COURT OF MASTER SOMMELIERS EUROPE

2026 / 2027

EXAMINATION SYLLABUS

WINE · SAKÉ · SPIRITS · BEER & CIDER · SERVICE

Introductory · Certified · Advanced · MS Diploma

www.courtofmastersommeliers.org

INTRODUCTION

The Course Syllabus is intended to give candidates studying for Court of Master Sommeliers courses and examinations an overview of the depth of knowledge required to achieve the standard to pass the various examinations.

Candidates should have an increasing depth of knowledge of the subject matter as they progress to each level of qualification.

The Syllabus gives an indication of the type and depth of the subject that is likely to be found at each level from fundamental knowledge and skills at the Introductory and Certified level, to in depth and specialist knowledge and skills at the Advanced and Master Sommelier Diploma levels.

I Introductory

C Certified

A Advanced

M MS Diploma

ALSACE

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Factors affecting climate. Importance of the Vosges.
- Sub districts.
- Location of best vineyards & variety of soils.
- Grape varietals.
- **Appellations of Alsace:**
  - Alsace Grand Cru
  - Crémant
  - Communale
  - Lieu dit
- Styles of wine VT & SGN
- Labelling terms.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Identify Grand Cru varietals and sites.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Yields per hectare for AC Alsace & Grand Cru.
- Required sugar levels for VT & SGN wines.
- Principal producers and sites
- Crémant production styles and grapes.

M MS DIPLOMA

- % plantings of varietals.
- Specific villages with Grand Cru and Clos sites.
- Soil diversity.
- Yields for different quality levels.
- Minimum potential alcohol levels for VT & SGN wines.
- Vintages.
- Principal producers and sites.
- Latest developments & updates.

BORDEAUX

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- Soil types.
- Production & ageing techniques
- Botrytis wine production.
- Barrique fermentation/ageing.
- Districts, sub districts & location.
- Classification system 1855.
- Top Médoc chateaux and location.
- St Émilion classification.
- “A” category St Émilion Châteaux.
- Top Pomerol Châteaux
- Grape varietals.
- Blending – importance of varietal in the blend.
- Styles of wine from principal production districts.
- Quality levels, AOP, IGP
- Labelling terms.
- Trade structure. En primeur, Négociants.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Well known 1st–5th classified growths from the Médoc, Sauternes, St Émilion and Pessac Léognan.
- Location of top Bordeaux properties
- Cru Bourgeois classification.
- Styles of wine from smaller districts.
- All Bordeaux sub districts. Eg: Loupiac, Cadillac, St. Croix du Mont, Fronsac.
- Individual commune names in principal districts.
- Classic vintages.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- All classified growths and their communes from each AC — Médoc, Sauternes, St Émilion.
- Wines of smaller districts.
- St Émilion Classification.
- St Émilion satellites.
- Pomerol Châteaux.
- Sauternes & Pessac Léognan, Châteaux & communes.
- Côtes de Bordeaux classification.
- Bourg / Blaye wines.
- Characteristics of the wines.
- Vintages, 30 years & their characteristics.
- Principal producers and sites.
- 2nd labels from classified sites.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Location/communes of principal Châteaux and position in ranking system.
- Top vintages and off-vintage data.
- Principal producers, all districts.
- Latest developments.

BURGUNDY

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- AOP districts & location.
- Permitted grape varietals.
- Soil types.
- Production & ageing techniques — traditional / macération carbonique.
- Quality levels — generic, district, villages.
- District & wines of Chablis & quality levels.
- Principal communes of the Côte d'Or & location.
- Premier Cru & Grand Cru wines of Côte d'Or.
- Location of Mâcon villages & Côte Chalonnaise districts
- Beaujolais Crus.
- Labelling terms.
- Structure of trade.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- **Smaller production districts, ie:**
  - St Bris, Irancy, Montagny, Bouzeron.
  - Givry, Mercurey, Pouilly Fuissé & St Véran.
  - Mâcon villages.
- Classic vintages.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Specific climatic influences.
- Grand Cru / 1er Cru wines from principal AC's.
- Villages entitled to use certain AC's, ie: Pouilly Fuissé
- Pouilly Fuissé Crus.
- Beaujolais villages.
- Characteristics of the wines.
- Vintages — characteristics.
- Principal producers and sites.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Differentiate between Lieux-dits and Premier Cru.
- Noted Clos sites.
- Noted producers linked to specific wines/sites.
- Principal vintages and off-vintages of the last 30 years.
- Latest developments & updates.

