

# San Francisco Chronicle

## THE SIPPING NEWS

### Is that a sommelier in your pocket?

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This Thursday is the release of local "personal sommelier" and wine-tasting party host **Courtney Cochran's** first book, "**Hip Tastes: The Fresh Guide to Wine**" (Viking Studio, \$18.95). The surprisingly practical wine tutorial for newbies and reference for shoppers is broken into memorable one-point paragraphs. (Perhaps a more appropriate title would have been "Wine: The Short Answers.")

Mixed in with the overview are useful solutions to modern dilemmas like what to drink when all the wine is lousy at the business reception (white, with a couple ice cubes), what to pair with Mexican food (depends on whether you're getting the carnitas), and how to shop for it online (try not to order anything in the peak of summer).

She keeps the endless lists of beginner-befuddling producers, regions, and French vocabulary out of the main text (so you can focus on the whys rather than the whats) and includes her recommendations instead in the Appendix, along with the pronunciation guide we may not admit we really want.

