

WHAT IS DECANTING?

Decanting simply means transferring the wine from the bottle into another vessel. You are allowing the wine to breathe. Decanting your wine will give you a clean and clear glass of wine, with a beautiful bouquet.

WHAT'S THE BENEFIT?

Obviously, it's not the mere act of shifting liquid from one container to another that accounts for the magic of decanting. Rather, when you decant a bottle of wine, two things happen. First, slow and careful decanting allows wine (particularly older wine) to separate from its sediment, which, if left mixed in with the wine, will impart a very noticeable bitter, astringent flavour. Second, when you pour wine into a decanter, the resulting agitation causes the wine to mix with oxygen, enabling it to develop and come to life at an accelerated pace (this is particularly important for younger wine).

You can improve cheap wine by removing some of the nasty sulfur compounds and you can make the tannins in expensive wines blend better with some of the other flavours in the wine.

WHICH WINES DO I DECANT?

Most reds will benefit from being decanted and full-bodied whites can benefit greatly from being decanted prior to drinking. Do not decant your sparkling wine or champagne! Young wines will be improved dramatically; complex flavours will be enhanced. Older wines (five years and beyond) like to collect sediment.

CLEANING THE DECANTER

Rinse it with mineral water to remove any residual chlorine odour. And never clean your decanter with detergent, because the shape of a decanter makes it very difficult to get the soapy residue out. Instead, use a mixture of crushed ice and coarse salt -- they'll remove any residual wine without leaving behind any aroma of their own.

