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How Long Will an Opened Bottle of Wine Last?

Different Wines, Different Shelf Lives

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How long can you keep an opened bottle of wine? Once a bottle is opened, the question of how long it can last without compromising its quality and flavor often arises. The lifespan of an opened wine depends on several factors, including the type of wine, storage methods, and tools used. Here's what you need to know to make the most of

your wine after opening.

When a bottle of wine is opened, oxygen interacts with the wine, altering its aromas and structure. While this oxidation is inevitable, its effects can be slowed. Red wines, with their higher tannin content, generally resist oxidation better than white or rosé wines. Here's how long you can expect different types of wine to remain drinkable after opening:

- **Red wines:** These can be kept for 2 to 5 days after opening. Tannic reds like Bordeaux or Barolo are more resistant than lighter reds like Pinot Noir.
- **White and rosé wines:** These are more fragile and should be consumed within 2 to 3 days. Dry whites such as Sauvignon Blanc or Chardonnay hold up better than sweet whites.
- **Champagnes and sparkling wines:** Even with a secure stopper, they quickly lose their effervescence and should be consumed within 24 to 48 hours.
- **Dessert or fortified wines:** Due to their high sugar or alcohol content, these can remain good for up to a week or more.

To extend the life of an opened bottle, it's important to minimize oxygen exposure and regulate temperature. Storing the bottle in the refrigerator, regardless of its color, slows chemical reactions and preserves freshness. Using specific tools, such as airtight stoppers or vacuum pumps, also helps reduce oxidation. Advanced tools like the Coravin system allow you to pour wine without removing the cork, preserving its quality for weeks or months. Storing the bottle upright reduces the wine's contact with air, further slowing oxidation.

Signs that a wine has gone bad include color changes, such as red wine turning brown or white wine becoming dark yellow. Altered aromas, like hints of vinegar or rancid nuts, indicate advanced oxidation. Additionally, a flat or flavorless taste suggests the wine has passed its prime and should be discarded.