

Wine

The Corkage Standard

Five steps for the guest who brings their own bottle. The fee is told before the cork comes out, and the bottle gets the service of a wine from the list.

Who	When	You need
Sommeliers, restaurant managers and the reservations team	Any guest who brings wine, announced at booking or on arrival	The written corkage policy and fee, bottle tags, the booking note
Measured by Fee told before the bottle is opened · Same glasses and service as a list wine · Bottle tagged with table and name		

1 Tell it early

When a guest mentions their own bottle at booking, give the fee and the limit, such as two bottles per table, in the same reply. Note it on the booking so the floor knows before the guest arrives.

"You're welcome to bring it, Dr Mensah. Corkage is 40 euros a bottle, up to two per table. I've noted it."

Common mistake Mentioning the fee only on the bill. The guest feels caught out, and the review says so.

2 Receive and tag

On arrival, take the bottle with both hands, thank the guest, and ask whether it needs chilling or opening early. Tag it with the table and name, and store it at its serving temperature.

"Thank you, Mrs Park. Shall I chill it now, or open it early so it can breathe?"

Common mistake Leaving it in its bag on the side station. The bottle the guest kept for ten years spends the evening under a hot lamp.

3 Serve it fully

Give the bottle the full service of a wine from our list: shown label up, opened at the table, the host's taste, the right glasses, decanted if needed. Comment on the wine only if the guest invites it.

"Your 2010 Pichon Lalande, Mr Novak. Would you like to taste it before I pour?"

Common mistake Serving it in the everyday glasses because the hotel did not sell it. The guest notices, and so does the next table.

4 Offer what fits

If the bottle will not cover the whole meal, offer one wine from our list for a course it does not suit, such as a glass of white for the starter or sweet wine with dessert. Offer once, then leave it.

"Your red will be lovely with the lamb. For the scallops before it, would a glass of white suit you?"

Common mistake Ignoring the table for the rest of the night because they did not buy wine. Glasses run dry and nobody checks.

5 Close and record

Offer to recork what is left and send it to the room or wrap it to take away. Show corkage as its own named line on the bill. Note the bottle and the occasion in the guest profile for the next visit.

"Brings own Bordeaux for anniversaries. At booking, offer to chill or decant it ahead."

Common mistake Clearing the half-finished bottle with the empties. It was the guest's wine, and they may have wanted the rest.

Our Corkage Policy

Write down your own rules, so everyone who takes a booking or opens a bottle gives the same answer. Fill it in with the restaurant manager.

Lunch and dinner

Fee per bottle _____

Bottles per table _____

Exceptions _____

Who can waive it _____

Special occasions

Fee per bottle _____

Bottles per table _____

Exceptions _____

Who can waive it _____

Wines also on our list

Fee per bottle _____

Bottles per table _____

Exceptions _____

Who can waive it _____

How to use this with your team

The restaurant manager fills it in and briefs reservations and the floor on the same day. Read it aloud at Monday's briefing; anyone who quotes a fee must say all four fields without the card by Friday.

Part of the DolceVita Standards Library: free operating standards for every department of the hotel, at dolcevitahospitality.com/free-resources.