CHAMPAGNE

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- Champagne AC & sub districts.
- Permitted grape varietals.
- Soils.
- Production methods.
- Styles.
- Qualities.
- Labelling terms.
- Bottle sizes.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Yields and extraction amounts.
- Bottle sizes & volumes.
- Quality marques from leading producers.
- Coteaux Champenois wines.
- Classic vintages, 10 years.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Viticulture — training etc.
- Grand Cru villages & locations.
- Contribution of each varietal.
- Amounts of dosage in different styles.
- Bottling terms.
- Single vineyard Champagnes.
- Specific factors affecting climate.
- Characteristics of the wines.
- Vintages — characteristics.
- Principal producers and sites.

M MS DIPLOMA

- All Grand Cru and Premier Cru classifications.
- Special Club producers.
- Characteristics of vintages in the past 30 years.
- Quality marques from top Champagne producers.
- Latest developments & updates.

SPARKLING WINES

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Methods of production, ie: Traditional, Charmat, Ancestral.
- Terms used to denote the Traditional method of production in other countries.
- Alternate appellations for sparkling wines — Crémant, Cava etc.
- Principal sparkling wines of other European countries.
- Sparkling wines from world countries — Australia, New Zealand.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Wines & grape varietals used in principal sparkling wines produced in major wine countries.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Quality levels of principal sparkling wines, eg. DOCG, DO, Qualitäts Sekt.
- Traditional production methods, eg: Méthode Dioise, Méthode Ancestrale.
- Specific factors affecting climate.
- Characteristics of the wines.
- Vintages — characteristics.
- Maturation periods for all quality levels and types.

M MS DIPLOMA

- **Principal producers and sites for internationally known sparkling wines:**
  - Prosecco
  - Franciacorta
  - Alta Langhe
  - Tasmania
  - New Zealand
  - USA
  - South Africa
  - UK
- VDP Sekt regulations.
- Vintages for principal sparkling wines.
- Latest developments & updates.

LOIRE

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- Principal soil types.
- Districts & sub districts of the region.
- Principal grape varietals & wines produced from them.
- Styles of wine.
- Principal AOP's.
- Labelling terms.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- **Principal wines from:**
  - Coteaux du Layon
  - Savennières
  - Central Vineyards
  - Anjou-Saumur
  - Touraine
  - Muscadet
- Grape variety synonyms.
- Sur lie ageing requirements.
- Smaller AC's of the Loire & Loir & wines produced, for example St Pourçain, Cheverny, Orléans.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Specific climatic influences.
- Muscadet Crus and ageing requirements.
- Soil types in Sancerre / Pouilly
- Villages in Layon.
- Characteristics of the wines.
- Vintages — characteristics.
- Principal producers and sites.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Soil composition in various districts.
- Notable producers in all districts.
- Coteaux du Layon vintages.
- Latest developments & updates.

RHÔNE VALLEY

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- Districts & sub districts of the region.
- Principal grape varietals & wines produced from them.
- Blends of grapes, South Rhône.
- Styles of wine.
- Principal AOP's.
- Labelling terms.
- VDN & VDL wine production.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Principal estates in Châteauneuf-du-Pape.
- VDL & VDN wines produced in the region & grapes used.
- AOP's of South Rhône, varietals & styles.
- Principal sites in North Rhône (Hermitage, Côte Rôtie).

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences — Mistral
- Côtes du Rhône village names.
- Permitted grape blends for principal AC's.
- Smaller Rhône AC's, eg Côtes de Tricastin, Côtes du Luberon etc.
- Characteristics of the wines.
- Cask sizes and ageing.
- Notable producers and sites.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Soil types throughout the region.
- Effects of geographical features, ie: Alps, Dentelles de Montmirail.
- Climats of the Rhône.
- Principal producers and wines
- Vintages — characteristics.
- Latest developments & updates.

