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**FINNISH CUSTOMERS' BEVERAGE
CHOICE AND THE POTENTIAL OF VI-
ETNAMESE WINE IN FINLAND**

Case: Vaasa citizens' beverage choices in Asian restaurant

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of the thesis is to discover the potential of selling Asian wine and beverages in Vaasa in particular and in Finland in general. The Asian wine means all of the alcohol made locally Asian with different ingredients including fruit, rice and grapes.

The thesis primarily concentrated on the combination of Asian food along with wine in different theory. From that, it gives the outlook of pairing Asian food with local Asian beverages. It presents general information about Asian food and in addition, one Vietnamese wine company is introduced as an example.

In order to understand the customers' behavior regarding Asian food and beverages, a quantitative research was conducted. The target group is citizens of Vaasa who are familiar with Asian food in restaurants. The first step is to discover their frequency and their favorite in different types of Asian restaurants presented in Vaasa. The second step is to see how their habits of drinking beverages in those restaurants. Finally, the research focused on how they are willing to taste the local beverages.

To conclude, it was found out that Vaasa citizens are often eating Asian food in restaurants, but they are rarely drinking Asian beverages. However, the research shows that people are willing to pay for Asian beverages as long as the beverages are local, special and reasonable price.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Asian cuisine is getting more and more popular in Finland. At first, it is known as Chinese cuisine, however Finnish have discovered different food culture for example from Thailand, Indian, Japan and Vietnam. As a result, there are many Vietnamese restaurants in Finland which have good reputation in quality. They contribute to the enriching of food choices and introduce the culture to Finns.

1.1 Research problem and the aims of research

Nowadays, Asian restaurants as well as Vietnamese ones have opened in Finland in different types both buffet lunch and fine dining. Menus are large with different choices even for vegetarians with the most common type of cooking: wok. However, the selection of beverage is limited, only soft drinks, tea and coffee. In contrast, many Finnish are required to have a bottle of wine while they are having dinner at restaurants, they do not have any choices in Asian restaurants. This leads to a loss for both restaurants and customers.

Therefore, this thesis is made to research the habit of Vaasa citizens regarding beverage while they eat Asian food. What do they usually prefer to drink? In which cases they would like to have beer or wine with Asian food? Which cases not?

In specific, there is a Vietnamese wine brand which has introduced good quality red wines and white wines. The thesis will look for any potential need from the Finnish market and what prices are acceptable in restaurants.

1.2 Structure of the thesis

The thesis is comprised of theoretical and empirical part. The first part will introduce different theories which have been discovered. Firstly, the preference of eating and drinking explains what the preferences of customers are, what factors affect their preferences and how people make choice in a restaurant. Secondly, wine

tasting part includes all information about wine taste and how to taste wine properly, how to combine between wine and food. Thirdly, the Asian cuisine part is focused in introducing Vietnamese and Cantonese cuisine and beverage culture which is the most popular in Finland these days. In the end of theoretical part is comprised the information of Vietnamese wine company with different types of wine they have made.

The empirical part is conducted by a quantitative research. The respondents answer the questionnaires which are made by researcher. The focus group is the regular customers in different Asian restaurants in Vaasa.

1.3 Restriction of the research

The researched area is restricted in Vaasa. Therefore, the result is only a recommendation for other areas in Finland. Because of the lack of time and finance, the research group is limited. Finally, the thesis does not comprise the import procedures of Vietnamese wines, wine marketing strategy and pricing.

2 PREFERENCE AND CHOICE IN EATING AND DRINKING

Psychologists have defined clearly liking, preference and choosing as the behaviors of organisms. They are different. Human can like chocolate, but prefer a carrot and choose a cucumber instead depending on their characteristic and the environmental effects. This chapter will explain those behaviors from psychological point of view.

2.1 Introduction to food and drink preference

Food preference is ‘the food selections that people and animals make when all foods are equally and simultaneously available’. (A.W.Logue, 1998, 65)

In gastronomy, preference is divided into three sections: preference for sweet, for salt and for milk products. Preference in sweet food and drink is led by the concentration of calories needed. Depending on the age, food and environment, people have different levels of preference in sweetness. Following to J. A. Desor, Lawrence S. Green, and Owen Maller, children from nine to fifteen prefer sweeter than adults. They also researched that twins both identical and fraternal prefer differences levels of sweetness even though they share the same genes and environment. (A. W. Logue, 1998, 75-85)

Salt preference is also required for the body to function properly. However, too much sodium can lead to the illness called hypertension (high blood pressure). Following to Beauchamp’s research, humans have no preference for salt until 2 years of age. And the saltiness taste experience is responsible for the quantity of consumed salt. In other words, if a person uses less salt, he or she not only reduce the amount but also the interest in saltiness. (A. W. Logue, 1998, 86-89)

Preference of milk and milk products differ depending on genetic basis. Northern Europeans use the large amount of milk and dairy products like cheese and butter while the Chinese consume no milk. Besides, lactose intolerance is a common ill-

ness which reduces people from liking milk and dairy products. It is involved in lactase that is responsible for digesting sugar in milk. Some people have insufficient lactase and leads to being uninterested in milk. (A. W. Logue, 1998, 90-93)

2.2 Factors influence preferences

There are two types of influence on food preference: genes and environmental contributions. In genetic basis, Marvin Zuckerman has introduced sensation seeking – ‘the tendency to seek out new or unusual experience. His study showed that people has high sensation seeking tend to prefer spicy, sour and crunchy food. Since sensation seeking is heritable, those preferences can be inherited. Furthermore, Henry C. Lindgren has found that food and drinks preference increase by age. Older persons have less dislike food than younger people. This results by declining the taste sensitivity. So the less old people taste, the less food they dislike. (A. W. Logue, 1998, 90-93)

However, it is undeniable that food preference depends significantly on the environment such as culture, socioeconomic classes. For instance, people who come from the same classes in the same culture tend to have the same food preference. Bennett G. Galef has come up with ‘sufficient mechanisms’ who could transmit the food preference to others. To be clearer, Sibylle K. Escalona made the research which found out that babies prefer the same juice as the baby sisters. The explanation is that babies could see the facial expression of baby sisters and imitate. Similarly, children prefer the same food as parents do, and adults tend to eat the food that is eaten by the member from classes they wish to belong. (A. W. Logue, 1998, 115-118)

Additional, following the A.W. Logue research people tend to prefer familiar food which they have seen or tasted. It is defined as neophobia - a fear of new things. Another theory is that human have experience of nutrition in food during the history, and they tend to select familiar food which provide all nutrition they need. In

contrast of preference, food aversion can be raised and last long due to the illness experience and taste individual perception. (A. W. Logue, 1998, 96-111)

2.3 Models of choice

Scientists believed that choice is involved in the human evolution. Starting from preference, a human considers the food's source to optimize energies to get food. Nowadays, there are two acceptable models of food choice: the matching law, and optimal foraging theory.

The matching law illustrated choice between frequencies, amounts and delays of reinforcement. The law stated that 'organisms match their choices of foods in proportion to the distribution of the foods available (reinforcers)'. For example, a hunter needs turkeys for his family. He knows turkeys visit his apple orchard once an hour and visit the field twice per hour. Following the theory, the hunter should choose stay twice as much time in field than in the apple orchard because it maximizes his possibility to get turkey. Besides, this theory also defines two types of food choices: self-control and impulsiveness. While self-control is type of option waiting for more food availability but larger, impulsiveness is a choice of direct receiving food but smaller amount. (A. W. Logue, 1998, 124-128)

The optimal foraging theory starts with the definition of foraging – wandering in search of food or other provisions. It explained the organisms make the choice so that they can maximize the energy intake and minimize energy output. This model includes three elements. Firstly, it is specialized in choice of food aspect. Secondly, it uses energy as a scale to compare the choices. Thirdly, it assumed that organisms have a limit to forage optimally. The limit can be by its own characteristics for example ability to get food, remember the previous food location or other performance need for their survival. This model also proposed that organisms should only choose the 'risk option' when it is sufficient to keep from dying. From that, it leads to the results that an organism sometimes chooses the small

amount of food instead of waiting for a larger amount. This theory can be applied to different species. (A. W. Logue, 1998, 129-140)

There are still many arguments between the matching law and the optimal foraging theory these days. While the first model has trouble with explaining the exchangeable food, the second one always need to measure energy which is impossible. However, both of them are suitable to contribute food choice behavior.

3 INTRODUCTION OF WINE TASTING

Nowadays, wine tasting is not only an art but also a science. Producers are trying to get the better flavors in their wine. Tasters are trying to choose and taste the best out of the bottle. Recently, judging a good bottle of wine include these factors: odors, taste and mouth feel, and appearance.

3.1 Introduction of odors

The odor of wine is the most important in tasting wine. In science, it comes from two air ways – direct to nose and indirect through the mouth. Only some of odorants which reach the olfactory patches are absorb by the mucus, normally 5-10%, and maximum 20% with strong sniffs. Inside each nasal septum, there are a thin layer of tissues which contains 10 million of receptor neurons, supporting and basal cells. The olfactory receptor neurons which have odor binding proteins are specialized in response to aroma. The detections happen at the top of these neurons. It continues to basal cells to the special brain areas called olfactory bulb and then to the taste, odor and visual centers of the brain intermingle. (Ronald S Jackson 2002: 42 - 44)

To air breathing animals, odorants must be volatile, strongly hydrophobic (fat soluble) and weakly polar (water soluble). They can be divided into different chemical groups. The ones in the same group can be reduce their odors if they are together or even create other unrelated odors while odorants from different groups can detain each other. This is one of the reasons why people smell differently in wine tasting. The more components the wine has, the more difficulty taster can recognize odors. Therefore, recognizing odors in wines is difficult. However, odors that people have an experience of easier to recall than others through description. So tasters can gain their experiences through trying more wines. On average, human can smell about 100 odors in wine. (Ronald S Jackson, 2002: 45)

In wine area, odors are divided into three groups: undesirable odors (off odors), odors from grape (aroma) and odors created from yeast and bacteria fermentation (bouquet).

