



ASSOCIATION
DE LA SOMMELLERIE
INTERNATIONALE

COMPETENCIES REQUIRED FOR THE ASI DIPLOMA

The ASI Diploma is certifying the competencies of professional sommeliers achieving an internationally recognized standard of service.

Although the ASI Sommelier is expected to have a very broad knowledge of beverages and the understanding of the hospitality environment.

The environment of the ASI Diploma exam is always considered to be taking place in a fine dining environment unless instructed otherwise.

Evaluation

Passing level for Silver: 60% of total average

Passing level for Gold: 70% of total average with a minimum of 50% required for theory task.

Candidates not taking the exam in a foreign language will pass with an average mark of 60% or more. This will award them a Bronze level ASI Diploma.

Language

The ASI Diploma exam requires the candidate to be fluent in one of the ASI languages (French, English and Spanish) as a foreign language to achieve Gold or Silver. The foreign language is a language that has to be learnt by the candidates opposed to their native first language. Candidates being assessed in an ASI language that is not a foreign language to them will qualify for Bronze only.

In doubt, consult with the ASI Certification Exam Committee.

Practical Skills

- Ability to interact comfortably with guests
- Ability to listen to your guest's requirement and react appropriately
- Ability to describe and sell successfully beverages, food and services
- Understanding of the dynamic of a brigade, and the ability to adapt to different roles of the service team from welcoming the guests to cleaning post service...
- Preparation and service of classic cocktails, service of aperitifs, waters, coffees, teas, cigars and digestives
- Service of all styles of wines, classic aeration and decantation, including larger format bottles
- Appropriate service of beers
- Banqueting skills, management of large groups
- Maintenance of the equipment for the bar and general beverage services: glassware, ice buckets, decanters, sommelier's tools...
- Hygiene management in the hospitality environment
- General alcohol regulations and social responsibility
- Tray service, adequate pouring

Management Skills

- Food & Beverage costing
- Calculation of margins, profits, gratuities
- Cellar, stocks and inventories management
- Team building and team training skills
- Converting and using volumes of beverages
- Sales and promotion techniques
- Wines and Beverages: purchasing, storing, creating and maintaining relevant lists...

Knowledge of the Hospitality industry

- Understanding the structure of the industry
- Famous chefs, famous restaurants and famous ASI Sommeliers
- The history of the ASI
- Knowledge of the classic French, Italian, Spanish, Mediterranean, Chinese, Japanese, Indian cuisine, and some specific world-famous regional dishes of preparation (i.e.: Ceviche, Sushi, Tabouleh, Thai Curry, Indian Tandoori, Goulash, Gravlax, Couscous....)
- Understanding of the different cooking technics and their specific influence (sous-vide, grilling, roasting, poaching, smoking, pickling, fermenting...)
- Managing allergies or dietary requirements from guests

Tasting Skills

- Being able to identify precisely all the beverages used in the hospitality environment
- Being able to provide an organoleptic description and identification of wines and other beverages
- Descriptions are considered to be made according to the current ASI Guidelines
- It is expected that the candidates communicate in full sentences

Food & Drinks Pairing

- Reasoning of the possible suggested matches, and ability to recommend alternative options both for the food and the drink.
- Management of complex pairing, whatever the client may order
- Ability to communicate clearly within the hospitality environment
- Understanding of the interactions of the spices, textures, flavours, tastes...

Theory Knowledge

- General culture of the world of food and drinks
- History of wine and other beverages
- Geography and relevance of vineyards such as the UNESCO listed ones
- The wine in culture /arts like literature, painting, movies..
- Wine celebrities
- Structure of the industry, regulation bodies and institutions
- Winemaking technics and Viticulture, traditional, organic and biodynamic
- Vines' pests and diseases
- Planting, grafting, growing, trellising, pruning, soil composition and equipment used for vine growing. The concept of terroir, from micro to meso-climate around the world
- Traditional terminology for vine cultivation and winemaking according to their origin (France, Italy, Germany, Portugal...)
- Comprehensive winemaking terminology and process, traditional and modern technology