SOUTH OF FRANCE

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- Principal wines of Provence, Languedoc, Roussillon, Bergerac, Madiran & Cahors.
- Varietals used in principal wines and styles / qualities of wines produced.
- VDN & VDL wines of South France.
- Vin de Pays districts and locations.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- In-depth knowledge of wines of Bergerac, Monbazillac, Pécharmant, Fitou, Cahors, Madiran, Corbières, Jura, Gaillac.
- Vin de Paille wines.
- Provence & sub regions and wines.
- Varietals / blends.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Jura — varietals, wines and production techniques of Vin Jaune / Vin de Paille.
- Savoie, wines and varietals
- Languedoc — major & minor AC's and varietal / styles of wine.
- Sub districts of principal Languedoc AOP's.
- Roussillon, Gaillac, Béarn, Jurançon, Irouléguy.
- Bergerac & AC's within.
- Characteristics of the wines
- Specific factors affecting climate.
- Vintages — characteristics.
- Notable producers and sites.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Specific villages of Côtes de Provence.
- Jura districts.
- Languedoc Crus.
- Styles of VDN / VDL wines.
- Principal producers and wines from all smaller districts of France.
- Characteristics of native grape varietals and composition of wines associated with these grapes
- Savoie Crus.
- Latest developments & updates.

SPAIN

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- Quality structure for Spain — Vinos de la Tierra, DO, DOCa, Vinos de Pagos.
- Wine districts of Spain & location.
- Principal varietals and synonyms of grapes, ie: Tempranillo, Mazuelo
- Wine ageing regime & terms.
- Principal wines of main wine districts: Rías Baixas, Navarra, Rioja, Toro, Ribera del Duero, Penedès, Rueda, Priorat, Valdepeñas.
- Styles of wine and varietals used.
- Cava wine production.
- Labelling terms.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Specific ageing requirements for Rioja wines.
- DOCa's of Spain.
- Quality hierarchy — Rioja, Priorat.
- Sub districts of Rías Baixas, Navarra, Penedès & Priorat (Vino de Pueblo)
- Location of, and wines produced in, Ribera del Duero, Montsant, Toro, Rueda, Bierzo.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- Specific names / locations of Vinos de Pagos and location.
- Smaller districts in Southern Spain and wines produced.
- Factors affecting climate.
- Specific characteristics of the wines.
- Vintages — characteristics.
- Styles of wine produced in Toro, Rueda, Montsant, Somontano, Penedès & Castilla-La Mancha.
- Principal producers and estates

M MS DIPLOMA

- Principal producers and sites + notable wines.
- Geographic influences on producing regions (rivers, mountains, coastal)
- Vinos de Pagos — location, wines and grapes.
- Cava de Paraje Calificado producers and estates.
- Corpinnat producers.
- DO zones in the Balearic & Canary Islands.
- Styles of wine and grape varieties used in Txakolina, Bullas, Méntrida, Alella, Empordà, Terra Alta, Conca de Barberá, Costers del Segre, Arlanza, Campo de Borja, Cigales & Uclés.
- Principal vintages of the last 10 years.
- Producers, estates & principal wines.
- Latest developments & updates.

PORTUGAL

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- Quality structure.
- Wine producing districts — VR & DOC.
- Location of districts.
- Principal grape varietals.
- Wines & production in Dão, Minho, Douro, Bairrada, Alentejo, Colares & Setúbal.
- Wine labelling terms.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Grape varietals used to produce principal wines — Douro, Bairrada, Dão, Vinho Verde & Setúbal.
- Ageing terms & regime.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Garrafeira, Reserva wines — maturation requirements.
- Minho sub districts.
- Transmontano VR — DOC's
- Duriense VR — Douro classification and terms
- Beiras VR — DOC's
- Lisboa VR — DOC's
- Alentejo VR — DOC's
- Tejo VR & sub districts
- Terras do Sado VR & districts
- Algarve VR — DOC's
- Açores VR
- Madeirense DOC
- Factors affecting climate (specific)
- Characteristics of the wines.
- Vintages — characteristics.
- Principal producers and sites.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Synonyms for Portuguese varieties.
- Portuguese ageing requirements, for example Selecionada, Colheita.
- Sub-regions of DOC districts.
- Wine districts and wines of the Azores.
- Douro table wines and producers.
- Producers, sites and principal wines produced.
- Latest developments & updates.

ITALY

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences. Quality structure — IGT, DOC, DOCG.
- Wine producing districts & location.
- Principal grape varietals and regions.
- Principal wines of each region and varietals used in production.
- Production methods — Recioto, Ripasso, Amarone, Vin Santo.
- Labelling terms.
- Prosecco quality levels & production methods.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- DOCG's in each region.
- Ageing requirements and specified terms, eg: Riserva, Superiore, for principal red wines — Barolo, Barbaresco, Chianti, Vino Nobile, Brunello di Montalcino.
- Sub-districts of Chianti.

