

# California vs. France: The Historic 1976 Paris Tasting that Revolutionized Wine



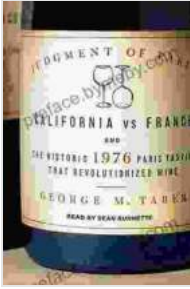
## The Story

In 1976, the world of wine was turned upside down when a group of California wines were entered into a blind tasting against some of the most prestigious French wines. The results were shocking: the California wines won.

### Judgment of Paris: California vs. France and the Historic 1976 Paris Tasting That Revolutionized Wine

by George M. Taber

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5



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The tasting was organized by Steven Spurrier, a British wine merchant who was living in Paris. Spurrier had been hearing rumors that California wines were getting better and better, but he wanted to see for himself. He invited nine French wine experts to blind taste 10 white wines and 10 red wines, half from California and half from France.

The French experts were skeptical at first. They were sure that the French wines would win. But when they tasted the wines, they were surprised by the quality of the California wines. In fact, they preferred the California wines to the French wines in both the white and red categories.

The results of the tasting were published in Time magazine, and they caused a sensation. Overnight, California wines became the talk of the world. The tasting proved that California wines could compete with the best wines from France, and it helped to put California on the map as a major wine region.

## **The Wines**

The California wines that won the tasting were:

\* Chateau Montelena Chardonnay \* Chateau Montelena Cabernet Sauvignon \* Stag's Leap Wine Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon \* Freemark Abbey Cabernet Sauvignon \* Ridge Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon

The French wines that lost the tasting were:

\* Chateau Haut-Brion Blanc \* Chateau Lafite Rothschild \* Chateau Margaux \* Chateau Latour \* Chateau Mouton Rothschild

## **The Experts**

The nine French wine experts who participated in the tasting were:

\* Pierre Tari \* Jean-Claude Vrinat \* Jean-Michel Caillavet \* Jacques Perrin \* Philippe de Rothschild \* Christian Moueix \* Robert Drouhin \* Emile Peynaud \* Michel Dovaz

## **The Impact**

The 1976 Paris Tasting had a profound impact on the world of wine. It proved that California wines could compete with the best wines from France, and it helped to put California on the map as a major wine region. The tasting also helped to change the way that people thought about wine. Before the tasting, many people believed that French wines were the only good wines. But after the tasting, people realized that there were great wines being made all over the world.

The 1976 Paris Tasting is still considered to be one of the most important events in the history of wine. It helped to change the way that people thought about wine, and it paved the way for the California wine industry to become one of the most successful in the world.

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