

General Terminology

- **Sommelier:** A wine steward; a tour guide; or, some lucky schmuck who gets paid to drink and talk about wine. Also called a “somm.”
- **Acidity:** How much the wine makes your mouth water. High acid = zippy, bright, refreshing. Low acid = smoother, softer. It’s about the feeling—and whether you *liked* it.
- **Body:** A wine’s “weight” on your palate. Light-bodied wines feel like water or juice; full-bodied wines feel more like whole milk or a smoothie.
- **Tannin:** That drying, grippy sensation in red wines—think about how fuzzy your teeth feel. Light tannins = like thin socks; heavy tannins = thick wool socks. Comes from grape skins, seeds, stems, and oak.
- **Primary Flavors:** The fruit, herbs, and floral notes straight from the grape. Red wines might show cherry, plum, or pepper; whites might show citrus, green apple, or tropical fruit. Fresh and upfront.
- **Secondary Flavors:** Flavors from winemaking (not the grape). Think butter (from malolactic fermentation), yeasty notes (from lees), and oak spices like vanilla, clove, or toast.
- **Tertiary Flavors:** Flavors that come with age. Red wines shift to dried fruit, tobacco, and leather; whites to honey, nuts, or Sherry-like qualities. Earthy, savory, and complex.

FRUIT & FLAVOR CATEGORIES

- **Stone Fruit:** Peach, apricot, nectarine—fleshy fruits with a single pit.
- **Tree Fruit:** Apples, pears, quince—crisp, orchard-grown fruits.
- **Citrus Fruit:** Lemon, lime, grapefruit, orange—zesty and bright.
- **Tropical Fruit:** Pineapple, mango, banana, passionfruit—ripe, exotic, sunshine-y.
- **Minerality:** A sense of wet stone, chalk, flint, or saline. Not fruity, not spicy—more like licking a rock in the best way.
- **Vessel:** The container used for fermentation or aging—stainless steel (neutral), oak (adds spice and texture), or amphora/concrete (adds structure or subtle earthiness).