A ADVANCED SOMMELIER

- Climatic influences (specific)
- Production techniques of principal wines — varietals / blends, ageing requirements.
- Sub-districts of wine areas — Chianti, Barolo, Barbaresco, Soave, Valpolicella etc.
- Wines from smaller areas: Liguria, Friuli, Trentino, Maremma, Bolgheri, Marche, Umbria, Lazio, Campania, Basilicata, Puglia, Abruzzo, Molise, Sicilia & Sardegna.
- Specific factors affecting climate.
- Characteristics of the wines.
- Vintages — characteristics.
- Principal producers and sites.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Soil composition and climate of all regions.
- Minimum / maximum alcohol contents / ageing requirements of principal DOC/DOCG wines.
- Specific DOC/DOCG of Southern Italy.
- Principal producers and wines produced in all regions.
- Grape varieties native to Southern Italy.
- Vintages, 20 years of DOCG wines.
- Super Tuscans and 2nd wines.
- Passito style wines.
- Latest developments & updates.

GERMANY

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences — effects of climatic conditions on wines.
- German quality structure — Qualitätswein, Prädikatswein.
- Anbaugebiete & location.
- Production terms — Einzellage, Grosslage, Bereich, Ortswein, Sekt, estate bottling.
- Principal grape varietals and crossings.
- Notable wine villages in the districts of Mosel, Rheingau, Pfalz, Rheinhessen.
- Soil structures, Mosel, Rheingau.
- Labelling terms indicating style, ie: Trocken, Halbtrocken
- Introduction to VDP structure & terms.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Location of principal wine villages and the appropriate Anbaugebiet.
- Labelling terms: Classic, Selection.
- VDP structure — Erste Lage, Grosses Gewächs etc.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- In-depth study of all Anbaugebiete.
- Quality structure, A.P. number.
- Landwein nomenclature.
- VDP grading of wines & approved varietals.
- Vine crossings
- Required sugar levels (Oechsle) for QmP grades.
- Principal producers and sites.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Principal producers and wines/sites.
- Monopole sites.
- Soils of principal sites.
- Minimum ageing requirements for Grosses Gewächs wines.
- Parentage of common crossings.
- Principal villages and sites in all Anbaugebiete.
- Vintages for the past 20 years.
- Latest developments & updates.

AUSTRIA

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences (Pannonian effect)
- Austrian quality structure — Qualitätswein & Prädikatswein.
- Define Ausbruch / Strohwein.
- Production regions.
- DAC quality structure & levels.
- Wachau quality terms.
- Principal grape varietals & production districts where best grown.
- Labelling terms.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- DAC districts and location.
- Wines produced.
- Wine terms.

A ADVANCED SOMMELIER

- Approved varietals in DAC regions.
- Principal producers and sites.
- Traditionsweingüter and Erste Lage sites
- Austrian Sekt production, quality hierarchy and maturation periods.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Principal sites in Wachau, Kamptal, Kremstal.
- Soils of various regions
- Producers / sites, all areas
- Erste Lage sites
- Native Austrian grape varieties and crossings / regions planted.
- Vintages, 10 years
- Latest developments & updates.

GREECE

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences
- Quality structure for quality wines
- Principal regions and location on map.
- Grape varietals
- Principal wines — Naoussa, Slopes of Meliton, Nemea, Mantinia, Patras, Samos & Santorini.
- Labelling terms.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Dessert wine production — Samos, Santorini

AM ADVANCED SOMMELIER · MS DIPLOMA

- Quality wine system.
- Detailed knowledge of production areas and grape varietals used.
- Techniques of production unique to Greece (Retsina, training of vines — Santorini)
- Principal producers and sites (lesser-known districts, MS level)
- Climatic and soil factors.
- Latest developments & updates.

EUROPE

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Hungary: production of Tokaji wines.
- Grape varietals.
- Qualities of Tokaji.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Principal wine districts of Bulgaria and Romania.
- Eastern European grape varieties and where grown.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- **Central & Eastern Europe**
  - Wine producing districts and principal wines produced in Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia & Hungary.
  - Grape varietals & native vines.
  - Principal producers and sites.
- **Switzerland**
  - Principal areas of production and varietals used — Lake Geneva + sub districts, Neuchâtel, Rhône valley.
  - Cantons where production areas are located.
- **England & Wales**
  - Principal vineyard sites in England & Wales by county.

