



FINE VINTAGE LTD  
BY JAMES CLUER MW

# WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines

## Course Outline

The Level 4 Diploma in Wines is the highest level WSET course and is a respected qualification around the world. After completion of the Diploma the next logical step is to register for the Master of Wine, a rare credential held by just over 420 people. Therefore, the Level 4 Diploma is the top credential an employer could reasonably expect you to have.

### Why take your Level 4 Diploma with Fine Vintage Ltd?



**Experience:** In addition to being awarded WSET Educator of the Year in 2011 and to have been shortlisted for Educator of the Year three times, Fine Vintage has been running the prestigious WSET courses since 2005 with schools in 16 cities. We therefore have experience running these courses.

**Instructors:** We have carefully designed our Diploma program so that you will receive the best possible instruction. We have assembled a fantastic team of instructors, all of whom are either a Master of Wine or a current or former MW candidate. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of being taught by knowledgeable experts who have experience in the industry and significant credentials.

Your instructors include 2 Masters of Wine and 2 highly experienced instructors who have been involved in the MW program. The course is created and overseen by James Cluer MW.

**Format:** The Diploma program is divided into 6 individual Units as summarized below:



- **Unit D1 (Wine Production):** This is a foundation Unit for the Diploma program and must be taken before taking other Units. Unit D1 explores the fascinating myriad of viticultural and winemaking options that contribute to a resultant style of wine. Unit D1 is offered in an **online format only** with 5 weekly Zoom sessions held on Saturdays. The exam is a 90-minute in-person exam and involves 3 – 5 short answer paragraph questions.
- **Unit D2 (Wine Business):** Unit D2 is also a foundation Unit and must be taken after Unit D1 and before taking other Units. In Unit D2, you learn about the types of businesses, the costing considerations and marketing decisions involved in the wine industry. It is offered in an **online format only** with 3 weekly Zoom sessions held on Saturdays. The exam is a 60-minute in-person exam and involves 3 – 5 short answer paragraph questions.
- **Unit D3:** The largest of the Diploma Units, Unit D3 delves into the Light Wines of the World. Students will explore the classic regions of Europe (France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, Portugal, Greece & Tokaj) as well as the leading wine-producing countries of the New World (USA, Canada, Chile, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and China). This Unit is offered in two different formats:
  - **In-Person Format:** 7 x two-day classes held on weekends about once a month over a 6-month period. Classroom participation includes both lecture and blind tastings of a dozen wines each day.
  - **Online Format:** Weekly sessions held over a 24-week period. These weekly theory sessions are hosted by the WSET directly. Students are responsible for obtaining their own tasting samples.



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At the end of either the in-person or online courses, there is a 2-day in-person exam held mid-week. Day 1 is for the Theory exams with 5 x theory paper questions. On Day 2, there are 2 x Blind Tasting exams, each containing 2 flights of 3 wines. Students must pass both the Theory and the Tasting exams in order to pass Unit D3.

- **Unit D4:** This Unit is devoted to the Sparkling Wines of the World. Starting with different production techniques, this Unit covers the classic regions of France, Italy, Spain, Germany, the USA, South America South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. This Unit is offered in two different formats:
  - **In-Person Format:** A two-day classroom session where each day covers the theory portion of this Unit as well as presenting a dozen different styles tasted blind. A half-day in-person review session on the day before the exam is included in this format.
  - **Online Format:** Weekly sessions held over a 5-week period. These weekly theory sessions are hosted by the WSET directly. Students are responsible for obtaining their own tasting samples.

At the end of either the in-person or online courses, there is an in-person 90-minute exam held on a mid-week afternoon. The exam consists of 3 – 5 short answer paragraph theory questions and a blind tasting of 3 sparkling wines. Students must obtain an aggregate passing grade from both theory and tasting in order to pass Unit D4.

- **Unit D5:** This Unit covers the great Fortified Wines of the world: Sherry, Port, Madeira, Vins Doux Naturels, and Fortified Muscats. Production methods, styles, and business aspects for each of these regions are covered in this Unit. This Unit is offered in two different formats:
  - **In-Person Format:** A two-day classroom session is held on a weekend. Each day covers the theory portion of this Unit as well as presenting a dozen different styles tasted blind. A half-day in-person review session on the day before the exam is included in this format.
  - **Online Format:** Weekly sessions held over a 5-week period. These weekly theory sessions are hosted by the WSET directly. Students are responsible for obtaining their own tasting samples.

At the end of either the in-person or online courses, there is an in-person 90-minute exam held on a mid-week afternoon. The exam consists of 3 – 5 short answer paragraph theory questions and a blind tasting of 3 fortified wines. Students must obtain an aggregate passing grade from both theory and tasting in order to pass Unit D5.

- **Unit D6:** A 3,000-word independent research assignment must be submitted to the Fine Vintage head office by either January 31<sup>st</sup> or July 31<sup>st</sup>. The topics for each submission date are released by the WSET on August 1<sup>st</sup> for the following academic year. Students must perform their own research and include footnotes/endnotes and a bibliography with their paper. A preparatory 2-hour Zoom session is held 2 months prior to each submission deadline. No further classroom time is provided for this Unit.

**Study Materials:** All the WSET study materials are offered in an online format in English only. We provide you with documents that give you a study road map, make recommendations of all supplementary study materials, and give you lists of mock tasting flights.

**WSET Exam Feedback Tests:** Included in our pricing is automatic enrollment in the WSET's Diploma Feedback Tests. These Feedback Tests are a series of mock papers that are graded by WSET assessors. This valuable feedback will enable you to better prepare for the exams. Most schools do not include these Feedback Tests in their price.

**Wine Tastings:** Wine samples are included in the tuition for the in-person Units D3, Unit D4 and Unit D5 sessions as well as an introduction to the Diploma Systematic Approach to Tasting following the D1 exam. Fine Vintage has a policy of showing classic benchmark examples to students. As such, we spend a considerable amount on wine. Therefore, you will be able to taste an extensive range of classic examples.



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**Payment Terms & Conditions:** Each Unit and format has a different price which is posted on our website. Full payment is required at registration and is non-refundable.

**Pre-requisites:** To enroll in the program you **must already have passed the WSET Level 3 certification**. You also need to have a **high school diploma or ESL equivalent** as a high degree of proficiency in written English is required to pass this course. The Diploma is a demanding program, and we discourage students from enrolling if they are not comfortable writing essays, have very little industry experience, and are not serious about dedicating a substantial amount of time to self-study. We want to give all our students the best possible chance of success. Diploma graduates are typically leaders in the wine industry.

**Certification:** Students are required to obtain a mark of 55% or higher on each of 7 sets of exams as follows:

- **Unit D1:** Wine Production (3 – 5 short answer paragraph format)
- **Unit D2:** Wine Business (3 – 5 short answer paragraph format)
- **Unit D3:** Light Wines of the World – Theory (5 x essay style format)
- **Unit D3:** Light Wines of the World – Tasting (Blind tasting of 12 wines)
- **Unit D4:** Sparkling Wines (3 – 5 short answer paragraph & blind tasting of 3 wines)
- **Unit D5:** Fortified Wines (3 – 5 short answer paragraph & blind tasting of 3 wines)
- **Unit D6:** Research Assignment (3,000-word essay on pre-determined subject)

Upon successful completion of the above exams, the student will receive the WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines certification.