These are several types of off-odors. Robert Jackson defined 'Oxidation produces a flat, acetaldehyde off-odor with increasing the color depth in white wine, or a brackish tint in red wines'. It results from trespassing oxide into bottle. Sulfur odor is produced by yeast. It makes the burnt-match odor. Diacetyl above threshold can give the buttery odor to wine. Moldy odor is another off-odor. It results from growing fungus on the cork or oak barrel. There are more off-odors such as mousy, raisined, cooked (fermented at high temperature), stemmy (presence of green stems during fermentation), rancio (old oxidized red wine), and other unexplained off-odors like rubbery and weedy. (Ronald S Jackson, 2002: 64)

Aroma is one of the most important factors in wines. Wine has distinct aroma not only depending on type of grapes but also on weather, and cropping level. Some grapes have their special aroma, such as bell pepper of Cabernet Sauvignon, spicy character of Gerurztraminer. However, it is difficult to recognize the grape's aroma since oak constituents and making wine process are combined.

Finally, there are several types of bouquet. Fermentation bouquet which appears in young wine usually is very yeasty. Oak aging bouquet is the odor which is created by grape aroma and oak during fermentation. Bottle bouquet indicates the harmony, complexity and mellowing of a bottle of wine. (Marian W Baldy, 1997: 38)

Nowadays, wine aroma wheel which provides all of odors has been useful equipment to understand odors in wines.

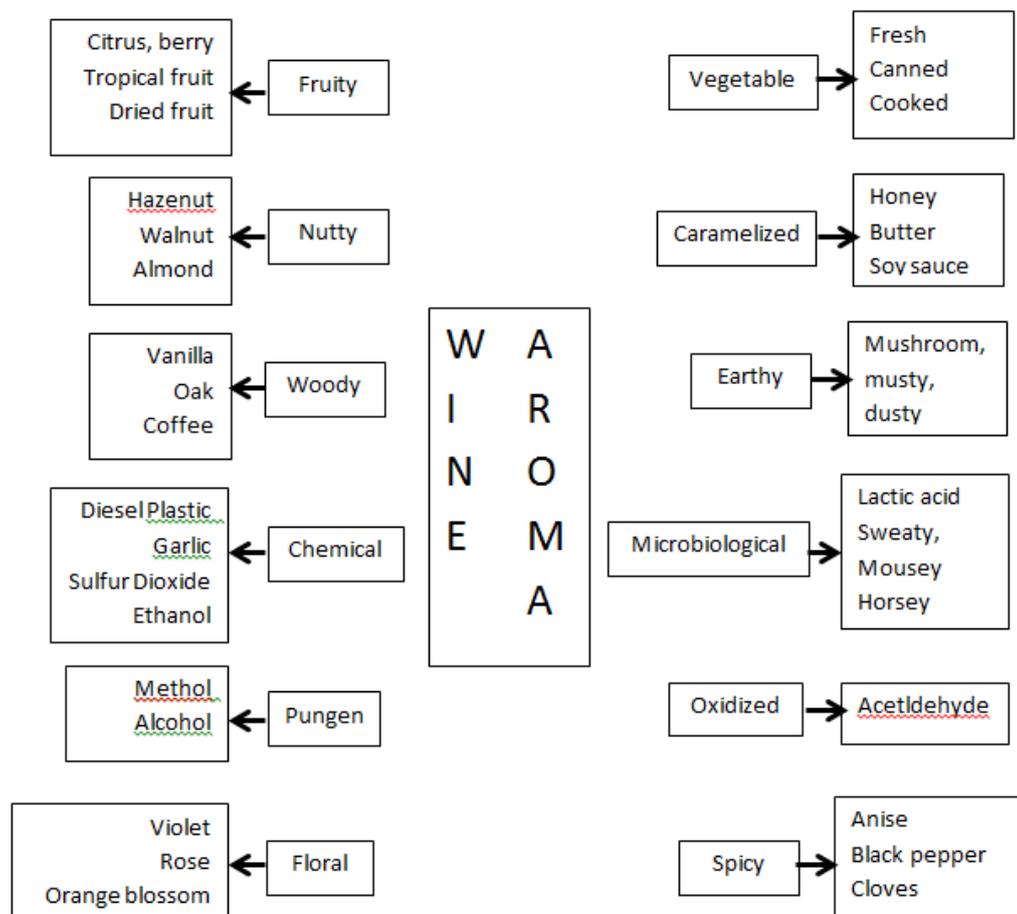


Figure 1: Wine aroma (Mariah W Baldy, 1997:32)

3.2 Taste and mouth-feel

Taste comprises sweetness, sourness, saltiness, and bitterness (figure 1). Sweet sources in wine come from glucose and fructose. Phenolic, associated with tannin, creates bitter. Some acids such as tartaric, lactic, acetic acid create the sourness in wine. Saltiness is rare to be found in wine. (Marian W Baldy, 1997: 26)

Another part of taste in wine is the mouth-feel. It is created by distributing of tri-geminal fibers throughout the oral cavity. In winetasting, there are a few of mouth feel. Firstly, 'astringency is a complex sensation inducing a dry, puckery, rough, dust-in-the-mouth' (Ronald Jackson). Tannin associated with salivary protein lead

to the reduction of lubrication of saliva. The precipitation of tannin dries the cells on the surface. Precipitated salivary proteins coat the teeth. All of these create astringency feeling. This is one of the slowest and intensive mouth senses. It can take up to 15 seconds. However, protein from food can reduce the level of astringency. (Ronald S Jackson, 2002: 94)

Secondly, burning feeling is also the result from the response of wines' heat. It can be from the high sugar content alcohol. In addition, the mouth feels cool when drinking chilled white or sparkling wines. Finally, the prickle feeling is created by bursting bubbles of wine containing 3%-5% carbon dioxide. These bubbles reduce the sweetness from sugar but increase the sourness from acid. (Ronald S Jackson, 2002: 94)

A taster usually uses terms to describe the wine tastes. For example acidity is tartness in wine. Flat, tart and green indicate the ascending of acidity. Balance means the equality between sugar and acid. (Marian W Baldy, 1997: 26)

3.3 Appearance

When opening a bottle of wine, tasters can presume the quality by looking its appearance. Appearance includes the clearance of wine. The liquid should be clear. Any dull liquid can appear unexpected elements such as protein haze (clumps of dissolved protein), phenolic haze, casse (insoluble metal element including iron or copper) or microbial spoilage. (Marian W. Baldy, 1997: 34)

In sparkling wine, it is important to observe bubbles. The traditional method champenoise technique leads to small and long lasting bubbles which indicate a good sparkling wine.

Tasters can also look at the tears which are streams left on the glass when tasters swirl the glass of wine. Because the alcohol evaporates fast, the liquid stick with the curve edge of glass until gravity affect it greater. Then liquid which is mainly

water drops down and creates tears. Therefore the higher alcohol content is, the thinner tears are. (Marian W. Baldy, 1997: 35)

Finally, the color of wine also indicates the its characteristic. White wine has mainly 5 distinct colors: colorless, light yellow green, light straw yellow, medium yellow, and brown. The darker the wine is, the sweeter it get. The wine which has more aging will have deeper hue. However, different tasters can perceive differently because these colors are much closer to each other. To make simple, red wine color is divided into three parts: 'hue, saturation (greyness), brightness (transmit light)'. Dark shade is symbol of rich flavor. 'Rose wines usually have pale pink, cherry or raspberry color with hint of blue'. A hint of purple can cause by high pH in wine. (Ronald S Jackson, 2002: 24 -28)

3.4 Differences in winetasting

Tasting wine is a process which can give different consequences in a variety of tasters. There are two main reasons: physiological factors and psychological factors. Physiological factors involve the human's instinct. For example, the sweetness is perceived differently, one wine can be medium dry for one person but sweet for another. The same fact happens with other odors and flavors. It is called thresholds. Another physiological reason is anosmia which means that some people cannot detect a certain smell. Finally, the objective facts also can alter the human's sense. African leave, *Gymnema sylvestre*, for instance can deceive the sweetness flavor.