M MS DIPLOMA

- **Switzerland**
  - Quality structure of Swiss wines. ConfidenCiel wines.
  - Smaller areas of production & wines — Zürich, Schaffhausen, Ticino & Bündner Herrschaft.
  - Grape varietals used.
- **Central & Eastern Europe**
  - Slovenia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania & Hungary.
  - Wine districts and principal grapes.
  - Notable producers (Tokaji)
  - Quality terms.
  - Native grape varieties.
  - Principal vineyards and villages in Tokaji (classified vineyards)
  - Vintages for Tokaji.
- **England & Wales**
  - Vineyard sites and principal wine
- Latest developments & updates.

AUSTRALIA

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- Wine producing states and production regions.
- Quality framework & categories.
- Grape varietals associated with particular regions of production.
- Wine zones, regions.
- SE Australia super zone.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Zones.
- Regions
- Principal producers / wines by region.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Production & blending regimes.
- Tasmania wine districts.
- Sub regions within wine zones.
- Principal producers and sites.
- Vine classification by age (Barossa)
- RS requirements / ageing requirements, Rutherglen Muscats.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Geographical features of Australia and influence on wine producing areas.
- Principal soils of major regions.
- Advanced vinification practices and regulations, for example acidification, de-alcoholisation
- Sub-regions of all districts.
- Principal producers and wines, all districts.
- Tasmania sparkling wines.
- Latest developments & updates.

NEW ZEALAND

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climate & soils.
- Wine producing regions.
- Grape varietals associated with particular regions of production.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Appellations — North / South Island.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- GI system and regions.
- Sub districts of wine regions.
- Principal producers and sites.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Geographical features of NZ and influence on wine producing areas.
- GI system, districts and sub-districts.
- Principal grape plantings (all regions)
- Principal producers and estates/wineries — locations.
- Latest developments & updates.

UNITED STATES & CANADA

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- AVA principles.
- Climatic conditions, West Coast.
- Principal wine districts of California & varietals associated with these areas — Napa, Sonoma, San Francisco Bay area, Monterey, Santa Barbara & Paso Robles.
- Principal wine districts of Oregon & varietals produced — Willamette, Columbia Valley & Walla Walla
- Principal wine districts of Washington — Columbia Valley, Walla Walla, Puget Sound & Yakima Valley.
- Climate related to topography.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- AVA's associated with Sonoma, Napa, Monterey & Santa Barbara.
- Principal wine districts of Washington / Oregon.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Sub districts of wine regions.
- Principal producers and sites.
- Specific climatic influences.
- Ontario wine regulations (VQA) (DVA)
- Wine producing regions of Canada & sub-districts of the Ontario area, Niagara Peninsula & British Columbia.
- Principal varietals of Canadian areas.
- Ice wine production.
- Appellation system.
- AVA's of California (by district)
- Smaller regions of California — Mendocino, Lake, Livermore, San Luis Obispo, San Joaquin, South Coast, Central Valley & Sierra Foothills.
- Major producers in each district & varietals produced.
- New York State — Finger Lakes & Long Island.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Major producers & varietals grown.
- Principal vineyards and location.
- AVA's of New York State — Finger Lakes, Hudson Valley, North Fork, Long Island & the Hamptons.
- Labelling regulations — USA.
- Canadian wine law and VQA's.
- Technicalities of icewine production.
- Vintages for icewines.
- Latest developments & updates.

SOUTH AMERICA

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- Climate of South America & topographical influences (Andes–Pacific)
- Chile wine laws.
- 5 wine regions of Chile & sub districts.
- Key districts — Casablanca, Maipo & Rapel.
- Principal varietals of Chile & Argentina.
- Regions & varietals grown.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Sub districts of Chilean wine regions.
- Sub districts of Mendoza.
- Argentinian native varietals.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Uruguay — VCP labelling regulations & terms.
- Regions & varietals.
- Brazil — districts of production & varietals.
- Mexico — districts of production & varietals.
- Principal producers and sites.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Geographical features of Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Mexico, and their influence on wine producing areas.
- Soils in principal regions.
- Wine production at altitude and its effects.
- Climatic effects on production areas
- Principal districts and sub districts — Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Mexico.
- DO areas of all South American countries.
- Principal producers and locations.
- Notable vineyards of Chile and Argentina.
- Wines produced including prestige labels.
- Laws regarding ageing terms.
- Native grape varieties, including Criollas.
- Latest developments & updates.

