

WINE WORDS WITH PAUL



**50+ WINE TERMS DEFINED IN EASY TO
UNDERSTAND LANGUAGE THAT WILL
MAKE YOU SOUND LIKE A WINE EXPERT!**



BY PAUL MURPHY

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Acidity:

Found on the grapes or produced in the fermentation process (SEE F), Acid adds zest and refreshing qualities to the wine. When balanced correctly Acid makes the wine energetic and exciting!

Aeration:

What people are doing when they swirl the wine around the glass. Getting as much oxygen to the wine in hopes of softening it and releases its aromas. Done in the glass for all wines to release the scents but done with fully bodied wines in decanters (SEE D).



Balance:

The harmonious connection of all the flavors and aromas of the wine. So that no one aspect of the wine sticks out. ALL GREAT WINE IS BALANCED

Biodynamic:

The practice of using zero chemical additives or fertilizers when growing grapes and making wine the old fashioned way. Using the land and animals, NOT chemicals and machines.



Champagne Method :

(Traditional Method)

The production process for the most complex sparkling wines in the world. This practice takes the most time and skill out of any method. Winemakers create those magical bubbles by a secondary fermentation (SEE S) inside the bottles.

Charmat Method (Tank Method)

Also known as the "Bulk Method". Used for the majority of Prosecco, it's the cheap and fast process for making sparkling wines. The wine gets its bubbles by a secondary fermentation(SEE S) in a huge pressurized tank by batches and not individual bottles like the champagne method.



Decant:

The action of pouring older, or fuller-bodied red wine into a vessel.

Typically we will decant into glass but it can vary greatly in shape and size. This act separates any sediment (SEE S) from the liquid, staying in the bottle or bottom of the decanter.

Dry Farming:

The technique of using only rainfall to water grapes, not an irrigation system.

E Enology:

The Science of Winemaking

E Enophile:

A Wine Lover

Estate Bottled:

The legal term in the USA for wine that has been produced and bottled at the same winery with grapes from that vineyard or other hyperlocal sources.

F

Fermentation Process:

(Primary Fermentation)

Method in which yeasts convert the sugars in grapes to alcohol and carbon dioxide.

Fining:

Winemaking process where substances (sometimes animal parts) are used to filter out unwanted particles from the wine before bottling.



Garrigue:

The combined fragrances of lavender, juniper, rosemary thyme and, other plants most often found on the hills of the Mediterranean coast. These aromas are associated with wines from that area.

Grassy:

Common term used to describe Sauvignon Blancs from New Zealand especially. Fresh cut grass, hay, straw, or meadows also are used to describe this aroma.



Hangtime:

Measurement of time the grape bunches spends ripening in the vineyard.

Hazy:

What you call wine that is hard to see through. Actually can be a good sign. Wines that are unfinned and unfiltered can be hazy.

Irrigation:

 Process in which you add additional water to grapes while growing them for wine.

Some Old World (SEE O) regions like Burgundy and Bordeaux have banned irrigation. While other regions can't grow grapes without it.

Isinglass:

Protein used from fish bladders in the Fining Process. (SEE F)

Jeroboam:

 Named for the first biblical king of northern Israel. This is the KING of all wine bottles. It holds TWENTY GLASSES OF WINE!

Jammy:

Term to describe wine with thick berry flavors and aromas (strawberry and blackberry) similar to jam. Examples include Zinfindal and Grenache.



Kabinettwein:

Literally means "a wine set aside in a cabinet". Also known as Kabinett, is the German classification for late harvest wines (SEE L) with high acidity (SEE A) and low alcohol.

Keg Wine:

A wine that can be served from a tap system just like beer. Each keg can hold up to 26 bottles of wine!



Late Harvest:

Grapes picked past the normal harvest time, resulting in higher sugar content. Dessert wines are usually made with late-harvest grapes.

Lees:

Dead yeast cells and bits of grape skins leftover after fermenting the wine. (Actually not gross) In some sparkling and white wines, they are aged on the lees (Sur Lie in French). This adds creamy, more complex flavors, textures, and aromas.

Maceration:

M Process of steeping the grapes in a wine after fermentation (SEE F). This extracts aromas, tannins (SEE T), and colors to the wine.