Psychological reasons are the mistakes of the human mind. Tasters can have their own opinions about wines before tasting which lead to imprecise judgments. Or the first and last bottles of wine usually give the most impressed to tasters. Tasters feel the wine better than it is if the previous wine was bad in quality. Finally, all tasting experience, memory and motivation can affect the tasters. (Marian W. Baldy, 1997: 27 - 30)

4 VIETNAMESE FLAVOR AND BEVERAGE

In Asia, different ingredients are used to create flavors for food. Saltiness is from salted fish, soy sauce, dried oyster, black bean paste, and fish sauce. Honey, barbecue, mirin (Japanese rice wine) and plum sauce create the sweetness while lemon, vinegar and tamarind make the sourness. Especially, bitter taste also can appear in dishes with petai bean (commonly used in Malaysian and Indonesian cuisine, it is usually bright green and almond-like shape); or bittergourd (with oblong shape, its texture is similar with cucumber but bitter) (Edwin Soon, 2009)

In addition, Asian dishes have other flavors which are problem to combine with wine. At first, many places use chili creating spicy which alcohol accentuate. Secondly, fermented food for example shrimp paste and kimchi are so intensive that it can affect the palate to taste wine. Finally, the sour taste from tamarind, pomelo, or vinegar which are used a lot in Asian dishes can make wines become tart and flat. (Edwin Soon, 2009)

Asian food has a variety of texture. It can be light from steamed fish, heavy from coconut curry, coarse from peanut sauce, fatty from barbecued pork or crunchy from fried rice. (Edwin Soon, 2009)

Like Western cuisine, Asian cuisine is divided into different areas. To focus on the topic, in this chapter, China and Vietnam cuisine will be chosen.

4.1 China and Vietnam food culture

Chinese have a very long history of food including herbs and animal parts. Food influences rapidly in Chinese daily and spirit culture. They consider food as an important source for healthiness. The common concept of food is the balance between Yin and Yang, hot and cold, dry and wet. For example, in hot weather, Chinese drink cool teas and eat cold food. (Barton, Arlen Thaker, Aruna, 2012, 137-139)

Chinese cuisine is divided into five different areas. North China comprises two famous areas Peking and Shandong. The main foods here are sources of carbohydrate since they mainly grow wheat. Therefore wheat filling dumpling, lamb and muttons are most famous foods in this area. East China is focused on Shanghai and its surrounding. Oil, sugar, sweet bean paste and rice wine are used commonly but not garlic. The main idea of cooking is bringing the natural flavors from ingredients. In contrast, Central China is famous as 'spicy zone'. The known cities are Sichuan, Hunan and Yunnan. In this area, smoking and barbecuing are popular methods of cooking. Besides, noodles are more common than rice. Western China, with Xinjiang province, is familiar for kebabs with lamb or mutton, flatbread (with onion and cumin seeds). Finally, Southern Chinese cuisine is known as Cantonese cuisine. This region has the finest cooking in China with full of technique and variety. Rice is necessary in meals. Deep frying, slow simmering and long steaming are popular in cooking method. Seasoning is not highly used but delicate. Instead, dipping sauces are more common for instance soy, white pepper and black bean. Besides, in the south, Hakka is also famous for liver, kidney and stir – fried technique. (Barton, Arlen Thaker, Aruna, 2012, 142-144)

Vietnamese cuisine is influenced by Chinese cuisine such as Yin and Yang concept but it also has differences. Vietnamese like complex flavor for example the combination of sweetness, sourness and spiciness. Therefore, they usually use tamarind, pineapple and galangal. The popular methods of cooking are grilled, stir – fry, braise and roast. Vegetable and fruit are widely used. Fish and seafood are consumed enormously since the country belong the long coast. However, milk and dairy products are not eaten popular. The most famous dish in the world is 'pho' (noodle soup with rich, clear broth). (Barton, Arlen Thaker, Aruna, 2012, 170).

In addition, in the sixteenth century, after the Southward Movement, The Cham brought the Indian, Thai and Malay spices for curried dishes. French came in eighteenth brought the Europe influences into Vietnamese cuisine. They got fa-

miliar with coffee, bread, butter, pastries and wine. (Mark W, MacLeod, Thi Dieu Nguyen, 2001, 118)

4.2 Notable ingredients used in the restaurant in Finland

Most of the Chinese and Vietnamese restaurants in Finland follow the wok type – the most common food of their cultures. Therefore, besides rice as the main dishes, they use also egg noodle (chow mien) which is made of wheat flour and egg. Local vegetable such as broccoli, cabbage, carrots, and squash are cooked with bamboo shot.

The sauce is the most distinct in Asian cuisine. The common ones in the restaurant is soy sauce made of fermented soy bean. It is used to add salty in dishes. Additional, oyster sauce is dark, thick and salty sauce which is made from oyster and soy bean. It is famous for wine killer but it is useful for adding flavors in wok dishes. Spring rolls are famous nowadays to dip with sweet and chili sauce that is a savory and sweet sauce combined with a bit sun dried chili pepper. Hoisin sauce is dark, sweet and spicy. It is made from soya bean with garlic, sugar, and other ingredients. Finally, fish sauce is made from fermented fish with salt. It is used rarely but becomes more and more popular in Finland to add saltiness in dishes.

4.3 Popular beverages in Vietnam

The custom of using alcohol in Vietnam is for relaxation and entertainment in a social meeting between male groups. Drinking is not modest and proper for women. However, this custom has changed gradually recently. Rice based liquors and beer are consumed widely nowadays. Beers have become more popular because they are suitable for tropical climate and spicy cuisine. (Mark W, MacLeod, Thi Dieu Nguyen, 2001, 142)

The newest research conducted by InfoQ Vietnam (marketing research company) about using beer illustrates how popular Vietnamese combine beer with their dinner. The research took place in October 2013. 2290 respondents in the age of 18 –

55 aged was interview. 38,06% of respondents drank beer in small restaurants. 36% of them drank in fine dining restaurants. Clearly, beer is the most common beverage in restaurant in Vietnam. However, its role in table is to refreshing the palate between dishes.

5 COMBINATION STRATEGIES BETWEEN FOOD AND WINE

There are many rules and strategies for matching wine and food. For example, caviar goes with champagne, California Chardonnay combines with lobster or Cabernet Sauvignon pairs with beef and lamb. However, except for these, there are no other such a compulsory combination. People have their own different tastes and interests. These are just some recommendations so that the food and wine may be taste better when they go well together. (Harrington Robert, 2008, 107)

5.1 History of combination of wine and food

Wine and food has been combined in daily meals for a long time. Romans and Greeks already considered a particular wine matched with their dishes. In medieval time, wine could not spread so far since the lack of techniques of preserving wine. In 1700s, winemakers started to add distilled spirit to keep wines better, and science and technology have been developed to stabilize the quality of wine. (Jackson S Robert, 2002, 99 – 100)

5.2 Scales of combination in food and wine

The combination is divided into five levels: no match, refreshment, neutral, good match and synergistic match. No match indicates one type of food do not pair with one kind of wine at all. For example, Chinese hot and sour soup cannot match with young Australian Cabernet Sauvignon since the wine will increase the astringent and bitter of the soup. Refreshment means wine only plays a cleanse role such as after eating spicy food. Neutral happens with large variety of wines and foods which do not have distinct features. Good match shows the good combination of wine and food. However, the better one is when they can create the incredible new effect called synergistic match. (Harrington Robert, 2008, 9-10)

Based on the direct effect of food and wine, elements are divided into three categories. The components are the basic perceptions of the tongue such as sweet, sour, bitter, salty. Textures are the mouth feeling such as creasy and dry in food related to cooking method or body and tannin in wine. Finally, flavors are odors in wine and foods. Depending on the level of perception, Robert Harrington introduced the sensory pyramid. Components are easiest to recognize so they are in the bottom while flavors are complex and difficult to perceive therefore it is on the top of pyramid. (Robert J. Harrington, 2008, 11-13)

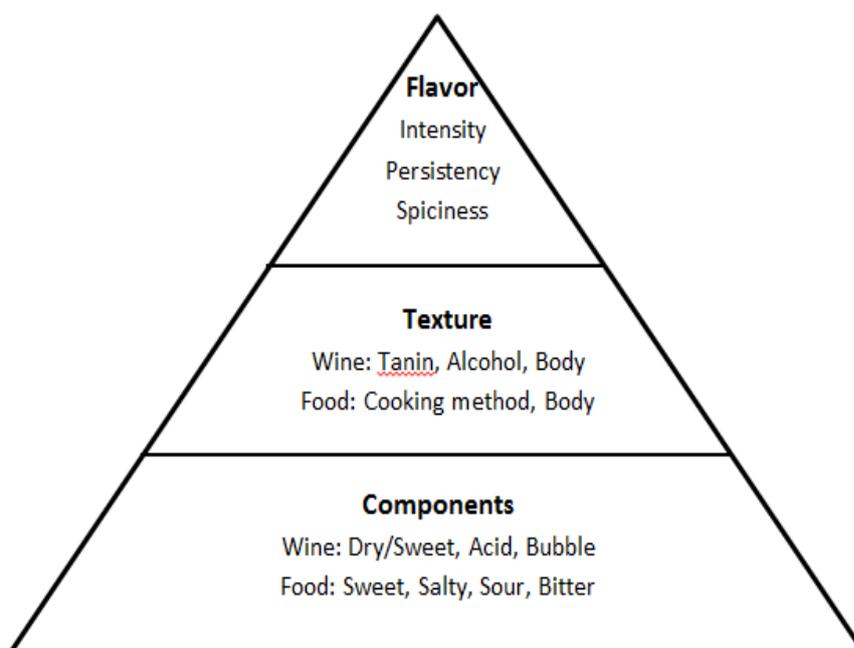


Figure 2: Hierarchy of tasting food and wine (Robert J. Harrington, 2008:136)

5.3 Combination strategies

According to the scale of combinations, there are three levels to combine food and wine. The most common way is paring food and wine depending on their components. The hardest way is combining their flavor.

