

GLOSSARY OF WINE TERMS

Acidity	Term used to indicate quality of tartness, sourness or sharpness to the taste, due to the presence of agreeable fruit acids.
Aftertaste	The taste sensation remaining in the mouth for a short period of time immediately after a wine is swallowed. Both the character and the length of the aftertaste may collectively be described as “finish”.
Appearance	This refers to clarity, not color. Wines should be free of cloud and suspended particles when evaluated in a glass.
Aroma	The fruity scent in a young wine, not to be confused with “bouquet” which is a more complex scent in mature wines.
Astringency	The degree of astringency of a wine depends primarily upon the amount of tannin it has absorbed from the skins and seeds of grapes. Moderate astringency is a desirable quality in many red wines. Do not confuse with dryness, and never call an astringent wine “sour”.
Balance	A tasting term denoting complete harmony among the principal constituents of wine.
Body	The degree of concentration or substance in a wine, referring to the presence of alcohol and flavors. Light bodied wines tend to be low in alcohol, tannin, and extract. Big, heavy bodied wines tend to be alcoholic, tannic, and often sweet.
Bouquet	Scent of a mature wine, to be distinguished from “aroma”, which is given off by young wines. The scent originates from the fermentation and aging of wine and is best noticed when swirling the wine in the glass.
Brut	French term applied to drier types of Champagne. Brut is drier than “Extra Dry”.

GLOSSARY OF WINE TERMS (cont.)

Color	Each wine has its own “right” color. A wine should be judged against the color that’s correct for each wine type.
Decant	To pour wine gently from a large container or from the bottle in which crust or sediment has deposited, for the purpose of obtaining clear wine for serving.
Dry	Opposite of sweet; free of sugar. A wine becomes dry when all sugar has been consumed by fermentation.
Fruity	Having the fragrance and flavor of the grape; sometimes used to designate tartness.
Generic Wine	Wine type names (such as Burgundy, Chablis, Chianti, Rhine, Champagne) to denote that the wine is best described by general type rather than by the major grape variety used in its production. Generic wines are normally blends of several grape varieties in which neither the percentage nor the character of any one variety dominates.
Magnum	A large wine bottle with the capacity of two ordinary bottles.
Nose	The name given to the perceived odor of wine. It is composed of aroma, bouquet, and other fermentation volatiles.
Nutty	Term denoting the characteristic flavor of Sherry.
Racking	The drawing of wine from a storage cask into a fresh cask.
Sec	French word for “dry”.
Table Wine	Wine with an alcoholic content below 14%, suitable for serving with meals at the table. As compared to dessert wines or sparkling wines.

GLOSSARY OF WINE TERMS (cont.)

Tart	Possessing agreeable acidity; in wine, tartness reflects the content of agreeable fruit acids.
Varietal	A wine that is named for the principal grape variety from which it is made. In California, the law requires that any varietally labeled wine must contain at least 75% of the grape for which it is named.
Vintage Wine	Wine made from grapes that were harvested in one given year. Regulations specify that a vintage wine must contain at least 95% of its volume from grapes of the year specified.