

WSET Level 3 Systematic Approach to Tasting Wine®

APPEARANCE

Clarity	clear – hazy (faulty?)
Intensity	pale – medium – deep
Colour	<i>white</i> lemon-green – lemon – gold – amber – brown <i>rosé</i> pink – salmon – orange <i>red</i> purple – ruby – garnet – tawny – brown
Other observations	e.g. legs/tears, deposit, petillance, bubbles

NOSE

Condition	clean – unclean (faulty?)
Intensity	light – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – pronounced
Aroma characteristics	e.g. fruits, flowers, spices, vegetables, oak aromas, other
Development	youthful – developing – fully developed – tired/past its best

PALATE

Sweetness	dry – off-dry – medium-dry – medium-sweet – sweet – luscious
Acidity	low – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – high
Tannin	low – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – high
Alcohol	low – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – high fortified wines: low – medium – high
Body	light – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – full
Flavour intensity	light – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – pronounced
Flavour characteristics	e.g. fruits, flowers, spices, vegetables, oak flavours, other
Other observations	e.g. texture, balance sparkling wines (mousse): delicate – creamy – aggressive
Finish	short – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – long

CONCLUSIONS ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY

Quality level	faulty – poor – acceptable – good – very good – outstanding
Level of readiness for drinking / potential for ageing	too young – can drink now, but has potential for ageing – drink now: not suitable for ageing or further ageing – too old

THE WINE IN CONTEXT

Identity	<i>for example:</i> location (country or region), grape variety or varieties
Price category	inexpensive – mid-priced – high-priced – premium

Notes for students:

For lines where the entries are separated by hyphens – students must select one and only one of these options.

For lines starting with “e.g.” where the entries are separated with commas – the list of options are examples of what students might wish to comment on. Students may not need to comment on each option for every wine.



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WSET Level 3 Wine-Lexicon: *supporting the WSET Level 3 Systematic Approach to Tasting Wine®*

AROMA AND FLAVOUR CHARACTERISTICS

FLORAL / FRUIT

Are the flavours delicate or aromatic? Simple/generic or specific? Fresh or cooked/baked? Ripe or unripe?

Floral	acacia, honeysuckle, chamomile, elderflower, blossom, rose, violet
Green Fruit	green apple, red apple, gooseberry, pear, grape
Citrus Fruit	grapefruit, lemon, lime (juice or zest?)
Stone Fruit	peach, apricot, nectarine
Tropical Fruit	banana, lychee, mango, melon, passion fruit, pineapple
Red Fruit	redcurrant, cranberry, raspberry, strawberry, red cherry, plum (fresh/baked?)
Black Fruit	blackcurrant, blackberry, bramble, blueberry, black cherry
Dried/Cooked Fruit	fig, prune, raisin, sultana, kirsch, jamminess, cooked, baked, stewed fruits, preserved fruits
SPICE / VEGETABLE	
Under-ripeness	green bell pepper (capsicum), grass, white pepper, leafiness, tomato, potato
Herbaceous	grass, asparagus, blackcurrant leaf
Herbal	eucalyptus, mint, medicinal, lavender, fennel, dill
Vegetable	cabbage, peas, beans, black olive, green olive
Sweet Spice	cinnamon, cloves, ginger, nutmeg, vanilla
Pungent Spice	black/white pepper, liquorice, juniper
OAK / OTHER	
Simplicity / Neutrality	simple, neutral, indistinct
Autolytic	yeast, biscuit, bread, toast, pastry, lees
Dairy/MLF	butter, cheese, cream, yoghurt
Oak	vanilla, toast, cedar, charred wood, smoke, resinous
Kernel	almond, coconut, hazelnut, walnut, chocolate, coffee
Animal	leather, meaty, farmyard
Maturity	vegetal, mushroom, hay, wet leaves, forest floor, game, savoury, tobacco, cedar, honey, cereal
Mineral	earth, petrol, rubber, tar, stony/steely, wet wool

OTHER OBSERVATIONS

BALANCE

Sweetness	austere, thin or cloying, sticky?
Acid	sour, refreshing or flabby, heavy?
Tannin (red)	well-integrated, soft or harsh, bitter?
Alcohol	delicate, light or hot burning
Fruit	hollow, thin, neutral or juicy, fruit-driven?
Overall	elegant, harmonious or shapeless, clumsy

TEXTURE

Tannin 'grain'	silky, fine-grained, velvety, ripe or grippy, coarse, drying?
Tannin (white)	waxy, bitter, drying, coarse
Viscosity	watery, thin, or creamy, mouthcoating?
Carbon Dioxide	petillant, prickly? delicate mousse, creamy mousse, aggressive mousse

Notes for students: the WSET Level 3 Wine-Lexicon is designed to be a prompt and a guide for students. It does not need to be memorised. Students are encouraged to stick to the terms in the WSET Level 3 Wine Lexicon but other relevant terms may be used.