5.3.1 Components

Saltiness of food emphasizes the tannin level, bitterness, and heat of alcohol. High salty food can only pair with no tannin and fruity like Riesling, sweet wine like Port or high effervescence such as sparkling wine. In contrast, bitterness accentuates the sense of tannin. It usually appears in some dishes which have ingredients such as citrus fruit, Brussels sprouts, and bitter gourd. However, wine with high effervescence can reduce the level of food bitterness. For the sweet taste, dry or slightly sweet wines combine with food better than sweet wine. But the sweetness of food should be always less than the wine. The reason is that the sweetness from wine can increase others characteristics in food like saltiness and bitter, but the sweetness in food overemphasize the acidity in wine. (Harrington Robert, 2008, 103-106)

5.3.2 Texture in food and wine

Robert Harrington indicated ‘The overall food body is a texture element based on your perception of the overall power or body of the prepared dish’. It may include the viscosity, richness and toughness of food.

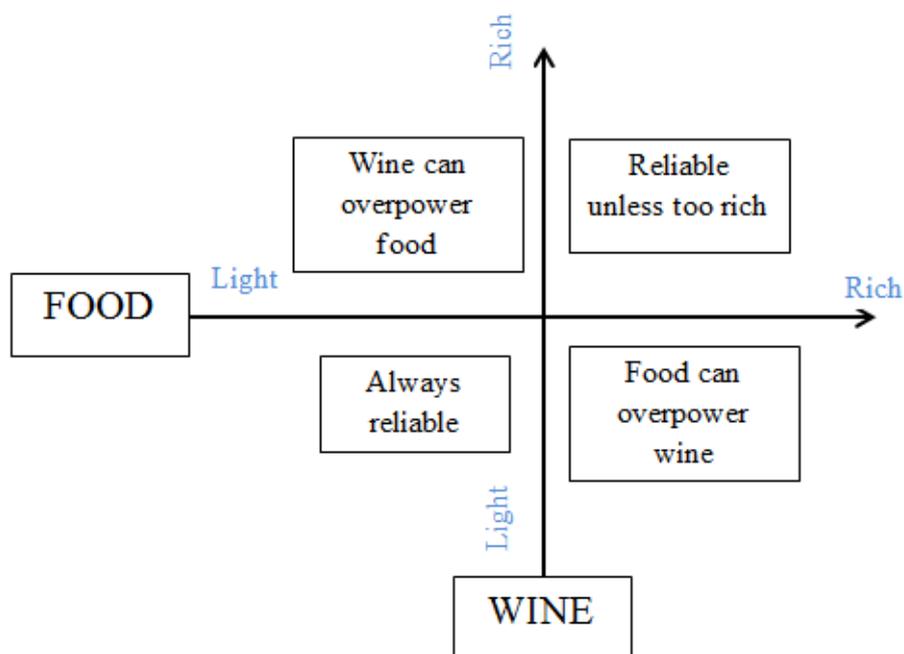


Figure 3: Texture combination of food and wine (Linda Johnson-Bell, 1990:60)

To match wine with food, Linda Johnson-Bell has indicated ‘weight of food is the substance or heaviness of the food or of the dish’ (Figure 3). Food weight is influenced by ingredients, method of cooking and sauces. Usually with the same ingredients, steaming, poaching, boiling and frying create light weighted food while braising, casseroles, stewing, grilling and roasting generate the heavy weighted food. In addition, sauces can change the food body. A sauce made with butter, cream, or egg yolk always adds in more to the food weight while oil – based sauce which is quite light do not add any more weight. The theory is that light bodied wines go with light food, full body wines go with heavy weight food. For example, game meat should be enjoyed with a bottle of full body Cabernet Sauvignons wine. (Johnson–Bell Linda, 1999, 60-62)

Most of ingredients which coat inside mouth like eggs and chocolate can reduce the sense of tannin in wine. Moreover, tannin can quickly refresh fat-animal. Therefore, it can combine well with cream, cheese and fat in meat. For example, spaghetti carbonara can perfectly match with high tannin red wine. However, high tannin wines can taste astringent and bitter. Therefore, they should be avoided to drink with fish dishes because they can bring the metallic taste in fish dishes.

Acidity in wine can be described as a squeeze of lemon in food. It can deduce the fattiness of food especially vegetable's fat and makes the palate cleansing and refresh. Therefore, wine with high acidity should match with rich fatty food. For instance, foods including olive oil are pairing well with high acidity wines. On the contrary, low fat food should be with low acidity so others characteristic such as aging, tannin can be tasted. In addition, high acidic food should go with high acidity wine because acidity of food can make wine taste flatter. This leads to the fact that wines are difficult to combine with food using vinegar, lemon, lime, and yogurt respectively. (Harrington Robert, 2008, 106-110)

Level of alcohol in wine also affects the taste of food. High alcohol wine should be avoided with spicy food but go well with chocolate. In addition, oak-aging wine can be drunk well with not only some rich cooking method such as grilling, broiling, roasting and braising; but also heavier texture ingredients like grains or legumes. (Harrington Robert, 2008, 156-158)

5.3.3 Flavor

Wine flavor has been indicated in wine aroma wheels which include fruity, nutty, vegetable, earthy and etc. To describe food flavors, there are similar types. The most recent flavor has been discovered is umami. It is created from fermented products like soya sauce, or from mushroom, tomatoes. Smoky favor can come from smoked ingredients and cooking. Additional, garlic, trout, beans, and grain can bring the earthy flavors. Besides, there are fruity flavor, vegetable flavor, spicy flavor and floral flavor. In order to match well, the flavor type of food and

wine should be similar or totally different. For example, to combine contrasting flavor type, spicy food usually increases the astringency and reduces the sweetness of wines. Therefore, these dishes should be combined with fruity, young and low tannic red or white wine. And to match the same group of flavor, smoky food like grilled swordfish can pair well with fruity wine. (Harrington Robert, 2008, 110-113)

Robert Harrington has introduced flavor intensity and flavor persistency. Flavor intensity is the level of power of the prominent flavors. It is divided the scale for favor intensity.

- No flavor: the sensation fades immediately
- Weak flavor: the tastes are perceived but not well
- Moderately strong: perception is at a intermediate level
- Strong: Sensations are well recognized
- Powerful: tastes are high and emphasized

He also indicated 'Flavor persistency is when the flavor continues to be perceptible for a period of time after swallowing'. To pair wine and food well, flavor intensity and flavor persistency of both wine and food should be equal. Otherwise the lower one will lose itself the flavor.

5.4 Recommendation for wine pairing with Vietnamese dishes

Vietnamese dishes are usually combination saltines, sweetness, sourness, spiciness and umami. Since, spiciness emphasizes alcohol content, low alcohol content should be chosen. Additional, wine should be low tannin so umami do not bring the metallic tastes. For the sourness, wine could be light, crisp and tart to sharper the sourness of dishes. Dishes are a bit sweet and spicy so the fruity and medium sweet wines are better. Because of much vegetables, wheat and rice; oak-aging wines are good with Vietnamese dishes.

In conclusion, there are many recommendations that Vietnamese dishes drink the best with white wine for example German Rieslings and sparkling wine. However, they also pair well with light, fruity, low tannic red wine these days. For some heavy and fatty dishes like roasted pork, Zinfandel and some of Rhone reds is a good choice. In Finland generally, or in Vaasa particularly, spring rolls have become one of the most popular Vietnamese snacks. White wine like Sauvignon Blanc, or rose would be recommended.

6 VIETNAMESE WINE – DALAT WINE

6.1 History and the products

In 1990s, most wines consumed were from Bordeaux France, there was no local wine in Vietnam. Based on market demand, the company Ladofoods made research and development. In 1999, the first wine was launched and Dalat wine became the first and only local wine in Vietnam.

Before 2006, the company used mostly table grape from Middle Vietnam to make wine. Therefore, the quality could not be competitive with oversea wines. In 2007, Ladofoods invested to import French grapes (Cabernet, Merlot, Syrah and Caladoc) and grew them in Dalat city which has suitable cool weather.

Nowadays, Dalat winery has developed more than 15 types of red and white wines with different types of grapes, for example Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Chardonnay. Products are divided into three line of quality: A, B and C.

6.2 Strengths and weakness of Vietnamese wine in restaurants

Although, the Vietnamese wine company is new in its industry, it has many advantages. Due to the specific weather in the Vietnamese mountains, it is always cool about 15-20 degree Celsius, no snow in the winter and not much heat in the summer. Grapes can be harvested two times per year instead of one time in France. Therefore, the costs are reduced and the quality increases which helps the wines become competitive against other import wines.

In addition, the company received much support from Vietnamese government since this is the only and most potential local wine. This includes support for importing grapes, tax and legal costs.

The Vietnamese has got more familiar with the Western culture including wines. Nowadays, a bottle of wine is a common gift when Vietnamese visit friends, espe-

cially in New Years'time or other ceremonies. As a result, the local market become bigger and bigger (about 10-15 million liters per year).

Finally, the company has made many researches on Vietnamese taste and favour in wine, so these wines have been made to fit with Vietnamese and dishes in specific. As a result, it is easier to choose for Asian food than for Western style wine.

However, Dalat wine still has many disadvantages. Since the wine industry in Vietnam is so young, the wine making process is still on the way to complete to get the distinctive taste which is the most important quality in wine. Secondly, the raising areas are still small (about 15 ha) which are incapable to produce large amount. Finally, the marketing and distribution channels are still limited. Dalat wine is mostly sold in supermarkets and wine shops but rarely found in restaurants.