SOUTH AFRICA

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences (oceans and mountain ranges)
- Wine law & labelling regulations (WO)
- Climate & soils.
- Structure of wine production.
- Geographical units — regions, districts, wards & estates.
- Principal wine regions of the Western Cape — Stellenbosch, Franschhoek, Paarl, Constantia, Walker Bay & Elgin.
- Varietals associated with production areas.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Districts within major wine regions: Coastal, Breede River
- Labelling terms such as Cap Classique, Cape Blend.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Districts outside WO areas.
- Wards of principal districts — Stellenbosch, Paarl, Walker Bay, Olifants River, Darling, Swartland & Klein Karoo.
- Principal producers and sites / principal wines produced (Stellenbosch / Elim / Walker Bay / Swartland)
- Vin de Constance — grapes, production and styles.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Geographical features influencing production in SA (mountains / oceans / rivers)
- Climatic effects.
- Location of wards in all WO districts.
- Principal producers and sites / principal wines (all regions)
- Vintages, 10 years.
- Latest developments & updates.

OTHER WINES

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

No formal requirement at this level.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

No formal requirement at this level.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- **China:**
  - Principal districts and location.
  - Native grape varieties.
- Wine districts of the Middle East — Lebanon, Cyprus, Corsica.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Geographic and climatic factors of production in China.
- Chinese wine districts and principal grapes grown.
- Principal producers and wines.
- Production districts and wines of Israel, Turkey, Cyprus, Lebanon.
- Commandaria wines — production and quality levels.
- Japan — Koshu; geographic and climatic factors; production techniques.

FORTIFIED WINES

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- **Sherry —**
  - Location, soils, varietals.
  - Production methods.
  - Wine types.
  - Non-fortified Sherry.
- **Port —**
  - Douro region and production centres.
  - Soils.
  - Permitted varietals.
  - Production methods.
  - Port types, ageing & qualities.
- **Madeira —**
  - Topography & climate.
  - Soils.
  - Permitted varietals.
  - Production methods.
  - Madeira styles.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Sherry — VOS & VORS designations.
- Port sub-districts.
- Recent Port vintages.
- Madeira ageing and designations.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Sherry Pagos (Finos)
- Detailed production techniques — fortification, sweetening, colouring etc.
- Sherry styles & ageing designations.
- Port viticulture & vinification
- Vineyard rating system.
- Single quintas of major Port houses.
- Principal vintages, 1970 to date
- Madeira producers.
- Key styles: 3, 5, 10, 15 year, Frasqueira, Colheita.
- Aromatised wines, eg. vermouths
- Vin de liqueur — Floc, Ratafia, Pineau des Charentes
- Vin Doux Naturel AC's and types.
- Moscatel de Setúbal.
- Australian Muscats.
- Commandaria wines
- Styles, grapes.
- Montilla wines — styles, grapes & production methods

M MS DIPLOMA

- Climatic effects on production areas (Sherry, Port & Madeira)
- Effects of geographical features and soils.
- Principal vineyard sites (Pagos) in Sherry.
- Technical issues of production (all wines)
- Port quintas and proprietors.
- Quinta classification system, elements A–F.
- Translate production and vinification terms.
- Ageing requirements (all wines)
- Regulations regarding production
- New styles of wine, eg. Añada, En Rama etc.
- Other fortified wines: for example, production details of Málaga, Montilla.

SPIRITS

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Principles of distillation.
- Methods of production and qualities of the following products.
- Scotch whisky (malt–blended)
- Irish whiskey types and production.
- US whiskey types.
- Cognac — qualities, blending & ageing.
- Armagnac — qualities, blending & ageing.
- Calvados — qualities, blending & ageing.
- Tequila.
- Gin.
- Vodka.
- Rum.
- Terms used in production of each of the above.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Identify specific spirit types, eg:
- Islay whisky.
- Fine Champagne.
- Armagnac.
- Marc/Grappa.
- Tequila & Mezcal.
- Eau de vie (fruit spirits)

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Production / qualities of flavoured spirits: Pastis, Ouzo, Raki, Akvavit, flavoured vodkas.
- Fruit eaux de vie.
- Marc/Grappa.
- Mezcals.
- Principal spirit producers / brands (all types).

M MS DIPLOMA

- Rum production and principal types / producers.
- Eastern European spirits / brands / producers.
- Fruit eau de vie production; names used in different producing countries.
- Technical details of production of major spirit brands.
- Regulations regarding production.
- Location of distilleries — Scotland.
- Styles and ageing requirements of principal spirit types.