Mouthfeel:

How the wine feels inside your mouth when initially tasting. Depending on the alcohol, acidity, tannins, and sugar levels wine could feel smooth or hot, thick or rough.

New World:

N Term for any wine made outside the traditional wine-growing regions all over Europe. The USA, New Zealand, Argentina, and South Africa are just some of the New World examples. These wines tend to be more fruit-forward and have higher alcohol than Old World (SEE O) counterparts.

Native Yeasts:

AKA Wild Yeasts, are present all over the vineyard and on the grapes. Naturally fermenting the sugar from the grapes into alcohol.



Old World:

These wines come from the traditional wine-growing regions.

France, Italy, Spain are a few of the examples.

They tend to be terroir (SEE T) driven wines, more earthy with less alcohol. Old World

names the wine after the region. For example:

French Sauvignon blanc grown in the

Sancerre region is called Sancerre on the

bottle's label. In the new world like California,

it's simply sauvignon blanc on the bottle.

Oxidized:

Wine that has been exposed to the open air for too long resulting in off smells and tastes.



Puckery:

Wine that is so full of tannins that it

makes your mouth pucker up in dryness.

Punt:

The dimple underneath the wine bottle. This adds integrity to the glass base.

Pomace:

The combination of grapes, seeds and stems left over after fermentation for reds or after being pressed for white wines.

Quartz:

Q

Second most common mineral in the earth crust. When high amounts of quartz are found in vineyards, wines produced tend to be lower in acidity and higher in alcohol.

Quinta:

Portuguese term for estate. (Chateau in French)

R

Residual sugar:(RS).

Natural grape sugars that are leftover in the final wine after fermentation concludes.

Racking:

The Process of moving wine from barrel to barrel or barrel to tank, while leaving sediment behind.

Secondary Fermentation:

S

Process where yeast is added a second time to wine to create the bubbles and make sparkling wine.

Sediment:

Particles that could be found in the bottom of a bottle or glass of wine made of pomace (SEE P) and other harmless leftover solids.

T

Tannins:

Naturally occurring material from the grape skins, seeds, stems and oak barrels. Tannins provide structure and help red wine age well. As well as contribute to the "dry" mouthfeel in full-bodied red wines.

Terroir:

The total natural environment in which a particular wine is produced, including factors such as the soil, topography, and climate. The characteristic taste and flavor imparted to a wine by the environment in which it is produced.

Unfiltered:



This refers to wines that have not been stripped of its nuanced natural flavors and textures.

Unfined:

Wine that has not been put through any sort of filtration system, preserving flavors and aromas in the bottle.

Varietal:



Wine made from or belonging to a single specified variety of grape

Viscous:

That thick feeling in your mouth when you have a really high alcohol red or white wine and its almost chewy.

Whole Cluster:



A way to add more tannins and structure to wines by pressing the grapes, fermenting the wine, or doing both while keeping the stems on bunches of grapes.

Wet Cardboard:

The off smell you get when sniffing a corked wine. Also described as a wet dog or humid attic.



Xarel-Lo: (Sha-Rel-Oh)

White wine varietal found in Spain. In combination with the Macabeo and Parellada grapes, it creates the beloved Spanish sparkling wine, Cava.

Xinomavro: (Zee-No-Mav-Ro)

Famed grape of northern Greece. Regarded as one of the most full-bodied reds in Europe, this grape has a powerful punch. Dark fruit, spices, tobacco, olives, and tomatoes filled the palate.



Yakima Valley:

The biggest and oldest growing region in Washington state. Top grapes grown in Yakima include Cabernet, Chardonnay, and Merlot.

Yeast:

Induces alcoholic fermentation in grape juice by converting the sugars of wine grapes into alcohol and carbon dioxide. They can be naturally occurring or introduced to the grapes.

Yield:

The amount of grapes grown versus the size of the land they're grown on. Although high yields usually mean low-quality wine, low yields don't always mean top quality.



Zinfandel:

Previously the most planted grape in California and a clone of the grape Primitivo in Italy. This full-bodied but light in color red is also made into a sweeter rosé known as white zinfandel.

Zweigelt: (Zveye-Gelt)

Austria's most planted red grape, tasting similar to light-bodied wines like pinot noir. Created in a lab by Austrian researcher Fritz Zweigelt.