7 RESEARCH METHOD

After the theoretical framework has been presented, this chapter will introduce the research applied to the topic. The following chapter will explain the details of the type of research, the process of research as well as the limitation.

7.1 Quantitative research

‘Quantitative method is explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed between mathematically based methods’ (Muijs, Daniel, 2004, 1-3). In addition, quantitative research is an opportunity to reach the large number of interviewees. From that, the result discovers how their opinions and attitudes are. (Burn & Bush 2003, 271) Therefore, this research is based on the quantitative method – survey research. It concentrates on identifying the characteristics of the sample such as their attitudes, and preferences, so descriptive survey is chosen.

Data is collected by a questionnaire which is designed with 15 different types of question. It is tested before giving to interviewees to ensure no misunderstanding of the questions. The main area in the research is Vaasa. The sample is non-probability. The target group is that people have been tasted Asian dishes in Vaasa.

7.2 Implementation of the research

The survey was conducted from 1th August – 30th September. Due to the sample, the survey is implemented in both direct and indirect ways. Firstly, the questionnaire was sent mainly by e-form to students of Tourism and Restaurant Management in Vaasa University of Applied Science. Secondly, the questionnaire was delivered to customers of four Asian restaurants in Vaasa. Finally, the researcher asked friends and relatives to fill out the questionnaire.

There were 100 questionnaires were distributed around Vaasa and 68 of them were collected. However three questionnaires were not filled completely. There-

for the sample consisted of 65 interviewees. The survey was analyzed by Excel and SPSS software.

7.3 Reliability/ Validity

Reliability is the consistency of the measure through over the time or in different context, while validity is the accurate of the research. (Brotherton, Bob, 2008, 100)

The validity of the research depends on different factors. Firstly, the questionnaire was tested and changed before sending to respondents to make sure there was no misunderstanding in the language. Secondly, it was delivered only to those interviewees who have tasted Asian food in Vaasa so they have already the general picture of Asian dishes here.

The research is reliable because the research was conducted the same method in the whole process. All of the respondents received the questionnaires which were same structures. Moreover, respondents could choose when and how long to answer.

8 THE RESULT OF SURVEY

This chapter will present the findings of the research. It is divided in three parts including the background of respondents, their favorite in Asian food and their interest in Asian wine.

8.1 Background of respondents

In this research, male respondents account for 25% and the rest were female. The largest group of respondents is from Finland (66%), the second is Vietnamese (8%), the rest is from all over the world like Northern Africa (Nigeria, Ghana); Europe (Spanish, Germany, Russia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Poland); Asia (Nepalese, Chinese) and Australia. Therefore, the survey is collected information from various people 'opinion living in Vaasa.

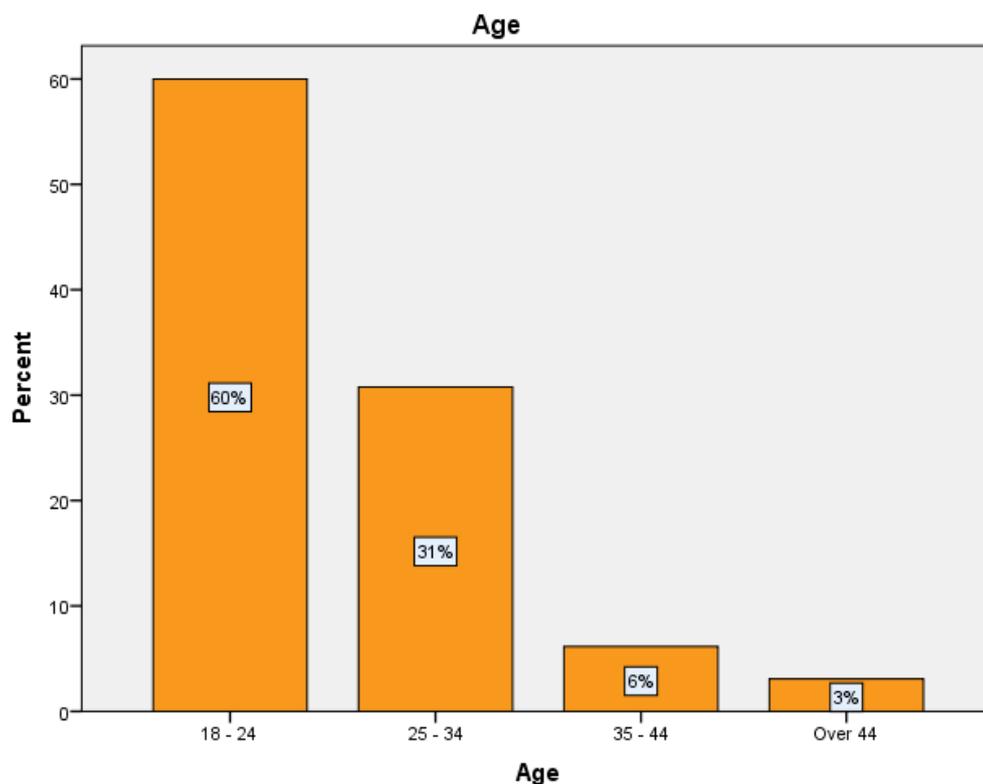


Figure 4: The age of respondents

The respondents were divided into 4 different groups. The largest group is from 18 - 24 years old, which made up 60% of respondents. The second group is 25 - 34 years old (31%). The third group (6%) is from 35 - 44 years old. Over 44 years old is the last group.

8.2 The respondents' favorite in Asian food

In this part, the research concerned about the popularity and the Asian dishes among Vaasa citizens. In Vaasa nowadays, there are a few types of Asian restaurants from China, Thailand, India, Japan and Vietnam

With the question of 'in which Asian restaurants have you eaten?' These are answers.

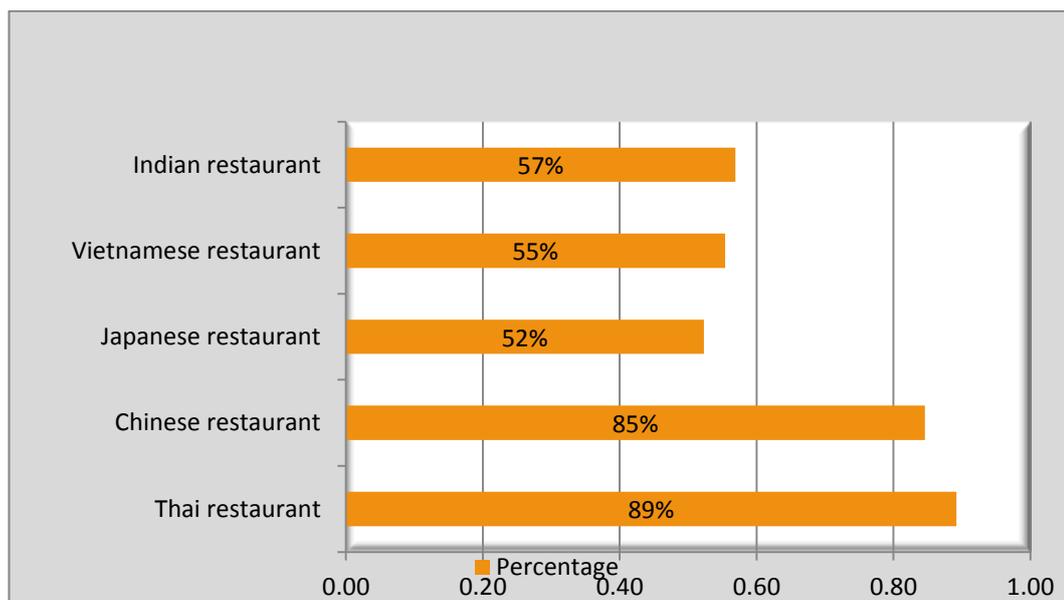


Figure 5: The popularity of the Asian restaurants

Thai food is the most popular which 89 % of respondents have tasted. On the second place is Chinese restaurant. Over 50% of them have eaten Indian, Vietnamese and Japanese foods which share the third place. In addition, four of the respondents also have also tasted Nepalese food (Figure 5). Furthermore, some respond-

ents added Indonesian, Philippine, Bangladeshi and Korean foods. It is obvious that Asian food has very popular in Vaasa and Finland.

In order to find out, which type of Asian food is the most popular one food in Vaasa, the scale of top Asian food are researched.