- from pressing to bottling, including analytical parameters, maturation and quality control
- Sake: production methods and terminology, history and traditions, classification, quality levels, service, food pairing, base material and production areas
- Beers: production methods and terminology, service and food pairing, history, base material and key producers, brewing specificity and speciality beers
- Ciders, meads, fruit wines and the production, styles and food pairing
- Liqueurs, bitters and aperitifs: production methods, regulations, most common brands, countries of production, service, composition, recommendations
- Spirits: Whiskeys (including but not limited to Scotland, Ireland, USA, Canada, Japan, South Africa, Taiwan, Australia...), Grape spirits (Including but not limited to Cognac, Armagnac, Brandy, Grappa and Pomace spirits...), Calvados, Gin, Rum, Rhum, Cachaça, Vodka, Mezcal/Tequila, Eaux de Vie, aniseeds flavoured spirits, Baijiu, Sochu, Soju... Production methods, maturation, wood and clay usage, blending, regulations, styles and brands/producers
- Fortified wines and liqueur wines with designation of origin: Sherry, Port, Madeira, Montilla Moriles, Malaga, Tarragona, Maury, Rivesaltes, Rasteau, Muscat Minervois, Frontignan, Banyuls, Beaumes de Venise, Commandaria, Marsala, Vernaccia di Oristano liquoroso, Quinato, Vermouths, Cape and Australian Fortified, Muscat and Topaque, Jeropigo, Floc, Ratafia, Pineau des Charentes, Setúbal... Production, styles, regulations and classifications
- Wine grape varieties of the world, their origin, the Vitis Vinifera but as well the crossings and hybrids and other vine species such as Vitis Labrusca, Vitis Rupestris, Vitis Riparia, Vitis Berlandieri...

Wine Knowledge

- Questions about France, Italy and Spain combined shall not be more than 50% of the points on the wine theory assessment.
- Sparkling wine styles, methodology of production, regulations, brands around the world
- France: AOP, AOC, major IGP, regulations, grapes, viticulture, terroirs and climats, classifications, planting, history, styles (SGN, effervescent, vin de paille, barrel maturation...), soils, labelling, trade structure, vintages of note, noteworthy producers and negociants; regional particularity, regional traditional food pairing, latest news.
- Italy: DOP, DOC and DOCG, major IGP, IGT, regulations, grapes, viticulture, terroirs, classifications, planting, history, styles (Passito, Frizzante, Spumante, Recioto, Vin Santo...), , soils, labelling, trade structure, vintages of note, noteworthy producers and cooperatives; regional particularity, regional traditional food pairing, latest news...
- Spain: DOC and DOCa, Vinos de Pago, major VT, regulations, grapes, viticulture, terroirs, classifications, planting, history, styles, Cava and new sparkling classifications, soils, labelling, trade structure, vintages of note, noteworthy producers, negociants and cooperatives; regional particularity, regional traditional food pairing, latest news...
- Portugal: DOC and VR, regulations, grapes, viticulture, terroirs, demarcation and classifications, planting, history, styles, soils, labelling, trade structure, vintages of note, noteworthy producers, negociants and cooperatives; regional particularity, regional traditional food pairing, latest news...
- Greece & Cyprus: history of wine, indigenous grape varieties, principal regions and appellations, specific wines (retsina, vinsanto, Commandaria...) key producers, latest news...
- Austria: DAC and other regions, specific style, classifications and regulations, OTW, soils, native grape varieties, key producers, latest news...
- Germany: grape varieties, regions, styles and appellations. VDP structure, regulations, key producers and noteworthy vineyards, latest news...
- Chile: Regions, terroirs, appellations, grapes and key producers, latest news...
- USA: wine districts and AVAs, structure of the wine trade, history of the industry, regulations, key producers, latest news...
- Argentina: wine regions, DO, subdistricts, terroirs, grapes and key producers, latest news...
- Canada: wine regions, Ontario VQA & DVA, styles of wine (Icewine, Ice-ciders), climatic influence. Key producers, latest news...

- Australia: terroir and wine regions, IG and specific wines associated to certain regions. Winemaking practices, classification, history, key producers and brands, latest news...
- New Zealand: wine regions and terroirs, styles and production, GI system, key producers, latest news...
- South Africa: wine regions, districts and wards, grape varieties and terroirs, classification, key producers, history, latest news...
- Rest of the World: Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Switzerland, England & Wales, Croatia, Lebanon, Palestine and Israel, Syria, Georgia, Turkey, Uruguay, Brazil, Mexico, China (main regions, terroirs, producers and styles, latest news). However a broad understanding of the wine world dynamic is required, so questions can be on the fringe of the defined regions. i.e. Kosu grape from Japan or the new wine producers like Thailand or India when they make the headlines in reputable global wine magazines (Decanter, La Revue du Vin de France, Wine Spectator, Sommeliers International, Jancis Robinson.com)...



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