommendations, and entertaining stories are woven throughout, along with Parr's own takes on his profession and favorite winemakers and wines. Along the way, the authors give an immersion course in tasting and serving wine; share strategies for securing hard-to-find bottles at a good price and identifying value sweetspots among the many regions; and teach readers how to make inspired food pairings. Winner - 2011 James Beard Cookbook Award - Beverage Category

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Customer Reviews

Let's start with the worst part of this book: the title. I had to hold my nose and buy it despite the horrible do it yourself, self improvement/self congratulatory vibe of that clumsy moniker. But don't let that keep you from buying this informative and entertaining book, whether you are in the wine trade, a serious amateur, or just a wanna be. Ed Anderson's excellent photography is one of the draws. There are some really stunning portraits of Dominique Lafon, Jean-Marc Roulot, Freddy Mugnier,

Etienne de Montille and others. Another plus is the collection of biographical sketches of a number of high profile sommeliers -- Larry Stone, Rajat Parr, Daniel Johnnes, Kevin Zraly and others. It's always interesting to read how other people found their true calling. But the most valuable part of the book is the common sense advice about buying wine, where to find it, and how to cellar and serve it; along with insights into the day to day joys, trials and tribulations of the folks who serve the stuff up in tony restaurants across the land. There are brief profiles of the great wine grapes and the best examples of each -- pinot noir, cabernet, merlot, cabernet franc, and so on. A discussion of the pros and cons of buying wine at auction, and how to find the best deals by avoiding the 'blue chip' names and vintages and using your wine knowledge to get value for money. A discussion of wine and food matching. How to pick your way through a restaurant wine list to find the hidden treasures to be found in just about every good list. A number of reviewers here appear offended that the book strongly emphasizes the wines of Burgundy. If that bothers you, I suppose you should stay away.

I have mixed feelings about this book. On one hand I respect the many of the folks mentioned in this book; on the other hand, Parr is portraying their 'clique' as a group of rock stars that have impeccable palates. The tone gets very cocky, though never really condescending.----- (Update): I also looked into a few things. In the beginning of the book the authors (Mr. Parr being one of them - shame on him for using the third person!) speak of studying for the MS exams. Ironically Mr. Parr does not actually have an MS certification, though the tone and wording of this introduction suggest otherwise.----- For a better and much more humble (and better written) book by a wine industry professional check these out: Red, White, and Drunk All Over: A Wine-Soaked Journey from Grape to Glass Reading between the Wines: With a New Preface I expected secrets of the sommeliers to be either: a) good look into what makes a good sommelier, or b) a look into the experience of becoming a sommelier. I did expect some funny stories, maybe some humor... But what the book needs a dose of humility. First Parr discusses his own rise to becoming a sommelier (in 3rd person mind you...), then he has short bios on other wine industry professionals, but this comes as more of a 'shout out' to his friends who have worked towards their MS (Master Sommelier) certification.

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