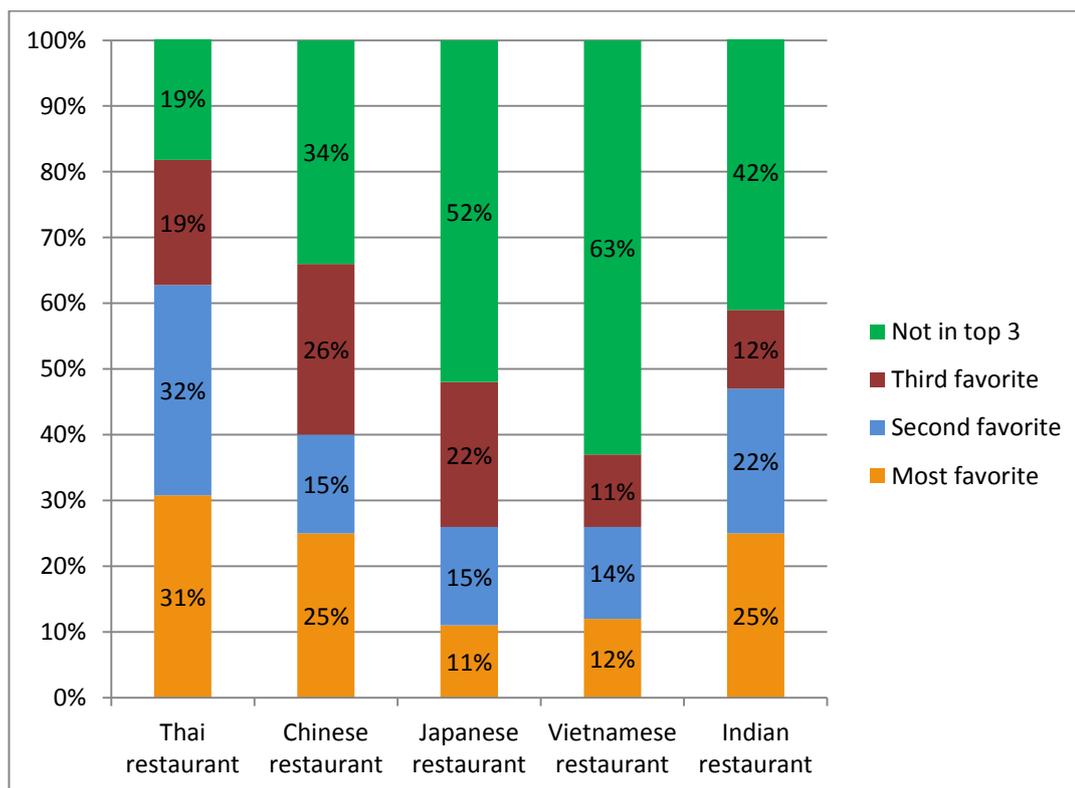


Figure 6: The respondents' favorite Asian restaurant

According to the graph, Thai restaurants in Vaasa are ranked as the most favorite restaurant with above 30% and the second favorite restaurant with 32% of people who have eaten Thai food. It showed that Thai is not only the most popular but also the most favorite Asian food in Vaasa since more people have tasted Chinese food, it also took the second position with more than 60% answers in top 3 most favorite restaurants. However, Indian foods surprisingly has a high percentage of number 1 (25% of people have eaten Indian food). Since it is newest type of Asian restaurant in Vaasa, it seems to have a huge potential in future. Japanese

restaurant is following and Vietnamese is the last position with 63% of people not ranking in top three.

Regarding the frequency of visiting Asian restaurants, the majority of the interviewees have eaten in Asian restaurants less than once per week (83%). 17% of the respondents have eaten once a week. Unfortunately, there is no respondent ate Asian food more than once a week in this research. This is a disadvantage of the research since respondents did not visit Asian restaurants very often

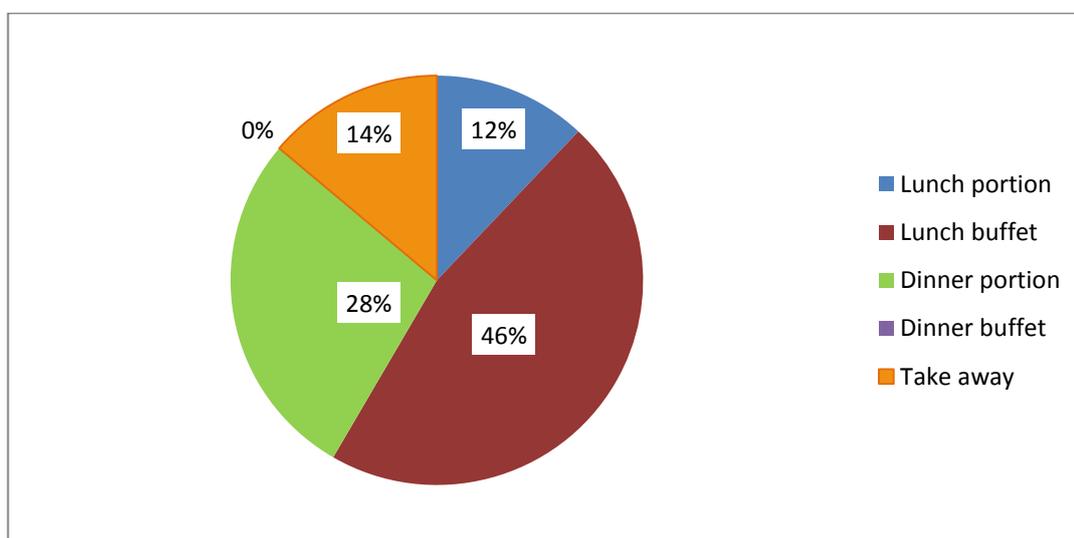


Figure 7: Popular types of Asian meals

It is not surprising that a majority of the respondents have eat mostly Asian food in lunch time, 12% of them ate lunch portion and 46% of them ate lunch buffet. This is the most common time that Finnish eat out and Asian lunch is the trend going in Vaasa since there are a lot of Asian restaurants open at lunch time. 14% of respondents chose to take away. However, 28% of respondents usually ate in the restaurant in the evening which is the time to introduce local beverages together with food.

8.3 Beverage with Asian food

The question is what kinds of drinks the respondents usually choose with the Asian dishes. The answers are divided in ranking the choices from most common to uncommon. In statistic, number 1 represent for the most common choice. The higher the number is the less common the beverage is. Finally, number 5 represent for the uncommon choice.

Table 1: The beverage that respondents chose in the Asian restaurants

Type of drinks	Average point
Water	1.4
Coffee / tea	2.8
Soft drink	3.0
Beer	4.0
Cider	4.5
Red wine	4.4
White wine	4.3
Sparkling wine	4.6

Water is the most common choice with the number of 1.35 (table 1). It means that most of the respondents chose water as the first and second choice. The following choices are coffee and tea with 2.83. Soft drink is in the third position. The rest of alcohol choices have very high average points (over 4). It shows that respondents in this research do not choose any of alcohol beverages in Asian restaurant. Nevertheless, with the open question that what type of beverage they wish to have in Asian restaurant, the answers are very variable. Some answers are the new trend of drinks nowadays like smoothies, Asian juice (sugarcane, kumquat juice) and Asian tea. Some suggestions are local alcohol drinks like local beer, sake or soju and liquor dessert. It indicates that there could be a demand for local beverages from customers.

The reason to choose these drinks have been asked and the answers were not so surprising.

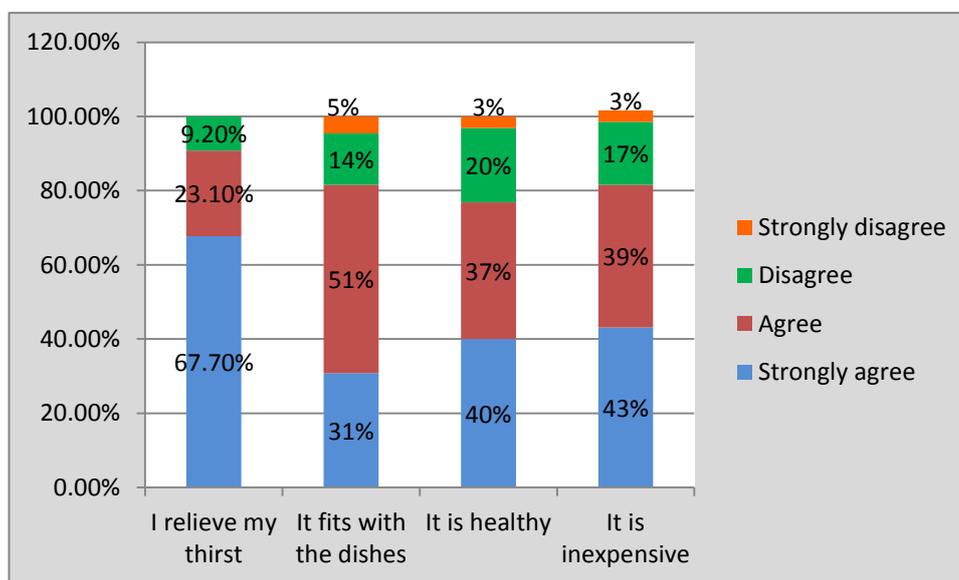


Figure 8: The reason of choosing the beverages

Over 90% of the respondents give as the strongest reason that it relieves their thirst. More than 80% of them think about the price and pairing their food with drinks. Finally 76% of them think about their health (Figure 8). Since water covers all these reasons, it is selected most. Therefore, the challenge is to change customers' habits to new beverages which will be more attractive, they are introduced as a suitable drink for dishes, reasonable price, and good for health.

8.4 Wine habits in Vaasa and the potential opportunities for Asian wine

Figure 9 shows the frequency of drinking wine of respondents in restaurants. Almost half of them sometimes drink wine and 28% rarely drink wine. Particularly, 23% do not drink wine.

