Beverage Testing Institute Methodology Statement
for the New York Wine Classic

Beverage Testing Institute (BevTest) is honored to conduct the New York Wine Classic at the request of the New York Wine & Grape Foundation (NYWGF). BevTest will organize and execute professional BevTest wine tasting panels at BevTest's Chicago sensory lab.

Our industry leading wine evaluation methodology was co-developed with Cornell University in 1981. Today, we've augmented that methodology by collecting more data points on custom software in a state-of-the-art sensory laboratory. The room is specially designed to minimize external factors and maximize our panelists' concentration. These are just some of the ways we ensure the fairest, most consistent reviews.

Trained Panelists Our panelists are buyers and influencers, experts in the categories they are tasting, that have also been trained as sensory analysts as part of BevTest's panelist program. No matter what level of experience an individual has, all panelists begin as an "auditor". Auditors participate in our focus group-style panels using a trimmed-down version of our sensory analysis software. Once they have consistently identified flaws, blindly assigned the same score to the same product, and have proven their evaluation and descriptive skills to be in line with BevTest's methodology and standards, they are promoted to "Judge". These trained and tested Judges have their scores aggregated into the final published score by our software.

Flighting Our flighting is thoughtfully and meticulously planned so that each wine is provided the best possible tasting experience. Our production department takes into consideration residual sugar, alcohol content, body, tannic structure, region and more to arrange flights that avoid palate fatigue. Panel flighting typically includes a mix of sparkling, white, rose, and red wines while ensuring multiple examples of each category and appellation are represented whenever possible. Compared to other competitions, we drastically limit flighting. Panelists NEVER taste more than 30 samples a day.

Objectivity Panelists are instructed to leave their preferences at the door and arrive with solid benchmarks top of mind for the categories and regions being tasted that day. They are specifically instructed to eschew strict style guidelines and instead evaluate objective quality, keeping in mind the diverse set of preferences their customers have.

Collaborative Blind Panel All wines are tasted blind. Panelists are given varietal or category and appellation but are not provided with brand, price, or vintage data. After individually assessing each wine's sensory attributes and objective quality based on the category and appellation, scores are locked in and then panelists pivot into a collaborative mode, discussing the wine and overall experience in a focus group-style setting with a BevTest moderator encouraging thoughtful discourse and recording the panelists' feedback. Only after all products have been tasted, scored and discussed will the sample bottles be revealed to the panel.

Faults If any panelist suspects a sample flaw (i.e. TCA), a second bottle will be opened and poured for the panel. They will evaluate the best of the two samples. If both samples are found to have unacceptably high levels of TCA, the product will receive a non-published score of "Not Recommended".

Learn more about our methodology and panelists here https://bevtest.com/lab/