

GENCO—Sensory evaluation

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Sensory evaluation: involves sight, smell, taste and feel.

- Appearance: color, clarity, brilliance
- Aroma: the smell imparted by the grapes and vineyard, e.g., soil, exposure, climate, trellis system.
- Bouquet: what the winemaker imparts: yeast used, barrel aging, type of oak, malolactic, blending, age, etc.
- Nose: the combined bouquet and aroma, pleasant to off-putting.
- Body: the tactile impression of thickness, relative weight, viscosity or oiliness due to alcohol, glycerine or sugar on the palate, or as seen on the glass after swirling.
- Mouth-feel: the tactile impression or feel of the wine in the mouth, e.g., thin vs. full, smooth vs. sharp, crisp or flat, , etc.
- Taste: sweet, sour, bitter, or salty
- Flavor: combination of aroma, bouquet and taste.
- Balance: the harmonious combination of all components. Wine lacking balance may be acidic, cloying, insipid, flat or harsh, etc.
- Finish: the sensation upon and after swallowing, e.g., hot, sharp, flat, long, short, lingering, pleasant simple vs. complex, or unpleasant notes , etc.

Some words used to describe wine:

Aftertaste: taste remaining after wine has been swallowed (finish)

Aroma: smell of a wine. Generally applied to younger wines.

Balanced: all components (acid, alcohol, tannins, and residual sugar) in harmony

Bitter: unpleasant perception of tannins.

Body: tactile feel (weight) of wine in mouth due to alcohol, glycerin and or sugar.

Bouquet: smells derived from the wine-making process and with aging, also imparted by oak

Brett or Brettanomyces: wild yeast that impart earthy, leathery, smoky, to barnyard, (horse stable, manure, sweaty saddle), rancidity, cheesy, band-aids, medicinal, etc.

Buttery: a wine that has undergone malolactic fermentation: rich, creamy buttery mouthfeel.

Clean: no obvious faults or unwanted aromas and flavors.

Closed-in: not very aromatic.

Coarse: rough texture or mouth-feel. Usually applies the perception of tannins.

Complex: a wine that gives a perception of being multi-layered in terms of flavors and aromas.

Corked: a tasting term for a wine that has cork taint

Crisp: pleasing sense of acidity

Depth: several layers of flavor. (syn. complexity).

Earthy: aromas reminiscent of earth, such as forest floor or mushrooms.

Elegant: a well balanced wine with subtle flavors and aromas (syn. finesse)

Finish: aftertaste of a wine

Flabby: lacking a sense of acidity.

Flawed: wines with the smell of garlic, rubber, medicinal, skunk, rancid butter (butyric acid) sauerkraut, lactic acid, asparagus, coffee, cabbage, mousey, horse sweat, rancid corn chips, rotten egg, stale odors, musty

Grassy: herbaceous or vegetal element of a wine—ranging from freshly mown grass or hay lemon grass flavors.

Green: overly acidic wine made from unripe fruit

Hard: Overly tannic or acid wine

Harsh: astringent, tannic or acidic wines

Herbaceous: the herbal, vegetal aromas and flavors that maybe derived from varietal characteristics or decisions made in the winemaking process—such as harvesting under-ripened grapes or using aggressive extraction techniques for a red wine fermented in stainless steel, ex, bell pepper, grassy, green olive, tea, mint, tobacco, etc.

Hot: overly alcoholic

Jammy: sweet, ripe fruit nose (grapey, berrylike), and with intensely fruity flavors

Mineral: mineral-like, tongue on stone, flinty, chalky, dusty

Nose: aroma and bouquet of a wine.

Oaky: noticeable bouquet of oak—vanilla, butterscotch, coconut, clove, cedar, smoky, bacon, charcoal, toast, etc.

Oily: thick, viscous mouth-feel

Oxidized: a wine that has been exposed to too much exposure to oxygen: sherry-like, vinegar, ethyl acetate (finger nail remover).

Prickly: a wine with some residual CO₂

Pungent: high levels of SO₂, irritate the nose

Sharp: excess acidity of bitterness

Short: refers to finish or aftertaste disappearing after swallowing

Smooth: a wine with a pleasing texture. Typically refers to a wine with soft tannins.

Soft: a wine smooth tannic. (ex. soft tannins)

Spicy: aromas and flavors reminiscent of various spices, e.g., black pepper and cinnamon, orange peel, cloves, anise, etc. May be due to the grape variety or from oak.

Structure: feel of the wine in the mouth—overall balance of acidity, residual sugar and tannins and other phenolic compounds in addition to the body

Tannic: A bitter or puckery wine with aggressive tannins.

Tart: high levels of acidity.

Texture: feel of the wine in the mouth

Thin: a wine that lacking body or concentration

Vegetal: aromas and flavor reminiscent of vegetation (tea, hay, green beans, etc.) as oppose to fruit or floral notes.

Aromas:

Fruit: apricot, apples, baked apples, bannana peach, pears, gooseberry, melons, plum (greengage) pineapple, citrus, lemony, grapefruit, cherries, (dried, Bing or sour) berries (raspberry, black berry, black current, cranberry, strawberry), rhubarb, pomegranate, etc.

Floral: honeysuckle, rose, violets, orange blossom, perfumed, dried fruit figs, raisins, apricots, etc.

Herbal : anise, cloves, nutmeg, pepper, minty, eucalyptus, tea, bay leaves, basil, cola, green olive, bell pepper, etc.

Bouquet: oaky, sweet spice (cloves, cinnamon), vanilla, coconut, butterscotch, smoke, toast, tobacco, mocha, toffee, cedar, tea, etc.

Flavors: vinous, fruity, bitter, chocolate, spicy, herbaceous, minty, simple, complex, off-putting flavors (rubbery, H₂S, moldy, tanky, staleness, VA (volatile acidity ethyl acetate))