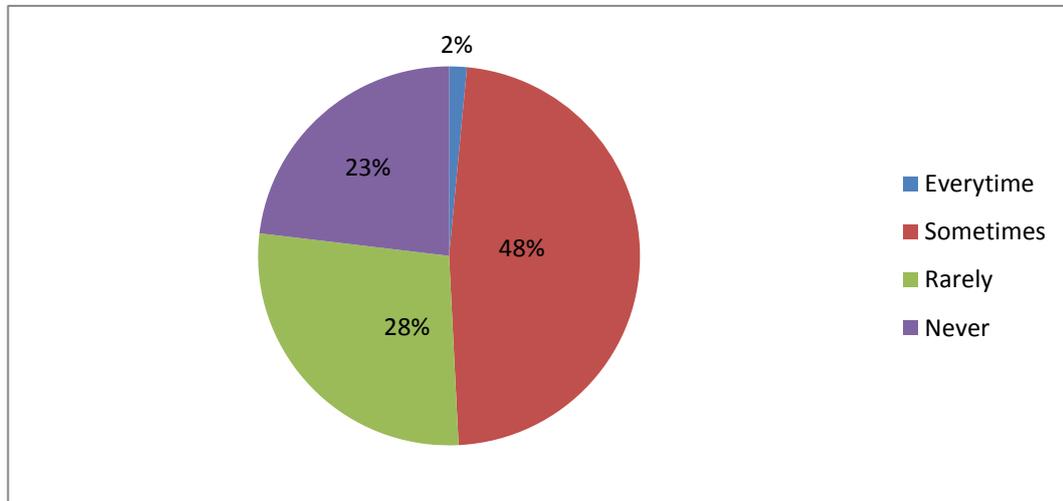


Figure 9: The frequency of ordering wine in restaurants

This research also tries to figure out the price that customers could pay for a glass of wine in restaurants. This will be the good source to consider when Asian restaurant owners introduce wine.

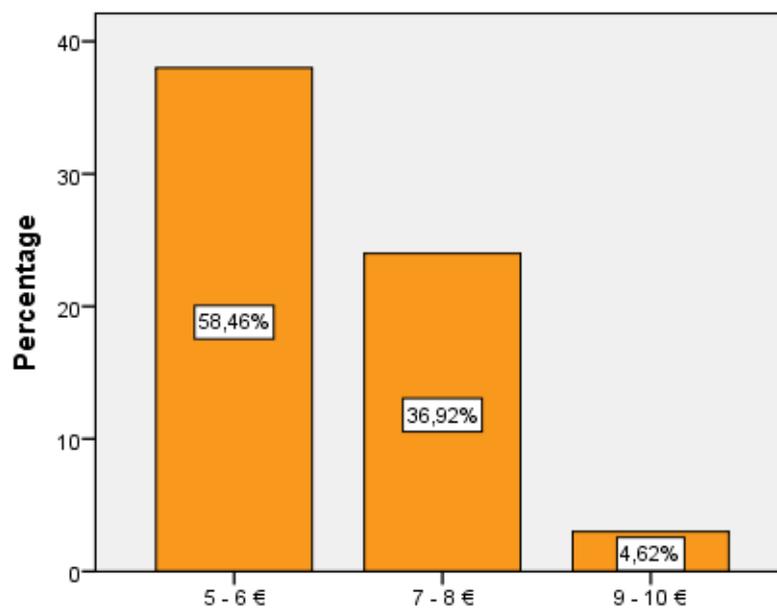


Figure 10: The price that customers are willing to pay for a glass of wine in restaurants

Regarding the wine price, half of respondents are willing to pay 5-6 euro per glass (59%), and only 5% are ready to pay 9-10 euro. Some respondents also mentioned that the price is depending on the quality. Specially, there is one respondent who is willing to pay 12 euro for a glass of good wine.

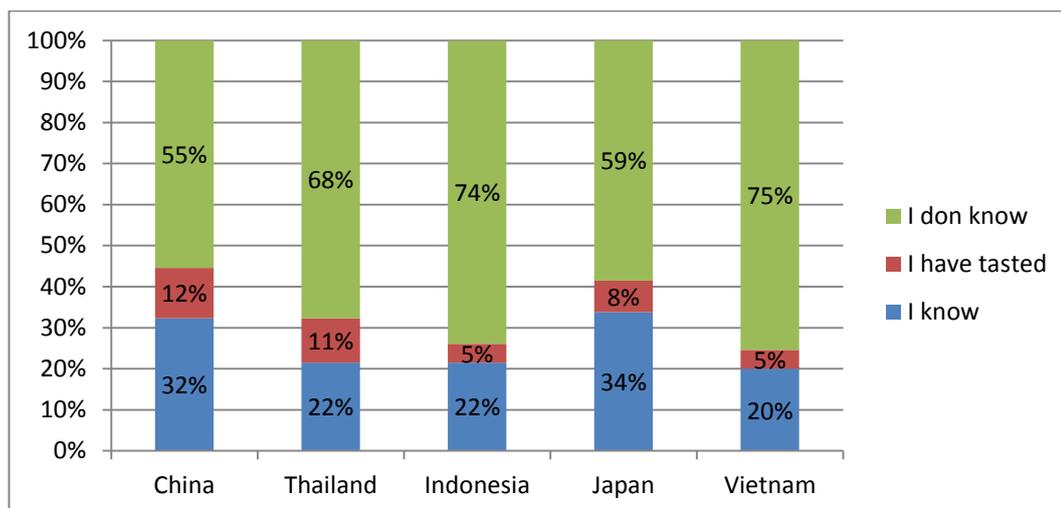


Figure 11: The knowledge of Vaasa citizen about some of Asian wine

It is clear that Asian wine is still unknown to Vaasa's citizen. Chinese and Japanese wines have the best result and over 30% of people were familiar with them. However, Chinese wine has more tasters with 12%, while only 8% has tasted Japanese wine. Since Thailand is very popular tourist attractions, 22% of people know about Thai wine and 10% have tasted it. Indonesian wine and Vietnamese wine are the least result with only 25% of respondents know and tasted (figure 11). To be aware, the knowledge of Vietnamese wine is from the Vietnamese respondents in the research. Therefore, Vietnamese wine is completely new with Finnish and other Vaasa citizens. To conclude, Chinese wine is the most popular Asian wine in Vaasa, Japanese wines are growing very quickly in popularity since they are introduced in Japanese restaurants.

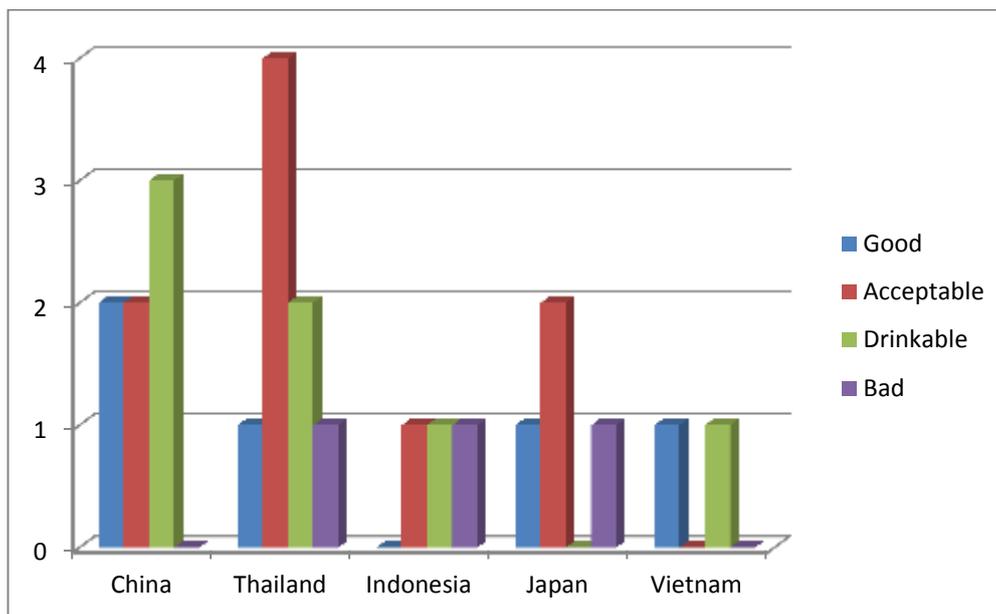


Figure 12: Respondents' opinion about Asian wine

In few of the answers 'I have tasted', the research tried to get the opinion about those wines. Again, Chinese wine prove to be the best Asian wine in Vaasa nowadays all positive answers (2 people said it is good, 2 people said it is acceptable and 3 said it is drinkable). Thai wine is in the second position, 3 people accept the taste and one consider it is a good wine. Similarly, with two acceptable reviews, the third place is Japanese wine. Finally, the last place is Indonesian and Vietnamese wine.