APERITIF WINES, LIQUEURS & BITTERS

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Principles of liqueur production.
- Extraction of flavours.
- Terms used: Triple sec, compounding.
- Service terms: Frappé.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- **Knowledge of liqueurs by type, colour & flavour:**
  - Fruit.
  - Citrus.
  - Herb — single & compounded.
  - Bean & nut.
  - Flower.
  - Non-classified.
- Ability to recommend.
- Aperitif wines and bitters — principal flavours/ingredients.

AM ADVANCED CERTIFICATE · MS DIPLOMA

- Knowledge of liqueurs by type, colour & flavour.
- Brands / producers of aperitif wines and bitters.
- Ability to recommend.
- Service requirements.
- Use of liqueurs and aperitif wines in cocktails and mixed drinks.

VITICULTURE & VINIFICATION

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Climatic influences.
- Basic principles of viticulture.
- Effects of climate, aspect, planting regimes.
- Terroir.
- Vine types: V. vinifera / labrusca; crossings, clones, hybrids.
- Grafting principles.
- Training styles and effect.
- Life cycle of the vineyard.
- Frost prevention systems.
- Vine diseases and pests.
- Harvesting — botrytis, passerillage
- Alcoholic fermentation — principles & practice.
- Terms: chaptalisation (where practised & forbidden)
- Pressing practice — terms used such as vin de presse, rebêche, vin de goutte, macération carbonique, malolactic fermentation.
- Sur lie ageing.
- Effects of oak regimes.
- Tartrates.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- **French terms for viticultural and vinification processes, for example:**
  - Buttage, passerillage,
  - véraison, mutage, pigeage,
  - remontage.

AM ADVANCED CERTIFICATE · MS DIPLOMA

- Soil composition of all wine producing regions and its effect on grape production.
- Climatic effects of grape production, ie: height above sea level, fog, sun exposure.
- Technical knowledge of the effects of various vine diseases and ailments and preventative measures used to combat them — nematodes, mealybugs, crown gall, bacterial blight, fanleaf degeneration virus, black rot, esca, flavescence dorée (phytoplasma diseases), Pierce's disease, leaf roll, eutypia.
- Understanding vine spacing, pruning, trellising.
- Technical knowledge of winemaking procedures and terms used; effects of use, eg: reverse osmosis, de-alcoholisation, fining & filtration methods.
- In-depth knowledge of wine ailments and effects on wine.
- Natural, organic and biodynamic winemaking techniques and terms.
- Barrel sizes and ageing requirements in wood/bottle.
- Effect of screwcaps on ageing.

BEERS & CIDERS

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Beer production: ingredients, methods, defining equipment used, for example mash tun & copper.
- Terms used: wort (sweet–bitter), liquor.
- Hops: types and use of.
- Beer types: ales, lager, stout, porter, weissbier, fruit beers.
- Conditioning practice — pasteurisation (keg, bottle, can)
- Cask conditioning — terms, for example venting, tapping, stillage.
- Cider production: apple types, use of pears, traditional production methods vs commercial practice.
- Cider types.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Food & beer pairing.
- Beer types.
- Belgian speciality beers.

AM ADVANCED CERTIFICATE · MS DIPLOMA

- Malt types and production techniques.
- Best known hop varieties.
- Brewing practices: dry hopping, kräusening etc.
- **Principal beer types and production techniques from around the world, for example:**
  - Lambic beers,
  - Rauchbier,
  - seasonal beers,
  - Gueuze.

SAKÉ

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Production methods.
- Labelling terms.
- Types of Saké.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

No formal requirement at this level.

A ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

- Saké production terms.
- Saké types and quality levels.
- Official classification.
- Saké service and pairings with food.
- Terms associated with Saké production.

M MS DIPLOMA

- Production areas.
- Base materials.
- Brewing terms, eg: Moto, Moromi, Shikomi, Shubo, Nihonshu-do, Kimoto, Yamahai, Toji
- Principal types of Saké

FOOD & WINE PAIRING

IC INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE · CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Basics of food and wine pairing.
- Knowledge of varietal characteristics and man-made effects, ie: malolactic, oak.
- Principles of food and wine pairing.
- Effects of cooking on food flavours.
- Effects of strong flavours
- Difficult pairings, ie: vinegar, chilli, chocolate, caramel.
- Match specific wines to dishes, giving reasons for choice

AM ADVANCED CERTIFICATE · MS DIPLOMA

- Match specific wines to dishes giving reasoned choice, including vintages and producers
- Effects of flavours: matching or contrasting wines.
- In-depth knowledge of best vintages and off vintages.
- Pairings with other beverage products such as beers, fortified wines, aperitifs.
- Discuss alternatives to recommendations and similar wines.
- Formulate plans for staff training and promotion events.
- Customer skills — handling complaints, giving recommendations.

