

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOTTLE

.....
A QUICK GUIDE TO
CANNING WINE



CANNED WINE IS HERE TO STAY!

Once considered a novelty, canned wine has taken its place in the mainstream tempting wine drinkers to pop the tab with their easy-drinking convenience, portability, and value. Wine lovers can find an increasing array of brands, flavors, and eye-catching can designs that fit into their active lifestyles.

THE MARKET IS BOOMING.

Cans are one of the fastest growing sales segments for the wine industry. In August of 2019, [a Wall Street Journal article](#) noted that canned wine growth grew 80% to \$90 million this year. The perception that wine in a can is a fad or that wine in cans is low quality, is changing as winemakers expand the segment with new flavors and options that compete with bottles in taste tests.



WHY ARE CANS GREAT FOR WINE?

1. *They provide a new revenue stream.* Today's consumers want alternatives to canned beer and are looking for additional choices in adult beverages.
2. *They fit an active lifestyle.* From festivals to the golf course, cans are portable, easy to carry, and fit in well for people that love to enjoy a good wine outdoors.
3. *They are recyclable.* In fact, aluminum cans are the most recycled beverage package on the planet and contain up to 70% recycled material.
4. *They are better for the environment.* Weighing 67% less than glass, cans are easier to ship and stack which limits carbon emissions in the supply chain.
5. *They are convenient.* Cans chill faster, don't shatter like glass, and are easy to open.
6. *They protect your flavors.* Designed to be air-tight and eliminate ultraviolet light exposure, cans keep oxygen and light from changing the flavor of your wine.

WHAT SHOULD YOU CONSIDER BEFORE YOU CAN YOUR WINE?

1. *Alcohol by Volume (ABV).* Wine has a higher ABV than other alcoholic beverages, like beer. Offering smaller can sizes is a great way to provide single-serve options for wine lovers.
2. *Regulations.* Wine production is regulated, and wine can only be sold in certain size containers. Even though beer can be sold in any size cans, regulations only permit wine above 6.9% (ABV) to be sold in a specific size format. It is important to know in advance what size cans and packs you need for your wine.



WHAT ABOUT FLAVOR?

The wine that you choose to put in a can has some special considerations to keep in mind. You want your wine to taste like you intend it to when your customer pops the top your carefully crafted canned wine.

1. *Which wines do best in a can?* Not all grapes are created equal for canning wine. Many of the best canned wines are made with a fresh and fruity style with little to no oak contact. Those with low tannins and high acidity maintain their flavor well in the anaerobic environment of a can.
2. *Hot or cold?* People are used to drinking a cold, refreshing beverage out of a can. Since red wines are served at close to room temperature, consider a lighter red for better drinkability.
3. *Is it ready to drink out of the can?* If a wine needs to be decanted or tastes better in a certain size or shape of glass, it may need to be adjusted with dissolved oxygen before it is packaged in a can. Wines that are ready to drink straight from the can or poured into a glass will fare best with the canned wine crowd.
4. *To carbonate or not to carbonate?* Carbonated and still wines work equally well in a can. Either carbon dioxide or nitrogen dosing can be used to push out excess oxygen in the can to prevent them from introducing unwanted oxygen to the wine, which could negatively impact the flavor.
5. *How does sulfur affect the flavor?* It is important to introduce the right level of sulfur before canning wine. Though sulfur works well to maintain freshness in a bottle, lower levels work well for cans. With a cork, oxygen is transferred from the outside air to the wine to promote freshness as the wine ages. Sulfur helps protect the wine from oxidizing. With a can, it is a sealed environment and oxidization is less of a concern.



WHAT SHOULD WINE MAKERS LOOK FOR IN A CANNING SYSTEM?

Finding the right system for canning your wine can make all the difference in your success. For ensuring a high-quality product, there are some important things to watch for when selecting a canning system for your wine.

- 1. Footprint** – There are a variety of canning systems on the market, so make sure your canning line fits in your facility. Many systems have a high throughput while fitting in a small space. That helps you maintain the quality of your product onsite, and allows you to can on your own schedule.
- 2. Adaptability/Flexibility** – With strict regulations and customer requirements for unique can sizes, it is important that your system is adaptable to fit your needs. Find a system that can adjust quickly and efficiently to different can sizes, speed, and unique settings as you grow and test the market with new wines.
- 3. Nitrogen Dosing** – If you plan to put still (non-carbonated) wines in cans you will need to use a nitrogen doser to reduce oxygen in the headspace and create rigidity in the can. Ensure your system integrates with nitrogen dosing equipment so your still wines maintain their integrity.
- 4. Dissolved Oxygen** – Introducing dissolved oxygen before packaging can improve the flavor of wine in the can. However, unwanted oxygen that is introduced during the canning process can have a big impact on flavor. Make sure that your system has controls for dissolved oxygen so you can ensure the wine tastes great right out of the can.

Estate Wine Distinction? Producing an “Estate Wine” is a very important distinction that equates to premium quality and a world class varietal correctness. It means that 100% of the grapes are grown on one estate and that the wine is made there from start to finish. It is important to have a dedicated canning line onsite to maintain the estate distinction and provide control of quality throughout the entire process.

Interested in next steps? See our eBook: *What to Know Before You Buy a Canning Line*



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