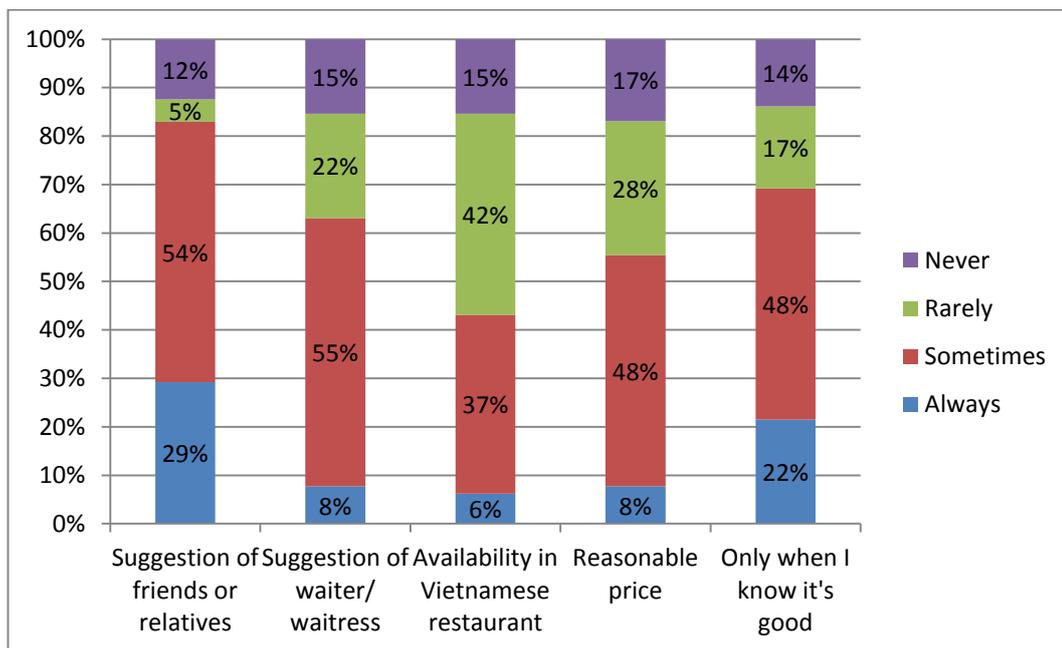


Figure 13: The reasons that customers would choose Vietnamese wine

In order to research the opportunities that people in Vaasa would get interested in buying Asian wine in general or Vietnamese wine in specific, the last question is ‘what would make you buy Vietnamese wine in the restaurants?’ (Figure 13). 29% of the respondents chose always and 54% of them sometimes chose if they get advice from friend and relatives. This seems to be most effective way to introduce a new wine. The remarkable percentage only buy when they know that the Vietnamese wine is good quality (22% of them will always choose the wine they know and 48% will sometimes choose it). With above 55% of positive respondents’ answers, the suggestion from waiter/waitress and reasonable price give almost the same potential that customers may try buying Vietnamese wine. Surprisingly, the position in menu at the Vietnamese restaurant is the least reason that they would choose the wine with only 43% positive answers.

On the other hand, 17% of customer would never buy wine because of the reasonable price. It indicates that prices could make customers more interested in buying wine but would be not the main reason that they would choose to buy wine.

9 CONCLUSION

9.1 Summary

This topic focused on a new trend of cuisine in Finland nowadays Asian food and beverages. Since Asian dishes have been so popular, this research concentrates more on Asian alcohol beverages in general and Vietnamese wine as an example.

Throughout the few first questions, the main purpose is to discover how popular of Asian cuisine is in Vaasa. Amazingly, Thai, Chinese, Japanese and other food has been tasted by all respondents. It is rarely to get the answer 'no' with the question 'have you tried Asian food'. Other type which has not appeared yet in Vaasa is added, for example Korean food. However, the contributions of Asian restaurants in spreading out cuisine are undeniable. Instead of traditional Western food, many of the respondents choose to eat out in lunch time at an Asian restaurant. Moreover, because of longer restaurants' longer history in Finland, Chinese and Thai restaurants remain the most popular.

Even though Asian food has an enormously bright prospect, Asian beverages, especially Vietnamese wine, are completely new ideas with customers in Vaasa. The highest percentage that respondents know about Asian wine is only 30%. Less than 10% of them have tasted. Additionally, they do not have ideas 'combine Asian food and drink' as Western food yet. Their habit of drinking with Asian dishes is choosing water to relieve the thirst. It is very rarely that they choose to drink wine or beer which is actually a better choice since they are not only refreshing palate but also adding tastes in wine and food.

Considering the reasons, the first one is that in the restaurants remain all of traditional Finnish drinks such as western tea, orange juice, Western wine and etc. They did not introduce any local beverages. Secondly, the Asian beverage list in Finland is very limited. Many products could not reach the European area and

hardly Finland. Therefore, Asian restaurants hardly find a big supplier with good prices.

However, this research has found out a bright side for Asian beverages. To all people who have tasted Asian wine, they gave positive answers. It means that Asian wine would become more popular if it is introduced widely in Vaasa and Finland. A good example is a Japanese restaurant in Vaasa. Even though it is a new trend in Vaasa, Japanese beverages seem to get very good attention because restaurants have launched local drinks.

In conclusion, people in Vaasa in specific and in Finland nowadays are opened more and more. They have accepted the new culture with new cuisine and beverages better than ever. This is a good opportunity for restaurants' owner increase their margins and reputation by introducing authentic products. Because Finnish are too reserved to buy new products especially in the expensive places like restaurants; the way of marketing communication would be mainly through word of mouth – a slow but effective way, and taste day – fast but costly in restaurants.

9.2 Future research

Since this research was only conducted in Vaasa, any similar research in different areas or whole Finland would be recommended. In addition, because of limit time and finance, the research still have quite limited number of respondents and most of them belong to the young generation (from 18- 34). Therefore, further researches in order to get more data to get higher validity and reliability are also encouraged.

Although Asian food has spread successfully through Finland for a long time, Asian beverages are still mystery in sale. Therefore, this research mainly focused on discovering the familiarity of customers in Vaasa with Asian wine and their willingness to taste those wines. This is only the first step in looking for a new market. Since the result is positive that many respondents would like to try not only local non-alcohol but also local wine, Vaasa in specific and Finland in gen-

eral could be a new market for any Asian wine. Consequently, importing local wines and doing marketing would be a smart idea. Japanese restaurants in Vaasa would be the brilliant example to encourage any Asian restaurant owners to start. As a result, 'how to import Asian wine to Finland' will be the next topic following this research.

There are also some suggestions for the restaurants' owners who are willing to introduce wine. Since citizens in Vaasa demand good quality wine, the Asian wines or Vietnamese wines should be the good quality ones. The price of a glass of wine should not be more than 8 euro. In order to introduce new wines, the restaurants' owners should arrange some free sample days so customers can taste. If the wines are good, the customers will introduce them to their family and friends.

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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

Respondents

I am studying in Restaurant and Tourism at Vaasa University of Applied Sciences. This questionnaire is for my final thesis which concerns about the potential of Asian wine in the Asian restaurants in Finland. Any information given will be confidential and only for the thesis. I will appreciate your opinion

Thank you for your responds

Regards

1. Gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
2. Your age:
3. What is your nationality?
4. In which Asian restaurants have you eaten?

a. Thai restaurant	b. Indian restaurant
c. Chinese restaurant	d. Japanese restaurant
e. Vietnamese restaurant	

Others:

5. Rank three of your favorite cuisine. (Number 1 for the most favorite one , 3 for the least)

	Score
--	-------

Thai restaurant	
Chinese restaurant	
Japanese restaurant	
Vietnamese restaurant	
Indian restaurant	
Others (name)	

6. How often in average do you eat Asian food in Asian restaurants?
- Less than once a week
 - Once a week
 - Twice a week
 - More than twice a week
7. Which type of Asian meal do you usually have?
- Lunch portion
 - Lunch buffet
 - Dinner portion
 - Dinner buffet
 - Take away
8. What kinds of drinks do you usually choose with your Asian dishes?
(Write down the score if they are available in restaurants)

	Unavailable in restaurant	Most common	Uncommon			
Water		1	2	3	4	5
Coffee/te		1	2	3	4	5

a						
Soft drink		1	2	3	4	5
Beer		1	2	3	4	5
Cider		1	2	3	4	5
Red wine		1	2	3	4	5
White wine		1	2	3	4	5
Sparkling wine		1	2	3	4	5

Name others if available (Cocktail, strong alcohol...):

9. Which beverages do you wish to be available in the Asian restaurant?

10. The reasons that you choose your most favorite drink is

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
It release my thirst				
It fits with the dishes				
It is healthy				
It is inexpensive				

Other reasons:

11. How often do you usually drink wines in the restaurants?

- a. **Every time** I go to restaurants
- b. I drink wine **sometimes** at the restaurants
- c. I **rarely** drink wine at the restaurants
- d. I **never** drink wine at the restaurants

12. How much are you willing to pay for a glass of wine in a restaurant?

- a. 5 - 6€
- b. 7 - 8€
- c. 9 - 10€

Other:

13. Which Asian countries do you know for producing wine? Have you tasted any of them?

	I know	I have tasted
China		
Thailand		
Indonesia		
Japan		
Vietnamese		
Others (name):		

I don't know any countries making wines in Asia

14. What is your opinion about those wines that you have drunk?

Wine	Good	Acceptable	Drinkable	Bad

1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

15. What would make you buy Vietnamese wines in restaurants?

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Recommendation from friends, or relatives				
Recommendation from waiter/ waitress				
It is available in Vietnamese restaurants				
It is inexpensive				
Only when I know it's good				

Others circumstances:

APPENDIX 2: List of some prominent bottles from Dalat wine

a) Pencee (Red wine)

Grapes: Merlot and Cabernet sauvignon

Taste: smoky, blackcurrant, chocolate

b) APEC (red wine) was served in APEC meeting
2006 by Prime Minister

Grapes: Merlot and Cabernet sauvignon

Taste: sweet, raisin, herbs, vanilla.

c) Chateau Dalat (red wine)

Grape: Merlot

Taste: raisin, chocolate, vanilla and
herbs

d) Gaillac (red wine)

Grapes: Merlot and Cabernet sauvi-
gnon

Taste: berries, and plum

e) Excellent (white wine)

Grapes: Chardonnay

Taste: lime, lemon, tropical fruit, and honey. Smooth
and long after taste

(Source: www.vangdalat.vn)