BUSINESS ASPECTS

IC INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE · CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Know the range of bottle sizes available and the volume of each.
- Relate the bottle size to the volume of glassware in standard use, in ml and fluid ounces.
- Calculate the number of bottles required for a function.
- Perform simple calculations for mark-up / selling price at given percentages of gross profit.

Questions may be asked in both theory and practical situations

AM ADVANCED CERTIFICATE · MS DIPLOMA

- Perform all aspects of spreadsheet calculations in relation to inventory documentation.
- Understand purchasing systems for wholesale and importation of wines and spirits.
- Sales and promotion techniques.
- Staff training programmes (theory, practice and tasting sessions)
- Rewarding staff performance.
- Fine wine list structure.
- Function wine list structure.

Testing of this area in both theory and practical examinations

PRACTICAL SERVICE ASPECTS

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Demonstrate effective recommendation of beverages.
- Food and wine matching with effective reasoning for choices (complementary and contrasting)
- Demonstrate professional service techniques for still wine service (presentation, opening, glassware choice, preparation and positioning)
- Pouring beverages — demonstrate professional practice.
- Carrying trays with drinks.
- Know and recommend a range of aperitifs and digestifs.
- Product knowledge, flavour profile.
- Service requirements for all beverages.

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Demonstrate effective recommendation of aperitifs & classic cocktails.
- Recommend wines for each course of a menu, including dessert and fortified wines.
- Recommendations to include producers and vintage knowledge.
- Service of spirits and liqueurs.
- Spirit types and producers.
- Product knowledge, flavour profile and service requirements of the above.
- Food and wine pairing with effective reasoning for choice; ability to recommend alternatives.
- Demonstrate the professional service of sparkling wines.
- Recommendation — types, quality levels, alternative suggestions.
- Opening, service, pouring and refilling.
- Carrying of tray to serve and clear glassware

AM ADVANCED CERTIFICATE · MS DIPLOMA

- Practical skills and recommendation: demonstrate effective customer and selling skills.
- Ability to deal with customer enquiries and complaints.
- Demonstrate professional practical skills, including aperitif and cocktail preparation and service (comprehensive knowledge of cocktails and preparation methods)
- Wine recommendations for all types of menu and cuisine.
- Knowledge of foods which are difficult for pairing, and suitable alternative beverages.
- Champagne and sparkling wine service.
- Professional decanting practice.
- Digestif service.
- Equipment maintenance: glassware, decanters, service cloths, ice buckets.
- Business aspects: ability to calculate profit margins, complete inventory data, calculate volume of beverage requirements.
- Training: ability to prepare and lead an effective training programme to promote the sale of products.
- Tasting and product identification: taste, identify and describe beverages; identify quality levels and origins.

DEDUCTIVE TASTING

I INTRODUCTORY CERTIFICATE

- Understand the principles of deductive tasting.
- Sight: colour, hue, viscosity, signs of ageing.
- Nose: identify principal aroma characteristics of principal grape varieties.
- Palate: understand taste characteristics of principal grape varieties — primary, secondary & tertiary flavours; fruit & non-fruit flavours.
- Structure: understand the principles of identifying structure in wine — alcohol, acid, tannin, finish.
- Conclusion: appreciate the principles of summarising information gained in tasting to identify the characteristics and identity of the wine.

NO EXAMINATION

C CERTIFIED SOMMELIER

- Identify principal classic grape varieties by sight, nose and palate.
- Evaluate a wine's structure and finish.
- Identify any common faults.
- Comment on origin of wine and quality level.

EXAMINATION

Written evaluation, 2 wines.

AM ADVANCED CERTIFICATE · MS DIPLOMA

- Identify a wide range of grape varietal characteristics.
- Orally describe wines in both a technical and marketing format.
- Evaluate sight, nose and palate using Court format.
- Evaluate the aromas and flavours, to include primary, secondary and tertiary elements.
- Evaluate the structure of wines (alcohol, acidity and tannins) to a quantitative formula.
- Comment on age characteristics.
- Offer a constructive conclusion of the wine, to include style, country and region of origin, quality level and age (vintage)
- Know and identify wine faults and the reasons for the fault, for example Brett, oxidation, reduction, anisole spoilage (TCA)
- Identify methods used in vinification to correct faults.

EXAMINATION

6 wines to be orally described in a time framework of 25 minutes.

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